

## Notes from the Rural Health Care Monthly Conference Call: July 8, 2010

### Agenda

- Packet Tracking
  - Supporting documentation
  - USAC's Payment Quality Assurance (PQA) Program
  - Funding Year 2009 has Closed
  - Line 29 on Form 465
  - FCC's NPRM (Notice of Proposed Rulemaking)
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The number of FCC Forms 466/466-A submitted for Funding Year 2009 was a record at 8,021 total applications.

#### **Packet Status Report:**

HCPs can check the progress of their applications online. The "Packet Status Report," located on the RHC website (<http://www.usac.org/rhc/tools/rhc-search-tools/packet-status-report.aspx>) allow applicants to monitor the status of their packet during review.

#### **Supporting Documentation:**

Applicants were reminded to mark the HCP number, Funding Year, and Packet ID number on all supporting documentation sent to RHC so it is connected to the right application. It is important that the funding year is provided since RHC currently has two funding years open.

USAC's Payment Quality Assurance (PQA) Program: The purpose of this program is to enable USAC to make accurate, timely calculations for rates of improper payments for RHC (to be reported to the FCC). USAC previously used audits for this purpose.

USAC will randomly select a limited number of USF beneficiaries each month. When selected, participants will receive a letter by email from USAC specifying the payment under assessment, instructions about what information and documents to provide, and how and when to submit these materials.

Producing documents should require just a few hours of participants' staff time and will involve no on-site work by USAC staff. USAC will select beneficiaries to participate in this program within a few months of the relevant Universal Service disbursement, and participants will receive results of their assessment within a few months of submitting their information and documentation.

**Funding Year 2009 closed on June 30, 2010 - RHC noted a few issues that applicants should be aware of:**

- Incomplete/draft Form 465 – Applicants were reminded to log into the “Applicant Login” page to ensure that all forms were submitted correctly. It is important to hit the “submit” button after filling out all required information and not the “save” button.
- RHC strongly advised applicants to not wait until June 30, 2010 to submit the Form 466 and/or Form 466-A. If problems arise while filling out information on June 30, the applicant may not be able to submit the form(s) on time therefore missing out on funding for the entire year.

**Line 29 on Form 465:**

Applicants were reminded again to not put bandwidth requirements in Line 29 of the Form 465. Instead, the line should include information on what the HPC intends on doing with the services. For example, bandwidth should support teleradiology, PACS, transmission of voice, data, video, etc. Including specific bandwidth requirements, such as T-1, DS-3, Frame Relay, will lock the HCP into receiving that specific service type. The reason for this is because if an HCP indicates that they are looking for T-1 services and then signs a contract for DS-3 service, a service provider that does not provide T-1 service, but does provide DS-3 service may have been prevented from bidding. In essence, there was not fair and open competitive bidding.

**FCC’s NPRM (Notice of Proposed Rulemaking):**

The NPRM meeting took place at FCC’s headquarters on July 15, 2010. A link to the NPRM can be found on the RHC Homepage or at [http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/FCC-10-125A1.pdf](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-10-125A1.pdf). Applicants and service providers are strongly urged to review the NPRM and provide comments to the