



August 13, 2004

REPORT 04-11

**MEMORANDUM FOR:**     THE FEDERAL CO-CHAIRMAN  
                                      ARC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
                                      ARC GENERAL COUNSEL

**SUBJECT:**                     Survey Report – Review of Selected Health Providers and  
                                      J-1 Visa Waiver Physicians in Georgia

### **BACKGROUND**

This review was undertaken as part of a survey of J-1 Visa Waiver program operations in the Appalachian Region.

The J-1 Visa Waiver program provides a waiver of the requirement for a foreign physician to return to his/her home country after completion of medical training in the United States. The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) participates as a Federal Entity sponsor to assist Appalachian Region communities in providing health care services to medically underserved areas. The applicable ARC policies and procedures require J-1 physicians to practice 40 hours of primary care per week in a designated Health Profession Shortage Area (HPSA) in the Appalachian Region. The ARC program requires the physician to serve at least 3 years (unless a state has a longer period). There is no prohibition on J-1 physicians working extra hours or practicing subspecialties after fulfilling primary care requirements.

Although preliminary responsibilities for reviewing J-1 Visa Waiver requests, including supporting documentation, justifications of need, program oversight, and reporting have been delegated to the state health agencies, ARC retains the authority to act on waiver requests and to ensure compliance with program objectives and requirements.

### **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of our review was to determine the compliance with ARC J-1 Visa Waiver program requirements and J-1 physicians perform primary care services in an Appalachian HPSA for 40 hours per week.

## **SCOPE**

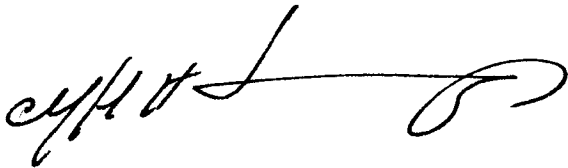
During the period April 23 thru April 28, 2004, unannounced visits to six physicians located in Georgia were performed. The purpose of the visits was to verify the practices and locations of the physicians with J-1 Visa Waivers.

## **RESULTS**

Of the six J-1 physicians we attempted to contact, all six were providing medical care in line with the approved practices. The physicians contacted were satisfied with the program and practices and they generally expressed interest in the possibility of staying in the area upon completion of their waiver periods.

Two physicians had changed locations but had not informed ARC of their new address. We informed them to officially notify ARC. A current review of their files showed that ARC had not yet received the new addresses. Follow-up calls were made August 9th and 12th to remind them to submit the new addresses as soon as possible to ARC. Their new address was close to the old location and would not influence their eligibility.

We recommend that ARC follow-up to ensure that changes of address are timely submitted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C.H. Jennings', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Clifford H. Jennings  
Inspector General

Attachment

**J-1 Physician Visits in Georgia  
April 2004**

	<u>Physician</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Specialty</u>	<u>Approval Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Consider Staying in Area</u>
1	Kessler, Alexander	Northside Medical Specialist	primary care	5/22/2003	Canton	yes
2	Graham, Fitzroy	Cherokee Pediatrics	pediatrics	10/22/2001	Canton	yes <sup>a/</sup>
3	Rehman, Obaid	Tanner Mgt. Services	primary care	9/24/2002	Bremen	yes
4	Alvarez-Bognar	Georgia Highlands Medical	primary care	10/10/2002	Cumming	yes
5	Garcia, Julia	AR Medical	primary care	7/14/2003	Dalton	undecided
6	Malpartida, Juan	Santa Rosa Clinic	primary care	3/25/2002	Dalton	yes <sup>b/</sup>

a/ new address not in file, informed physician to notify ARC:

15 Reinhardt College Parkway, Bldg. 100, Suite 100, Canton, GA 30114

b/ new address not in file, informed physician to notify ARC:

1200 E. Walnut Ave., Suite 4, Dalton, GA 30721