



September 1, 2000

REPORT 00-54

**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 New York

### **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 primary 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

On August 24, 2000, while conducting several audits in the area, unannounced visits to three physicians located in western New York were also performed. The purpose of the visits was to verify the practices and locations of the physicians with J-1 Visa Waivers.

## RESULTS

Three J-1 physicians were contacted: one was at the designated site and working, one was on vacation another not in that day. For the two that were not available, an interview was conducted with their secretaries. It appears all were providing medical care in line with the approved practices and no discrepancies were noted. The one physician directly contacted was satisfied with the program and practices.

An Employment Verification form was provided to the physician's secretary for whom a form was not available at ARC.

  
Hubert N. Sparks  
Inspector General



September 1, 2000

**MEMORANDUM FOR:**    GENERAL COUNSEL


**SUBJECT:**                    Addendum to OIG Report 00-54  
                                      J-1 Visa Waiver Program in Western New York

The physicians contacted during our survey were:

**Salamanca**                    Srinivas Thandla  
   Farzaneh Mohammadi    1/

**Jamestown**                    Rashida Khanam

1/ Verification form given

  
Hubert N. Sparks  
Inspector General