



May 4, 2001

REPORT 01-36(H)

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 Alabama

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

During the period February 24, 2001 through April 26, 2001, while conducting several audits, unannounced visits to nine physicians located in Alabama were also performed. The purpose of the visits was to verify the practices and locations of the physicians with J-1 Visa Waivers.

RESULTS

Of the nine J-1 physicians we attempted to contact, all nine were providing medical care in line with the approved practices. One of the physician's sponsor, Family Healthcare was in the process of reorganizing due to financial problems caused by the previous administration, and the physician was temporarily working at a different site. The State coordinator was informed of the situation.

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.


Hubert N. Sparks
Inspector General



May 4, 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR: ARC GENERAL COUNSEL

SUBJECT: Addendum to OIG Report 01-36(H)


The physicians contacted during our survey in Alabama were:

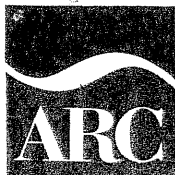
<u>City/Town</u>	<u>Physician</u>	
Birmingham	Marwan Shalabi	1/
Tuscaloosa	Syed Mahommad Raza	1/
Tuscaloosa	Ramesh Peramsetty	1/
Tuscaloosa	Zynnia Zafra	1/
Eclectic	Maher Farah	1/
Centreville	Steven Chervenkoff	2/
Centreville	Marius Stan	1/
Bessemer	Rafael Coplin	3/
Pell City	Irfan Rahim	1/

1/ physician on site

2/ physician works between two clinics, at Woodstock clinic day of visit, talked with Administrator

3/ sponsor having financial problems and is reorganizing, physician temporarily working at Tuscaloosa site. Talked with new Director, physician and head nurse.


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Inspector General



July 20, 2001


MEMORANDUM FOR The Federal Co-Chairman
 ARC Executive Director

SUBJECT: OIG Reports

Enclosed are copies of the below-listed memorandum reports that apparently were not forwarded to your office at the time of issuance. The reports generally do not identify conditions needing followup, and we have closed the reports. However, OIG Report 01-37(H) notes that the Jefferson County Board of Education distance Learning Project had with project completion and equipment utilization delays similar to those reported in 01-21(H), Elmore County Telecommunications Project. Our recommendations emphasized timely project completion or alternative actions to utilize the equipment. For future projects of this type, control should be exercised to preclude equipment purchases substantially prior to other key project requirements being met.

- o 01-22(H), Grant TN-12513, Scott County Emergency and Health Service Complex
- o 01-23(H), Grant TN-12161, Cocke County Comprehensive Dental Service Grants
- o 01-24(H), Grant TN-12499, Bledsoe County Dental Project Grants
- o 01-25(H), Grant OH-13223, Foundation of Appalachian Ohio
- o 01-26(H), Grant KY-13352, Appalachian Kentucky Water Resource Planning Grant
- o 01-28(H), Grant GA-13076, Haralson County Adult Literacy
- o 01-29(H), Grant GA-13551, Appalachian Georgia Early Childhood Initiative
- o 01-30(H), Grant GA-13407, Catoosa County Adult Literacy Program
- o 01-31(H), Grant NC-13217, Tri-County Community College Information Highway Site
- o 01-32(H), Grant NC-13511, Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute

- 01-34(H), Grant NC-13186, North Carolina Partnership for Children
- 01-36(H), J-1 Visa waiver Program—Alabama
- 01-37(H), Grant AL-12447, Jefferson County Distance Learning Project
- 01-38(H), Grant AL-13452, North Alabama Science Center Hands-On Science Education Program
- 01-39(H), Grant AL-13244, Jefferson State Community College Workforce Development Center
- 01-40(H), Grant AL-13143, Birmingham Regional Visioning Implementation Project


Hubert N. Sparks
Inspector General

Enclosures

cc: Ms. Judy Rae