



Request for Proposals

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Applications for the 1998 ACCORD Grants for health outcomes research studies are now available. The ACCORD (A Company-wide Commitment to Outcomes Research and Development) Grants program, funded by Hoechst Marion Roussel, encourages health outcomes research projects in the following therapeutic areas: oncology, cardiovascular disease, neurosciences, respiratory diseases, endocrinology, rheumatology, and infectious diseases.

ACCORD Grant proposals are evaluated on a variety of criteria, including scientific merit and contribution to the health care system and to society. To be eligible, research must advance knowledge in health outcomes research or investigate health outcomes research issues related to a specific therapeutic domain or product, or a specific therapeutic domain or product compared to another intervention. Grant recipients are selected by a panel of experts in health outcomes research, including members of an external advisory board. The final selections are made by Hoechst Marion Roussel.

Applications for 1998 ACCORD Grants may be requested by calling 800-867-7001. The deadline for completed applications is May 1, 1998. Grants will be awarded in October 1998. Amounts range from \$5,000 to \$100,000.

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to Teach, the intent is to bring ambulatory hospital payments in line with physician office practices.

Moving home health, the largest single area of Medicare growth, to Part B of the trust fund should allow for more money to be available at the state level. However, expect increasingly restrictive referral enforcement to be placed on hospital owned and controlled home health agencies, Teach said.

Finally, Teach urged all physician practices to draw up a compliance plan to evaluate Medicare and Medicaid billing. "It is a smart insurance policy, no matter how small you are. Seventy-five percent of grievances are brought by whistle blowers in physicians' offices. It takes just one disgruntled employee to result in a major problem. You can be hit with substantial fines and penalties."

Last year, Congress vastly increased HCFA's resources for fraud control. Up to \$440 million is available this year to investigate fraud, and the amount is scheduled to grow to \$720 million by the year 2003. Stark II allows the Inspector General's office and the Justice Department to keep all funds they recover. "This means they have an unlimited amount of money to do these investigations," said Teach, who noted that he didn't believe any practice—regardless of size—was immune from scrutiny. ☛

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