

their individual health care, including understanding of risks and benefits, choice of optional treatments, and an opportunity to provide care systems. A second focus group identified a number of issues in managed care from the perspective of individuals with disabilities.

The primary Federal responsibility for health care services and research is with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Several units of HHS, particularly the Public Health Service, the Health Care Financing Administration, and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), are establishing significant programs of research into managed care for vulnerable populations. The Administration on Aging also conducts research on managed care: NIDRR plans to continue collaboration with HHS, and expects any Center funded under this priority to work closely with HHS grantees.

However, NIDRR also has had a long history of support for medical rehabilitation research and demonstrations of model systems of care. In addressing its research mission, NIDRR has been impressed by the importance of health care to rehabilitation and independence, as well as by the high value of individuals with disabilities attach to access to comprehensive, high-quality, consumer-responsive health care. In 1991, NIDRR supported a planning conference to set a long-term agenda for medical and health research in NIDRR. The conferees recommended four areas of focus: trauma care; medical rehabilitation; primary care; and long-term care.

Consistent with this agenda, NIDRR is supporting a number of RRTCs that address research issues related to trauma care, medical rehabilitation, and long-term care. In order to identify significant research issues related to primary care for individuals with disabilities, NIDRR convened a focus group of researchers, consumers, and service providers. Within the context of primary care, the group's most significant area of concern was managed care, including the role of primary care and of medical rehabilitation in the managed care system. A second focus group identified a number of issues in managed care from the perspective of individuals with disabilities.

NIDRR's funding priority on issues in managed care focuses on accessibility, consumer-responsiveness, the role of consumers and consumer organizations (e.g., Independent Living programs) in health maintenance and in the evaluation of managed care plans, and the role of rehabilitation medicine. In

addition, the priority expands the target population of related research efforts that focus primarily on publicly financed systems to include individuals covered by private health plans and individuals without health care coverage. The research undertaken by this Center is expected to complement, supplement, or confirm studies sponsored by HHS.

The Secretary is interested in research that will identify the characteristics of a managed health care system that is responsive to the needs of individuals with disabilities, including research on the effects of managed care on individuals with disabilities. For the purposes of this funding priority, an individual with a disability is defined as one who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, section 7(8)(B)). One function of the funding RRTC will be to develop a definition and parameters to identify those individuals whose disabilities necessitate special health care arrangements in a managed care system.

#### Priority

The Secretary intends to establish an RRTC to conduct research that will contribute to the development of consumer-responsive managed health care that encompasses the continuum of care needed by individuals with disabilities whose health care needs require special attention under managed care and will provide information and training to service providers and individuals with disabilities on new developments in managed care systems and their implications for individuals with disabilities.

In addition to carrying out activities to fulfill this general purpose, the RRTC shall:

- Conduct a study assessing the impact of managed care on individuals with disabilities, by type of disability and social and demographic characteristics, examining such factors as quality of care, costs of care, access to specialty providers, service utilization, and preventive care, and develop, using the findings of this study, a method for identifying those individuals with disabilities whose health care needs require special approaches under managed care;
- Using existing data where possible, analyze alternative health delivery approaches, including carve out models, disease management models, and models combining acute and long-term services in order to: (1) identify critical elements (such as capitation formulas, incentive-rewards, or service packages)

that enhance the application of traditional managed care models to individuals with disabilities; and (2) identify gaps in the data to be addressed by future research;

- Review, in cooperation with efforts sponsored by the NCQA, ASPE, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, existing or emerging industry quality assurance standards in relation to the needs of individuals with disabilities, and develop and recommend quality indicators for this population, involving individuals with disabilities in this effort;

- Design, based on new or existing research about consumer training needs, and with the involvement of individuals with disabilities, programs to prepare individuals with disabilities to be educated consumers of health care, and implement these training programs, using consumer organizations in this effort;

- Serve as a center of information for policy makers, researchers, and individuals with disabilities about new developments in managed care, integrating the perspective of individuals with disabilities into the national discussion of managed care, and conduct at least two national conferences on emerging issues in research on managed care for individuals with disabilities, researchers, and service providers; and

- Establish and work with an Advisory Committee whose members include relevant Federal and other public agencies (e.g., relevant units of the Department of Health and Human Services, including ASPE, HCFA, AoA, and the Public Health Service, and the Department of Veteran's Affairs), foundations such as RWJ, key managed care representatives from the private sector, individuals with disabilities, and other NIDRR centers and projects addressing related issues.

Program Regulations: 34 CFR Parts 350 and 352.

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 760-762.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 84.133B, Rehabilitation Research and Training Center Program)

Dated: July 3, 1996.

Judith E. Heumann,

*Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION****[CFDA No.: 84.133B]****Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research; Notice Inviting Applications for a New Award Under the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center Program for Fiscal Year 1997**

*Purpose of Program:* Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs) conduct coordinated and advanced programs of research on disability and rehabilitation that will produce new knowledge that will improve rehabilitation methods and service delivery systems, alleviate or stabilize disabling conditions, and promote maximum social and economic independence for individuals with disabilities. RRTCs provide training to service providers at the pre-service, in-service training, undergraduate, and graduate levels to improve the quality and effectiveness of rehabilitation services. They also provide advanced research training to individuals with disabilities and those from minority backgrounds, engaged in research on disability and rehabilitation. RRTCs serve as national and regional technical assistance resources, and provide training for service providers, individuals with disabilities and families and representatives, and rehabilitation researchers.

This notice supports the National Education Goal that calls for all

Americans to possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

*Eligible Applicants:* Institutions of higher education and public or private agencies and organizations collaborating with institutions of higher education, including Indian tribes and tribal organizations, are eligible to apply for awards under this program.

*Deadline for Transmittal of Applications:* 9/17/96.

*Application Available:* 7/19/96.

*Maximum Award Amount Per Year:* \$500,000.

Note: The Secretary will reject without consideration or evaluation any application that proposes a project funding level that exceeds the stated maximum award amount. (See 34 CFR 75.104(b) published in the Federal Register on 3/4/96 (61 FR 8454)).

*Estimated Number of Awards:* 1.

Note: The estimate of funding level and awards in this notice do not bind the Department of Education to a specific level of funding or number of grants.

*Project Period:* 60 months.

*Applicable Regulations:* (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), 34 CFR Parts 74, 75, 77, 80, 81, 82, 85, 86; (b) the regulations for this program in 34 CFR Parts 350 and 352; and (c) The priority in the notice of final priority for this program, as published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register, applies to this competition.

*For Applications Contact:* William H. Whalen, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue SW., Switzer

Building, Room 3411, Washington, D.C. 20202. Telephone: (202) 205-9141.

Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the TDD number at (202) 205-8887.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Betty Jo Berland, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue S.W., Switzer Building, Room 3422, Washington, D.C. 20202. Telephone: (202) 205-97391. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the TDD number at (202) 205-5516. Internet: Betty-Jo-Berland@ed.gov

Information about the Department's funding opportunities, including copies of application notices for discretionary grant competitions, can be viewed on the Department's electronic bulletin board (ED Board), telephone (202) 260-9950; on the Internet Gopher Server at GOPHER.ED.GOV (under Announcements, Bulletins, and Press Releases); or on the World Wide Web at <http://www.ed.gov/money.html>

However, the official application notice for a discretionary grant competition is the notice published in the Federal Register.

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 761a and 762.

Dated: July 3, 1996.

Judith E. Heumann,

*Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.*

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