



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Question:** Are Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) eligible to serve as NHSC service sites?

**Answer:** Under a three-year pilot program (FY 2012 – 2014) beginning in October 2011, Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) will be eligible to become National Health Service Corps (NHSC) service sites. To be eligible, CAHs must have an affiliation (either through direct ownership or affiliation agreements, i.e., a Memorandum of Understanding) with an outpatient, ambulatory care clinic and provide comprehensive primary care and related inpatient services. In addition, CAHs and their affiliated clinics must meet the following NHSC site requirements:

- 1) Be located in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) that corresponds to the disciplines the site is seeking to recruit.
- 2) See all patients regardless of their ability to pay and advertise this fact.
- 3) Accept Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Program patients.
- 4) Provide services at a discount to low-income patients.
- 5) Demonstrate sound fiscal management.

CAHs may only recruit physicians (MD or DO) specializing in family medicine, obstetrics/gynecology, general internal medicine, geriatrics, general pediatrics, and psychiatry; physician assistants (PA) or nurse practitioners (NP) specializing in adult medicine, family medicine, pediatrics, psychiatry, mental and behavioral health, geriatrics, and women's health; and certified nurse-midwives.

During the pilot program, each CAH may recruit a total of 10 NHSC clinicians, regardless of the HPSA score. Please note that the clinical practice requirements vary for clinicians working at CAHs. For more information on the clinician requirements, please refer to the FY 2012 NHSC Loan Repayment Program Guidance, which was released in December 2011.

For more information regarding the site eligibility requirements, please refer to the "Become an NHSC Site" section of the NHSC website (<http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/sites/becomenhscapprovedsite/index.html>).