**SPRING 2010**

**CMS Academic Internship Program with the Erickson School of Aging**

**University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC)**

**POSITION 1**

**Component:** Center for Medicare Management – Hospital and Ambulatory Policy Group – Division of Ambulatory Services

**Title of Supervisor:** Director, Division of Ambulatory Services

**List Preferred Major (s):** Public Policy, HAPP, EHS, Biology, Chemistry, Pathology

**Position Description:**

The intern candidate will be responsible for evaluating and studying clinical diagnostic laboratory services, paid under the Medicare clinical lab fee schedule, in order to develop a library of technical and policy background for each code. This background dossier will include the following:

1. A technical evaluation of the test, including the specific type (e.g. ELISA, FISH) of testing technique used; typical steps used in performing the test and the testing platform used;
2. A list of manufacturers and brand names of unique testing products assigned to the code describing the testing technique; and,
3. The current Medicare payment limit and the historical basis for such payment.

The intern candidate will have the opportunity to interact with CMS payment policy, coverage policy, and lab certification and enrollment policy staff when assembling this information. Opportunities may also present for the intern candidate to interact with CMS Medical Officers, Medicare Administrative Contractor Medical Directors, AMA staff, and other contractor staff.

**Knowledge and experience required for effective performance in the assignment:**

The successful candidate will have excellent organization skills, the ability to interact and communicate with others effectively, and the ability to fully analyze a range of information in order to develop an effective dossier for each test evaluated. A background in biology, chemistry or pathology would be helpful, although not critical.

**POSITION 2**

**Component:** CMSO/SCG/Training Staff

**Preferred Student Status:** X Graduate Student

**List Preferred Major (s):** Instructional Systems Design

**Position Description:**

The Survey & Certification Group (SCG) in CMS is responsible for essential quality assurance for the Medicare and Medicaid programs. Each year more than 7000 surveyors inspect the nation's hospitals, surgical centers, nursing homes, home health agencies, hospices, dialysis facilities and other providers to ensure that patients are safe and that adequate quality of care is being provided.  Several interns hosted by SCG in the past are currently employed full time with our program.

The individual in this position will work with a team of training experts to develop training tools that assist inspectors (we call “surveyors”) with the quality review of healthcare providers. It is a task that is required by statute. CMS must go and physically determine whether providers are complying with contractual conditions that address the quality of care that they provide to Medicare and Medicaid patients and nursing home residents. These are our most vulnerable populations and ones that need to know that a qualified individual is checking on the quality of care.

Tasks will include analysis of surveyor job activities to determine what skills they must have and how to best deliver that knowledge and skill to them. It also involves translating that information into a course design and allows CMS to measure whether the individual has adequately learned the task and is ready to inspect facilities under government contracts.

Components of this work may involve working directly with government Subject Matter Experts to better understand what must be taught and the sequence of those activities. Also, the student will learn from professionally trained Instructional System Design (ISD) experts on how to apply ISD principles in a setting like CMS.

**Knowledge and experience required for effective performance in the assignment:**

Background experience in education, with emphasis on adult education, and be a candidate for a Masters in ISD.

**POSITION 3**

**Component:** Office of External Affairs/Creative Services Group

**Preferred Student Status:** \_\_X\_\_ Junior  \_\_X\_\_\_Senior  \_\_X\_\_Graduate Student

**List Preferred Major (s):  All considered** Health Policy, Public Policy, Graphic Design, Communications, Health Administration, Political Science, Public Relations, Aging Services

**Position Description:**

The Creative Services Group develops hundreds of products each year to inform and educate beneficiaries and other target audiences about the Medicare and Medicaid programs. Products include publications, videos, broadcasts, training materials, direct mail pieces, and others. In this position, you will learn about our current communication vehicles and investigate emerging communications trends and technologies to help us plan for best meeting the needs of aging and disabled beneficiaries in the future. The position requires daily interaction with senior staff and management officials in the Agency, as well as opportunities to share information with other parts of HHS.

**Knowledge and experience required for effective performance in the assignment**

Excellent oral and written communications skills are a must. Experience with project management, good analytical skills, and ability to work with a team in a fast-paced and flexible environment will help with success.

**POSITION 4**

**Component: CPC**/Medicare Drug & Health Plan Contract Administration Group

**Title of Supervisor:** Director, Division of Policy, Analysis & Planning

**Preferred Student Status:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Junior \_\_\_\_X\_\_\_ Senior \_\_\_\_X\_\_\_\_Graduate Student

**List Preferred Major (s):** Health Policy, Public Policy, Health Administration, Political Science, Public Relations, Aging Services

**Position Description:**

* Work directly with team responsible for policy and operations related to marketing of Medicare health plans. Potential projects and assignments include basic administrative work, data analysis, development of tracking spreadsheets, development of slides and presentations, writing summary papers and reports on policy and operational issues and options, and participation in meetings and conference calls with Central and Regional Office staff involved in marketing issues.
* Assist with ad hoc projects related to Medicare Advantage policy. Potential projects and assignments include basic administrative work, data analysis, development of tracking spreadsheets, development of slides and presentations, writing summary papers and reports, and assisting staff analysts with research on legislative or regulatory issues and options, and tracking legislation.

**Knowledge and experience required for effective performance in the assignment:**

* Knowledge of Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel.
* Experience writing academic or policy papers, memoranda, and reports.
* Ability to conduct basic research from a variety of sources
* Flexibility and willingness to work on a variety of projects and with a variety of staff on ad hoc projects.

**POSITION 5**

**Organization:** Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Division of Benefit Purchasing and Monitoring

**Preferred Student Status:** \_\_\_x\_\_\_\_ Junior \_\_\_x\_\_\_\_ Senior \_\_\_\_x\_\_\_\_Graduate Student

**List Preferred Major (s): ANY** - Health Policy, Public Policy, Health Administration, Political Science, Public Relations, Aging Services

**Position Description:**

The Division of Benefit Purchasing and Monitoring in the Medicare Drug Benefit and C&D Data Group is responsible for, among other activities, reviewing and approving applications from potential Part D (drug benefit) sponsors wishing to offer one or more drug benefit offerings. During September through January, we prepare new application materials and conduct other pre-application activities, such as gathering information from the insurance industry on how many applications we are likely to receive. During January through May, these applications come in to CMS and must be carefully reviewed and analyzed to determine if the applicant meets all CMS requirements to become a Part D sponsor. During June and July we present cases in front of hearing officials to defend any application denials we have made.

One of the key requirements is for an applicant with a prior CMS contract to have demonstrated sound performance in the past. Twice each year we conduct a rigorous quantitative analysis that integrates all performance information CMS has about an organization to generate a past performance score for each organization. Applicants whose score indicates negative performance will have their applications denied. In addition to working on the full spectrum of activities surrounding the application review project, the intern will be assigned to work on this high profile analytic project, which has received press attention in the past.

This is an opportunity for an intern to learn first-hand about Part D policies, regulations, and operations; the mechanics of contracting with the Federal government; and to apply this newly-gained knowledge to a real-world, high-profile project. The intern would also work on a range of additional ad hoc projects pertaining to other aspects of the division’s responsibilities, such as Part D program monitoring and compliance oversight.

**Knowledge and experience required for effective performance in the assignment:**

Good analysis skills

Attention to detail

Prior coursework on health policy

Basic Excel skills