DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Health Care Financing Administration

[Form # HCFA–R–0264–a,b,c,d,e]

Emergency Clearance: Public Information Collection Requirements Submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

In compliance with the requirement of section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), is publishing the following summary of proposed collections for public comment. Interested persons are invited to send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including any of the following subjects: (1) The necessity and utility of the proposed information collection for the proper performance of the agency's functions; (2) the accuracy of the estimated burden; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology to minimize the information collection burden.

We are, however, requesting an emergency review of the information collections referenced below. In compliance with the requirement of section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, we have submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) the following requirements for emergency review. We are requesting an emergency review because the collection of this information is needed prior to the expiration of the normal time limits under OMB's regulations at 5 CFR, Part 1320. The Agency cannot reasonably comply with the normal clearance procedures because of a statutory deadline imposed by section 1853(a)(3) of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. Without this information, HCFA would not be able to properly implement the requirements set forth in the statute.

HCFA is requesting OMB review and approval of this collection within eleven working days, with a 180-day approval period. Written comments and recommendations will be accepted from the public if received by the individual designated below within ten working days. During this 180-day period, we will publish a separate **Federal Register** notice announcing the initiation of an extensive 60-day agency review and public comment period on these requirements. We will submit the requirements for OMB review and an extension of this emergency approval.

Type of Information Collection Request: New collection;

Title of Information Collection: Collection of DMEPOS Supplier Data in Support of the Medicare DMEPOS Competitive Bidding Demonstration using form (HCFA–R–0264) and Supporting Statute Section 4319 of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997;

Form No.: HCFA–R–0264;

Use: Section 4319 of the Balanced Budget Act (BBA) mandates HCFA to implement demonstration projects under which competitive acquisition areas are established for contract award purposes for the furnishing of Part B items and services, except for physician's services. The first of these demonstration projects implements competitive bidding of categories of durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies (DMEPOS). Under the law, suppliers can receive payments from Medicare for items and services covered by the demonstration only if their bids are competitive in terms of quality and price. Each demonstration project may be conducted in up to three metropolitan areas for a three year period. Authority for the demonstration expires on December 31, 2002. The schedule for the demonstration anticipates about a six month period required between mailing the bidding forms to potential bidders and the start of payments for DMEPOS under the demonstration. HCFA intends to operate the demonstration in two rounds, the first of two years, and the second of one year. HCFA has announced that it intends to operate its first demonstration in Polk County, Florida, which is the Lakeland-Winter Haven Metropolitan Area.

There are five forms that are required for the demonstration. The first, HCFA–R–0264A, will be filled out by suppliers to describe the attributes of their organization, including quality of services and financial data. Form HCFA–R–0264B will be filled out by suppliers for each of the categories of DMEPOS for which they bid, and includes information about their supply of that category of equipment or supplies, and the prices that they bid for each item in that category. Form HCFA–R–0264C will be used by site inspectors who gather information at the facilities of bidders. Form HCFA–R–0264D is used to gather data by telephone from referral sources of business for the bidding suppliers, and form HCFA–R–0264E is used to gather data by telephone from banks and other financial institutions for financial and business references.

The competitive bidding demonstration for DMEPOS has the following objectives:

- Test the policies and implementation methods of competitive bidding to determine whether or not it should be expanded as a Medicare Program.
- Reduce the price that Medicare pays for medical equipment and supplies.
- Limit beneficiary out-of-pocket expenditures for copayments.
- Improve beneficiary access to high quality medical equipment and supplies.
- Prevent business transactions with suppliers who engage in fraudulent practices.

HCFA plans to mail the bidding package, including the referenced forms A and B, to potential bidders at the first demonstration sites in Polk County, Florida on November 16, 1998, and to request bidder submissions by December 16, 1998. The remaining forms C, D and E will be used for inspections and reference checking in the three months following the bid submissions. These forms will be used by HCFA or its agents to gather information regarding bidders who have made financially attractive bids and are being evaluated for quality, financial stability, and other attributes for consideration as demonstration suppliers.

Frequency: Two times at each demonstration site;

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit, and not-for-profit institutions;

Number of Respondents: 2,040;

Total Annual Responses: 2,040;

Total Annual Hours: 25,260.

To obtain copies of the supporting statement and any related forms for the proposed paperwork collections referenced above, access HCFA's Web Site address at http://www.hcfa.gov/regs/prdact95.htm, OR E-mail your request, including your address, phone number, and HCFA form number(s) referenced above, to Paperwork@hcfa.gov, or call the Reports Clearance Office on (410) 786–1326.

Interested persons are invited to send comments regarding the burden or any other aspect of these collections of information requirements. However, as noted above, comments on these information collection and recordkeeping requirements must be mailed and/or faxed to the designee

referenced below, within ten working days:

Health Care Financing Administration,
Office of Information Services,
Security and Standards Group,
Division of HCFA Enterprise Standards,
Attn: Dawn Willinghan,
Room: N2–14–26,
7500 Security Boulevard,
Baltimore, Maryland 21244–1850
or
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs,
Office of Management and Budget,
Room 10235,
New Executive Office Building,
Washington, DC 20503,
Fax Number: (202) 395–6974 or (202) 395–5167,
Attn: Allison Herron Eydt, HCFA Desk Officer

Dated: October 7, 1998.

John P. Burke III,

HCFA Reports Clearance Officer, HCFA, Office of Information Services, Security and Standards Group, Division of HCFA Enterprise Standards.

[FR Doc. 98–27850 Filed 10–15–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4120–03–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development; Availability of a Panel of HIV–1 Subtypes for Commercial Production and Distribution

AGENCY: National Institutes of Health, Public Health Service, DHHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), National Institutes of Health (NIH), in cooperation with the Department of Defense (DoD) and the European Network for Viral Assessment, would like to make available to a qualified recipient a panel of HIV–1 subtypes for commercial production. The panel will consist of approximately 10–12 virus seed stocks representing clades A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H, and O. These isolates are an invaluable resource to the HIV–1 research community for development of assays for the detection of various subtypes of HIV–1 and for use as standards in quality assuring the performance of these assays. A qualified manufacturer must demonstrate a well-established history in the acquisition, production and provision of quality assurance reagents. The manufacturer must be willing to provide the commercially produced reagents at cost to non-profit representatives and under specific stipulations which will be set forth in a Transfer Agreement with the collaborating groups. These materials will be transferred to the qualified manufacturer at no cost other than the costs associated with the packaging and shipping of the materials from the current repository. A panel consisting of representatives from the collaborating groups will evaluate the proposals received. It is anticipated that the collection will be transferred to one or more manufacturers but NICHD will be under no obligation to make this collection available in this manner.

DATES: Only written proposals for acquisition of these materials which are received by NICHD on or before December 15, 1998 in the Federal Register will be considered.

ADDRESSES: Requests for further information about these materials and applications should be directed to: Patricia S. Reichelderfer, Ph.D., Center for Population Research, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 6100 Executive Boulevard, Room 8B13F, Rockville, MD 20892; telephone (301) 496–1661; facsimile (301) 480–1972.

Dated: October 7, 1998.

Yvonne T. Maddox,

Deputy Director, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

[FR Doc. 98–27750 Filed 10–15–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–M

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

National Center for Research Resources; Notice of Closed Meeting

Pursuant to section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. Appendix 2), notice is hereby given of the following meeting.

The meeting will be closed to the public in accordance with the provisions set forth in sections 552b(c)(4) and 552b(c)(6), Title 5 U.S.C., as amended. The grant applications and the discussions could disclose confidential trade secrets or commercial property such as patentable material, and personal information concerning individuals associated with the grant applications, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Name of Committee: National Center for Research Resources Special Emphasis Panel Clinical Research.

Date: October 29, 1998.

Time: 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: 6705 Rockledge Drive, Suite 6018, Bethesda, MD 20892, (Telephone Conference Call).

Contact Person: John J. Ryan, PHD, Scientific Review Administrator, Office of Review, National Center For Research Resources, 6705 Rockledge Drive, MSC 7965, Room 6018, Bethesda, MD 20892–7965, 301–435–0818.

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing limitations imposed by the review and funding cycle.

(Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 93.306, Comparative Medicine, 93.306; 93.333, Clinical Research, 93.333; 93,371, Biomedical Technology; 93.389, Research Infrastructure, National Institutes of Health, HHS)

Dated: October 8, 1998.

LaVerne Y. Stringfield,

Committee Management Officer, NIH.

[FR Doc. 98–27748 Filed 10–15–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–M

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases; Notice of Closed Meetings

Pursuant to section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. Appendix 2), notice is hereby given of the following meetings.

The meetings will be closed to the public in accordance with the provisions set forth in sections 552b(c)(4) and 552b(c)(6), Title 5 U.S.C., as amended. The grant applications and the discussions could disclose confidential trade secrets or commercial property such as patentable material, and personal information concerning individuals associated with the grant applications, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Name of Committee: National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases Special Emphasis Panel.

Date: October 20, 1998.

Time: 10:00 am to 12:00 pm.

Agenda: To review and evaluate contract proposals.

Place: Natcher Bldg, 45 Center Drive, Room 5As.25u, Bethesda, MD 20893 (Telephone Conference Call).

Contact Person: Tommy L. Broadwater, Phd, NIAMS, 45 Center Drive, Room 5AS 25U, Bethesda, MD 20892.

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing