



**Alert to CSWE Accredited Programs  
\$10 Million for New Training Program Expected Soon**

March 14, 2012

Dear Colleagues:

I am writing to alert CSWE members to a new source of federal grant funding, expected to be announced very soon, that will help in your efforts to expand capacity. It is our hope that you will use this information to begin your preparations for writing a grant proposal when the announcement is issued by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in early April. Once announced, the program's submission window is likely to be very compressed—perhaps only 30 to 45 days.

HRSA plans to use approximately \$10 million in already appropriated fiscal year 2012 funds to initiate a new program authorized in Sec. 756 of the recent healthcare reform law.

The funding announcement is currently being drafted in the agency, but we expect it to be called the Mental and Behavioral Health Education and Training Grant program. Its aim is to help close the gap in access to mental and behavioral health care services by increasing the number of adequately prepared mental and behavioral health providers, including social workers. All grants will be peer-reviewed and awarded before the end of the current fiscal year, September 30, 2012. Review scoring will be used as the basis for rankings and funding decisions by HRSA staff. HRSA currently plans to devote at least another \$5 million to the new program next year. In addition to social work, psychology programs will also be eligible. It is not clear whether the grants will be funded on a multiyear basis.

The focus of this effort will likely be on expanding training in accredited social work programs. Although the final HRSA program may be slightly different from what is described in the law, the following language from Sec. 756 is offered as a guide to your initial thinking about this opportunity:

(d) PRIORITY.—

(1) In selecting the grant recipients in social work under subsection (a)(1), the Secretary shall give priority to applicants that—

- (A) are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education;
- (B) have a graduation rate of not less than 80 percent for social work students; and
- (C) exhibit an ability to recruit social workers from and place social workers in areas with a high need and high demand population.

It is important to keep in mind that HRSA gives preference to targeting underserved populations, focusing on rural and urban communities, and supporting disadvantaged students.

CSWE will alert members as soon as the new announcement is posted. We also are contemplating holding a webinar or conference call soon after the announcement is released to help foster discussion and answer questions. If possible, we will have a HRSA staff member on hand to answer technical questions on the aims and process.

Please help us get the word out about this major new opportunity for social work education.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Julie".