

OIG Applies for CMS Grant

On August 9th, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) submitted a grant application in response to an invitation from CMS for proposals from states and U.S. territories to be considered for inclusion in the *Nationwide Program for National and State Background Check Program for Direct Patient Access Employees of Long Term Care Facilities and Providers*. As part of the recently passed Affordable Care Act, the National and State Background Check Program will require direct care employees in long-term care facilities and designated health providers to submit to an FBI fingerprint check in addition to the already required in-state criminal records check, thereby enhancing protective measures intended to reduce the potential for abuse, neglect, or exploitation of residents and patients.

Employer types covered under the National and State Background Check Program include the following:

- Nursing homes (SNF and NF)
- Family care homes
- Personal care homes
- Intermediate care facilities
- Intermediate care facilities for individuals with mental retardation and developmental disabilities
- Home health agencies
- Hospice care providers
- Assisted living communities
- Long-term care hospitals, swing beds
- Alzheimer's facilities
- Personal services agencies
- Adult day health centers

During the next month, CMS will review all grant proposals and announce the names of those states selected to receive grant funding by September 30, 2010. If awarded, the OIG could receive up to \$3 million in federal grant monies; the OIG committed \$1 million in matching funds under its grant proposal. Therefore, if successful, up to \$4 million could be used during the two-year grant period (*September 30, 2010 through September 30, 2012*) to implement the new background check program statewide, which would include the purchase of live scan equipment for the collection of fingerprints at easily accessible locations throughout the state. The OIG also intends to explore the possibility of using any monies secured from the grant, agency funds or civil monetary penalties not used as match, to cover the cost of the fingerprint checks in order to avoid charges to applicants and providers **during the grant period**.

Updates and additional information regarding the status of the OIG's grant proposal will be forthcoming in future newsletters. The OIG is optimistic about the possibility of securing funds under this grant, and we look forward to any opportunity which would allow us to develop an efficient, effective, and economical procedure for securing national background checks on prospective employees in long-term care facilities and facilities that provide long-term care services.

To view additional details regarding the National and State Background Check Program Grant, please go to the following link:

http://www.cms.gov/SurveyCertificationGenInfo/04_backgroundcheck.asp