

1. Exchange National Bancshares, Inc., Jefferson City, Missouri; to acquire 100 percent of the voting shares of Bank 10, Belton, Missouri.

2. First National Security Company, DeQueen, Arkansas; to acquire 100 percent of the voting shares of First Community Banking Corporation, Hot Springs, Arkansas, and thereby indirectly acquire First National Bank, Hot Springs, Arkansas; First National Bank in Mena, Mena, Arkansas; and First National Bank, Mount Ida, Arkansas.

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, March 2, 2005.

**Robert deV. Frierson,**

*Deputy Secretary of the Board.*

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## FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

### Federal Open Market Committee; Domestic Policy Directive of February 1-2, 2005

In accordance with § 271.25 of its rules regarding availability of information (12 CFR part 271), there is set forth below the domestic policy directive issued by the Federal Open Market Committee at its meeting held on February 1-2, 2005.<sup>1</sup>

The Federal Open Market Committee seeks monetary and financial conditions that will foster price stability and promote sustainable growth in output. To further its long-run objectives, the Committee in the immediate future seeks conditions in reserve markets consistent with increasing the federal funds rate to an average of around 2-1/2 percent.

By order of the Federal Open Market Committee, February 28, 2005.

**Vincent R. Reinhart,**

*Secretary, Federal Open Market Committee.*

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<sup>1</sup> Copies of the Minutes of the Federal Open Market Committee meeting on February 1-2, 2005, which includes the domestic policy directive issued at the meeting, are available upon request to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Washington, D.C. 20551. The minutes are published in the Federal Reserve Bulletin and in the Board's annual report.

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

#### Limited Competition for Supplemental Grants for Centers for Education and Research (CERTs)

**AGENCY:** Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, HHS.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability of fund for limited competitive supplements.

**SUMMARY:** This notice informs the research community that the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) is requesting applications for competitive supplemental grants from the seven Centers for Education and Research on Therapeutics (CERTs) for which it provided funding in fiscal year 2004.

The purpose of the competitive supplements is to provide funds for existing CERTs research centers to build on and to expand their research work and expertise with respect to comparative effectiveness research specifically to carry out short term projects that will address research gaps in priority subject areas identified and published pursuant to section 1013 of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act (MMA). Since the inception of the CERTs program in 1999, the CERTs research centers have gathered significant data regarding therapeutics, refined research methodologies, and developed collaborative research resources. They are therefore uniquely prepared and suited to efficiently carry out pharmaco-epidemiology and methodological studies related to comparative effectiveness research that is pertinent to developing therapeutic evidence identified as being of high interest to the Medicare, Medicaid or SCHIP programs. For this reason, this solicitation will be for a limited competition among CERTs grantees.

**DATES:** The receipt date for the competitive supplemental grant applications is April 7, 2005. AHRQ will inform the current grantees directly regarding application procedures and format.

**ADDRESSES:** Submission of the applications should be sent to: Dr. Gerald Calderone, Office of Extramural Research, Education, and Priority Populations, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 540 Gaither Road, Rockville, MD 20850, Phone: (301) 427-1548, Fax: (301) 427-1561, E-mail: [gcaldero@ahrq.gov](mailto:gcaldero@ahrq.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Scott R. Smith, Center for Outcomes and Evidence, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 540 Gaither Road, Rockville, MD 20850, Phone: (301) 427-1511, Fax: (301) 427-1520, E-mail: [ssmith@ahrq.gov](mailto:ssmith@ahrq.gov).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

Section 1013 of the MMA directs the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), acting through the Director of AHRQ, to support research to address priorities identified by the Medicare, Medicaid, and SCHIP programs and other concerned stakeholders, regarding improvement of health care outcomes, comparative clinical effectiveness, and appropriateness of health care items and services (including prescription drugs) either provided or possibly not currently covered under these programs; and strategies for improving program efficiency and effectiveness with attention to the ways in which health care items and services are organized, managed, and delivered under these programs.

Pursuant to this section 1013, which may also be found at 42 U.S.C. 229b-7, DHHS published, on December 15, 2004, an initial priority list of ten conditions with respect to which research mandated under this section is to be promptly undertaken. The ten conditions are:

- Ischemic heart disease
- Cancer
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease/asthma
- Stroke, including control of hypertension
- Arthritis and non-traumatic joint disorders
- Diabetes mellitus
- Dementia, including Alzheimer's disease
- Pneumonia
- Peptic ulcer/dyspepsia
- Depression and other mood disorders

The Centers for Education and Research on Therapeutics (CERTs) program was first developed by AHRQ in accordance with a Congressional authorization in the Food and Drug Administration Modernization Act of 1997 (Pub. L. 105-115) to carry out or support research that would provide objective information on drugs, biologics, and medical devices. Just months after the first CERTs grants were awarded, the CERTs program was incorporated into the AHRQ Reauthorization Act of 1999 (Pub. L. 106-129); its objectives: to increase