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Heather Hipsley,
Deputy General Counsel.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Decision To Evaluate a Petition To Designate a Class of Employees From the Reduction Pilot Plant in Huntington, West Virginia, To Be Included in the Special Exposure Cohort

AGENCY: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: NIOSH gives notice of a decision to evaluate a petition to designate a class of employees from the Reduction Pilot Plant in Huntington, West Virginia, to be included in the Special Exposure Cohort under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Grady Calhoun, Director, Division of Compensation Analysis and Support, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 1090 Tusculum Avenue, MS C-46, Cincinnati, OH 45226-1938, Telephone 513-533-6800. Information requests can also be submitted by email to DCAS@CDC.GOV.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to 42 CFR 83.12, the initial proposed definition for the class being evaluated, subject to revision as warranted by the evaluation, is as follows:

Facility: Reduction Pilot Plant.

Location: Huntington, West Virginia.

Job Titles and/or Job Duties: All security guards who worked in any area of the RPP.

Period of Employment: June 7, 1976 through November 26, 1978.

Authority: 42 CFR 83.9-83.12.

Frank J. Hearl,
Chief of Staff, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

[Document Identifiers: CMS-685]

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request

AGENCY: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, HHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is announcing an opportunity for the public to comment on CMS' intention to collect information from the public. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (the PRA), federal agencies are required to publish notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information (including each proposed extension or reinstatement of an existing collection of information) and to allow 60 days for public comment on the proposed action. Interested persons are invited to send comments regarding our burden estimates or any other aspect of this collection of information, including the necessity and utility of the proposed information collection for the proper performance of the agency's functions, the accuracy of the estimated burden, ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected, and the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology to minimize the information collection burden.

DATES: Comments must be received by February 24, 2020.

ADDRESSES: When commenting, please reference the document identifier or OMB control number. To be assured consideration, comments and recommendations must be submitted in any one of the following ways:

1. *Electronically.* You may send your comments electronically to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for "Comment or Submission" or "More Search Options" to find the information collection document(s) that are accepting comments.

2. *By regular mail.* You may mail written comments to the following address: CMS, Office of Strategic Operations and Regulatory Affairs, Division of Regulations Development, Attention: Document Identifier/OMB Control Number ____, Room C4-26-05, 7500 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850.

To obtain copies of a supporting statement and any related forms for the

proposed collection(s) summarized in this notice, you may make your request using one of following:

1. Access CMS' website address at website address at <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Legislation/PaperworkReductionActof1995/PRA-Listing.html>.

2. Email your request, including your address, phone number, OMB number, and CMS document identifier, to Paperwork@cms.hhs.gov.

3. Call the Reports Clearance Office at (410) 786-1326.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: William N. Parham at (410) 786-4669.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Contents

This notice sets out a summary of the use and burden associated with the following information collections. More detailed information can be found in each collection's supporting statement and associated materials (see **ADDRESSES**).

CMS-685 End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Network Semi-Annual Cost Report Forms and Supporting Regulations

Under the PRA (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520), federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. The term "collection of information" is defined in 44 U.S.C. 3502(3) and 5 CFR 1320.3(c) and includes agency requests or requirements that members of the public submit reports, keep records, or provide information to a third party. Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA requires federal agencies to publish a 60-day notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension or reinstatement of an existing collection of information, before submitting the collection to OMB for approval. To comply with this requirement, CMS is publishing this notice.

Information Collection

1. *Type of Information Collection Request:* Revision of a previously approved collection; *Title of Information Collection:* End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Network Semi-Annual Cost Report Forms and Supporting Regulations; *Use:* Section 1881(c) of the Social Security Act establishes End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Network contracts. The regulations found at 42 CFR 405.2110 and 405.2112 designated 18 ESRD Networks which are funded by renewable contracts. These contracts are on 3-year cycles. To better administer

the program, CMS is requiring contractors to submit semi-annual cost reports. The purpose of the cost reports is to enable the ESRD Networks to report costs in a standardized manner. This will allow CMS to review, compare and project ESRD Network costs during the life of the contract. *Form Number:* CMS-685 (OMB Control Number: 0938-0657); *Frequency:* Reporting—Semi-annually; *Affected Public:* Not-for-profit institutions; *Number of Respondents:* 18; *Total Annual Responses:* 36; *Total Annual Hours:* 108. (For policy questions regarding this collection contact Benjamin Bernstein at 410-786-6570).

Dated: December 19, 2019.

William N. Parham, III,

Director, Paperwork Reduction Staff, Office of Strategic Operations and Regulatory Affairs.

[FR Doc. 2019-27822 Filed 12-23-19; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

[CMS-3377-FN]

Medicare and Medicaid Programs: Application From Accreditation Association of Hospitals/Health Systems—Healthcare Facilities Accreditation Program (AAHHS-HFAP) for Continued CMS-Approval of Its Critical Access Hospital (CAH) Accreditation Program

AGENCY: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, HHS.

ACTION: Final notice.

SUMMARY: This final notice announces our decision to approve an application from Accreditation Association of Hospitals/Health Systems—Healthcare Facilities Accreditation Program for continued recognition as a national accrediting organization for critical access hospitals that wish to participate in the Medicare or Medicaid programs.

DATES: This final notice is effective December 27, 2019 through December 27, 2025.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lillian Williams, (410) 786-8636. Anita Moore, (410) 786-2161.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

Under the Medicare program, eligible beneficiaries may receive covered services in a critical access hospital (CAH) provided certain requirements

are met by the CAH. Section 1861(mm) of the Social Security Act (the Act), sets out definitions for “critical access hospital” and for inpatient and outpatient CAH services. Regulations concerning provider agreements are at 42 CFR part 489 and those pertaining to activities relating to the survey and certification of facilities are at 42 CFR part 488. The regulations at 42 CFR part 485, subpart F specify the conditions that a CAH must meet to participate in the Medicare program, the scope of covered services, and the conditions for Medicare payment for CAHs.

Generally, to enter into an agreement, a CAH must first be certified by a State survey agency as complying with the conditions or requirements set forth in part 485 of our regulations. Thereafter, the CAH is subject to regular surveys by a State survey agency to determine whether it continues to meet these requirements. There is an alternative; however, to surveys by State agencies.

Section 1865(a)(1) of the Act provides that, if a provider entity demonstrates through accreditation by an approved national accrediting organization that all applicable Medicare conditions are met or exceeded, we will deem those provider entities as having met the requirements. Accreditation by an accrediting organization is voluntary and is not required for Medicare participation.

If an accrediting organization is recognized by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (the Secretary) as having standards for accreditation that meet or exceed Medicare requirements, any provider entity accredited by the national accrediting body’s approved program would be deemed to meet the Medicare conditions. A national accrediting organization applying for approval of its accreditation program under part 488, subpart A, must provide the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) with reasonable assurance that the accrediting organization requires the accredited provider entities to meet requirements that are at least as stringent as the Medicare conditions. Our regulations concerning the approval of accrediting organizations are set forth at § 488.5. The regulations at § 488.5(e)(2)(i) require an accrediting organization to reapply for continued approval of its accreditation program every 6 years or as determined by CMS. The Accreditation Association of Hospitals/Health Systems—Healthcare Facilities Accreditation Programs (AAHHS-HFAP) current term of approval for its CAH accreditation program expires December 27, 2019.

II. Approval of Deeming Organizations

Section 1865(a)(2) of the Act and our regulations at 42 CFR 488.5 require that our findings concerning review and approval of a national accrediting organization’s requirements consider, among other factors, the applying accrediting organization’s requirements for accreditation; survey procedures; resources for conducting required surveys; capacity to furnish information for use in enforcement activities; monitoring procedures for provider entities found not in compliance with the conditions or requirements; and ability to provide CMS with the necessary data for validation.

Section 1865(a)(3)(A) of the Act further requires that we publish, within 60 days of receipt of an organization’s complete application, a notice identifying the national accrediting body making the request, describing the nature of the request, and providing at least a 30-day public comment period. We have 210 days from the receipt of a complete application to publish notice of approval or denial of the application.

III. Provisions of the Proposed Notice

In the July 31, 2019 **Federal Register** (84 FR 37302), we published a proposed notice announcing AAHHS-HFAP’s request for continued approval of its Medicare CAH accreditation program. AAHHS-HFAP submitted all the necessary materials to enable us to make a determination concerning its request for continued approval of its CAH accreditation program. This application was determined to be complete on May 31, 2019. Under Section 1865(a)(2) of the Act and our regulations at § 488.5 (Application and re-application procedures for national accrediting organizations), our review and evaluation of AAHHS-HFAP will be conducted in accordance with, but not necessarily limited to, the following factors:

- The equivalency of AAHHS-HFAP’s standards for CAHs as compared with CMS’ CAH conditions of participation (CoP).

- AAHHS-HFAP’s survey process to determine the following:

- ++ The composition of the survey team, surveyor qualifications, and the ability of the organization to provide continuing surveyor training.

- ++ The comparability of AAHHS-HFAP’s processes to those of State agencies, including survey frequency, and the ability to investigate and respond appropriately to complaints against accredited facilities.

- ++ AAHHS-HFAP’s processes and procedures for monitoring a CAH found