Non-Exhaustive Databases of Essential Community Providers
340B Drug Program and 1927(c) Providers

HHS is releasing the attached refreshed database of available essential community providers (ECPs) to assist issuers in complying with the requirements specified in 45 CFR 156.235 and outlined in CMS's "2015 Letter to Issuers in the Federally-facilitated Marketplaces," available at: http://www.cms.gov/CCIIO/Resources/Regulations-and-Guidance/Downloads/2015-final-issuer-letter-3-14-2014.pdf. Under that regulation, ECPs are those who serve predominantly low-income, medically underserved individuals. They include health care providers defined in section 340B(a)(4) of the Public Health Service Act and described in section 1927(c)(1)(D)(i)(IV) of the Social Security Act.

This ECP database is not exhaustive, and does not include every provider that participates or is eligible to participate in the 340B drug program, every provider that is described under section 1927(c)(c)(1)(D)(i)(IV) of the Social Security Act, or providers that might otherwise qualify under the regulatory standard discussed in the Letter to Issuers. While HHS has updated the list for the 2015 benefit year, QHP issuers may include providers in their application that meet the regulatory standard but do not appear in the database. CMS will use the non-exhaustive database of ECPs as the basis for determining the number of available ECPs in the QHP's service area. The denominator of the percentage of available ECPs included in the issuer's provider networks(s) includes ECPs in the QHP's service area that are listed in the HHS database as well as eligible ECPs that a respective issuer lists as ECP write-ins, as referenced in the Letter to Issuers.

To assist CMS and the states in evaluating QHP applications against the sufficiency standard as described in the Letter to Issuers, CMS developed an analytic evaluation tool that computes the percentage of available ECPs in the QHP's service area that are also included in the issuer's provider network(s). All providers included in a QHP issuer's application that meet the federal regulatory standard will count toward the numerator of the evaluation percentage.

In addition, HHS is also making available the attached database of Federally Qualified Health Center grantees, which are eligible to participate in the 340B Drug Program, that provide dental services either on-site or through referral. Issuers offering stand-alone dental plans may want to use this database to help identify ECPs that provide dental services.

HHS expects to monitor inclusion of ECPs in QHP provider network(s) over time, including providers that issuers write in, and will continue to update this database in future years. Questions about the database may be directed to essentialcommunityproviders@cms.hhs.gov.