

HEALTH PROFESSIONS OPPORTUNITY GRANTS (HPOG) IMPACT STUDY

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families

August 2012 – September 2015

Project Summary: The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has contracted with Abt Associates Inc. and The Urban Institute to conduct an impact evaluation of the Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG). The HPOG grants fund programs that provide Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients, other low-income individuals, and members of Native American tribes with training and support needed to find and keep employment in healthcare occupations and fill the growing demand for skilled healthcare workers. Thirty-two grants were awarded in September 2010 to government agencies, community-based organizations, post-secondary educational institutions, and tribal-affiliated organizations to conduct these activities. The purpose of the study is to conduct the most rigorous possible evaluation to measure the relationship between the HPOG program design and implementation and participant outcomes. The overall evaluation focuses on estimating the impacts of varied HPOG program components to inform future program design and improvement. Key participant outcomes to be measured and analyzed include completion of education and training, receipt of certificates and/or degrees, and post-program employment and earnings in a healthcare career. The sample includes 20 HPOG grantees serving TANF recipients and other low-income individuals. Among those HPOG grantees not already engaged in HHS-supported evaluation (e.g., University Partnership Research Grants; Innovative Strategies for Increasing Self-Sufficiency (ISIS), all grantee program locations randomly assign eligible applicants to be part of the HPOG program or to receive “services as usual,” which means they may participate in and receive any other services in the community for which they are eligible. Some HPOG programs also have an opportunity to receive additional funds to test “program enhancements” (e.g., peer support, emergency cash assistance). Capital Research Corporation, Inc. is performing two main tasks under this experimental (random assignment) study:

- **Random Assignment Preparation/Implementation:** Under this task, CRC helped six local sites to plan and implement random assignment, including development of a plan for flow of participants through random assignment, providing site level training on random assignment, and providing ongoing monitoring of the random assignment/service delivery process.
- **Implementation Analysis Study:** Under this task, CRC is conducting two rounds of implementation study visits to grantees. The first round of visits, scheduled for 2014, is for the purpose of conducting an in-depth study of grantees’ implementation of the HPOG program. The second round of visits, scheduled to occur in 2015, focuses on studying the implementation of specific components of the HPOG program that are being studied under the systematic variation part of the Impact Evaluation.

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