

ACTION: Notice.

This notice announces a forthcoming meeting of a public advisory committee of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The meeting will be open to the public.

Name of Committee: Blood Products Advisory Committee.

General Function of the Committee: To provide advice and recommendations to the agency on FDA's regulatory issues.

Date and Time: The meeting will be held on March 13, 2003, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and March 14, 2003, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Location: Hilton DC North—Gaithersburg, Grand Ballrooms A, B, C, and D, 620 Perry Pkwy., Gaithersburg, MD.

Contact: Linda A. Smallwood, Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (HFM-302), Food and Drug Administration, 1401 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852, 301-827-3514, or FDA Advisory Committee Information Line, 1-800-741-8138 (301-443-0572 in the Washington, DC area), code 19516. Please call the Information Line for up-to-date information on this meeting. FDA welcomes the attendance of the public at its advisory committee meetings and will make every effort to accommodate persons with physical disabilities or special needs. If you require special accommodations due to a disability, please contact Linda A. Smallwood or Pearlina K. Muckelvene at 301-827-1281 at least 7 days in advance of the meeting. Persons attending FDA's advisory committee meetings are advised that the agency is not responsible for providing access to electrical outlets.

Agenda: On March 13, 2003, the following committee updates are tentatively scheduled: FDA consolidation, Medical Device User Fee and Modernization Act, Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments waiver for human immunodeficiency, type 1 human immunodeficiency virus-1 (HIV-1) rapid tests, and the Trans Net pilot program. The committee will hear presentations, discuss, and provide recommendations on the topic of West Nile Virus testing. On March 14, 2003, the following committee updates are tentatively scheduled: Limitations on validation of anticoagulant and additive solutions to permit freezing and irradiation of red cells, and particulates in blood bags. The committee will hear presentations, discuss, and provide recommendations on the topic of extensions of the dating period for pooled platelets.

Procedure: Interested persons may present data, information, or views, orally or in writing, on issues pending before the committee. Written submissions may be made to the contact person by March 7, 2003. Oral presentations from the public will be scheduled between approximately 9:15 a.m. and 9:45 a.m.; and 3 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. on March 13, 2003, and between approximately 9 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.; and 10:50 a.m. and noon on March 14, 2003. Time allotted for each presentation may be limited. Those desiring to make formal oral presentations should notify the contact person before March 7, 2003, and submit a brief statement of the general nature of the evidence or arguments they wish to present, the names and addresses of proposed participants, and an indication of the approximate time requested to make their presentation.

FDA regrets that it was unable to publish this notice 15 days prior to the March 13 and 14, 2003, Blood Products Advisory Committee meeting. Because the agency believes there is some urgency to bring these issues to public discussion and qualified members of the Blood Products Advisory Committee were available at this time, the Commissioner of Food and Drugs concluded that it was in the public interest to hold this meeting even if there was not sufficient time for the customary 15-day public notice.

Notice of this meeting is given under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. app. 2).

Dated: February 26, 2003.

William K. Hubbard,

Associate Commissioner for Policy and Planning.

[FR Doc. 03-4974 Filed 3-3-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4160-01-S

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

Advisory Committee for Pharmaceutical Science; Amendment of Notice

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Notice.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is announcing an amendment to the notice of meeting of the Advisory Committee for Pharmaceutical Science. This meeting was announced in the **Federal Register** of February 3, 2003 (68 FR 5297). The amendment is being made to reflect a change in the *Agenda*

portion of the document. There are no other changes.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kathleen Reedy or LaNise Giles, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (HFD-21), Food and Drug Administration, 5600 Fishers Lane (for express delivery, 5630 Fishers Lane, rm. 1093), Rockville, MD 20857, 301-827-7001, or FDA Advisory Committee Information Line, 1-800-741-8138 (301-443-0572 in the Washington, DC area), code 12539. Please call the Information Line for up-to-date information on this meeting.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In the **Federal Register** of February 3, 2003 (68 FR 5297), FDA announced that a meeting of the Advisory Committee for Pharmaceutical Science would be held on March 12 and 13, 2003. On page 5298, in the first column, the second sentence in the *Agenda* portion of the document is amended to read as follows:

On March 13, 2003, the committee will: (1) Discuss and provide direction for future subcommittee: Pharmacology/ Toxicology Subcommittee; (2) receive an update on the Office of Pharmaceutical Science research projects; (3) discuss and provide comments on dose content uniformity, parametric interval test for aerosol products; (4) discuss and provide comments on bioequivalence/ bioavailability of endogenous drugs; and (5) discuss and provide comments on comparability protocols.

Notice of this meeting is given under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. app. 2).

Dated: February 26, 2003.

William K. Hubbard,

Associate Commissioner for Policy and Planning.

[FR Doc. 03-4975 Filed 3-3-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of Inspector General

Publication of OIG Special Fraud Alert on Telemarketing by Durable Medical Equipment Suppliers

AGENCY: Office of Inspector General (OIG), HHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This **Federal Register** notice sets forth the recently issued OIG Special Fraud Alert addressing telemarketing by durable medical equipment (DME) suppliers. For the most part, OIG Special Fraud Alerts address national trends in health care

fraud, including potential violations of the anti-kickback statute for federal health care programs. This Special Fraud Alert specially highlights the statutory provision prohibiting DME suppliers from making unsolicited telephone calls to Medicare beneficiaries regarding the furnishing of a covered item.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Joel Schaer, Office of Counsel to the Inspector General, (202) 619-0089.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) was established at the Department of Health and Human Services by Congress in 1976 to identify and eliminate fraud, waste, and abuse in the department's programs and to promote efficiency and economy in departmental operations. The OIG carries out this mission through a nationwide program of audits, investigations, and inspections. To reduce fraud and abuse in the federal health care programs, including Medicare and Medicaid, the OIG actively investigates fraudulent schemes that are used to obtain money from these programs and, when appropriate, issues Special Fraud Alerts that identify practices in the health care industry that are particularly vulnerable to abuse.

The OIG issues Special Fraud Alerts based on information it obtains concerning particular fraudulent or abusive practices within the health care industry. Special Fraud Alerts are intended for widespread dissemination to the health care provider community, as well as those charged with administering the Medicare and Medicaid programs. To date, the OIG

has published in the **Federal Register** the texts of 11 previously-issued Special Fraud Alerts.¹

This Special Fraud Alert focuses on section 1834(a)(17) of the Social Security Act, which prohibits suppliers of DME, except under limited circumstances, from making unsolicited telephone calls to Medicare beneficiaries regarding the furnishing of a covered item, and possible telemarketing practices by DME suppliers through the use of independent marketing firms.

II. Special Fraud Alert: Telemarketing by Durable Medical Equipment Suppliers (January 2003)

Section 1834(a)(17) of the Social Security Act prohibits suppliers of durable medical equipment (DME) from making unsolicited telephone calls to Medicare beneficiaries regarding the furnishing of a covered item, except in three specific situations: (i) the beneficiary has given written permission to the supplier to make contact by telephone; (ii) the contact is regarding a covered item the supplier has already furnished the beneficiary; or (iii) the supplier has furnished at least one covered item to the beneficiary during the preceding fifteen months. Section 1834(a)(17)(B) also specifically prohibits payment to a supplier who knowingly submits a claim generated pursuant to a prohibited telephone solicitation. Accordingly, such claims for payment are false and violators are potentially subject to criminal, civil, and administrative penalties, including exclusion from federal health care programs.

Notwithstanding the clear statutory prohibition, the Office of Inspector General has received credible information that some DME suppliers continue to use independent marketing firms to make unsolicited telephone calls to Medicare beneficiaries to market DME. Suppliers cannot do indirectly that which they are prohibited from doing directly. Except in the three specific circumstances described in the statute, section 1834(a)(17) prohibits unsolicited telemarketing by a DME supplier to Medicare beneficiaries, whether contact with a beneficiary is made by the supplier directly or by another party on the DME supplier's behalf. Moreover, a DME supplier is responsible for verifying that marketing activities performed by third parties with whom the supplier contracts or otherwise does business do not involve prohibited activity and that information purchased from such third parties was neither obtained, nor derived, from prohibited activity. If a claim for payment is submitted for items or services generated by a prohibited solicitation, both the DME supplier and the telemarketer are potentially liable for criminal, civil, and administrative penalties for causing the filing of a false claim.

What to do if you Have Information About Fraud and Abuse Against Medicare or Medicaid Programs

If you have information about DME suppliers or telemarketers engaging in any of the activities described above, contact any of the regional offices of the Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, at the following locations:

Regional offices	States served	Telephone
Boston	MA, VT, NH, ME, RI, CT	617-565-2664.
New York	NY, NJ, PR, VI	212-264-1691.
Philadelphia	PA, MD, DE, WV, VA, DC	215-861-4576.
Atlanta	GA, KY, NC, SC, FL, TN, AL	404-562-7603.
Chicago	IL, MN, WI, MI, IN, OH	312-353-2740.
Dallas	TX, NM, OK, AR, LA, MS	214-767-8406.
Kansas City	CO, UT, WY, MT, ND, SD, NE, KS, MO, IA	816 426-4000.
Los Angeles	AZ, NV, So. CA, HI,	714-246-8302.
San Francisco	No. CA, AK, OR, ID, WA, AK	415-437-7961.

¹ All OIG Special Fraud Alerts are available on the Internet at the OIG Web site at <http://oig.hhs.gov/fraud/fraudalerts.html#1>.

Dated: February 3, 2003.

Janet Rehnquist,

Inspector General.

[FR Doc. 03-5004 Filed 3-3-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4150-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

[Docket No. FR-4820-N-05]

Notice of Proposed Information Collection: Comment Request; Previous Participation Certification

AGENCY: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Housing—Federal Housing Commissioner, HUD.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The proposed information collection requirement described below will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act. The Department is soliciting public comments on the subject proposal.

DATES: May 5, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments regarding this proposal. Comments should refer to the proposal by name and/or OMB Control Number and should be sent to: Wayne Eddins, Reports Management Officer, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street, SW., L'Enfant Plaza Building, Room 8003, Washington, DC 20410, or Wayne_Eddins@hud.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Beverly J. Miller, Director, Office of Multifamily Asset Management, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20410, telephone number (202) 708-3730 (this is not a toll-free number).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Department is submitting the proposed information collection to OMB for review, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended).

This Notice is soliciting comments from members of the public and affected agencies concerning the proposed collection of information to: (1) Evaluate whether the proposed collection is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (3) Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to

be collected; and (4) Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond; including the use of appropriate automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

This Notice also lists the following information:

Title of Proposal: Previous Participation Certification.

OMB Control Number, if applicable: 2502-0118.

Description of the need for the information and proposed use: This information is necessary to ensure that responsible individuals and organizations participate in HUD's multifamily housing programs. The information will be used to evaluate participants' previous participation in government programs and ensure that the past record is acceptable prior to granting approval to participate in HUD's multifamily housing programs. The collection of this information will be 100 percent automated.

Agency form numbers, if applicable: HUD-2530.

Estimation of the total numbers of hours needed to prepare the information collection including number of respondents, frequency of response, and hours of response: The estimated number of respondents is 4,300; the frequency of responses is 1 unless additional actions require additional submissions; estimated time to gather and enter the information into the automated system is estimated to be 30 minutes per submission, and the estimated total annual burden hours are 2,150.

Status of the proposed information collection: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Authority: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C., Chapter 35, as amended.

Dated: February 24, 2003.

John C. Weicher,

Assistant Secretary for Housing—Federal Housing Commissioner.

[FR Doc. 03-4939 Filed 3-3-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4210-27-M

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

[Docket No. FR-4820-N-06]

Notice of Proposed Information Collection: Comment Request; Funds Authorizations for Reserve for Replacements/Residual Receipts Funds

AGENCY: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Housing—Federal Housing Commissioner, HUD.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The proposed information collection requirement described below will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act. The Department is soliciting public comments on the subject proposal.

DATES: *Comments Due Date:* May 5, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments regarding this proposal. Comments should refer to the proposal by name and/or OMB Control Number and should be sent to: Wayne Eddins, Reports Management Officer, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street, SW., L'Enfant Plaza Building, Room 8003, Washington, DC 20410, or Wayne_Eddins@hud.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: William Hill, Director, Policy and Participation Standards Division, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20410, telephone number (202) 708-3730 (this is not a toll-free number).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Department is submitting the proposed information collection to OMB for review, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended).

This Notice is soliciting comments from members of the public and affected agencies concerning the proposed collection of information to: (1) Evaluate whether the proposed collection is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (3) Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond; including the use of appropriate automated