



**Strengthening Oklahoma's Safety Net,
One Community At A Time**

Board Bulletin

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Information Collection and Assessment

The Health Center Program Expectations, as outlined in BPHC Policy Information Notice (PIN) 98-23, state, "The quality of every decision made in health centers is critically dependent upon the availability of accessible, accurate, relevant and current information." Page 7 of the assessment tool entitled *BPHC New Start Protocol* deals with *Finance and Management Information Systems* - the guiding forces to information collection necessary for making sound operational decisions. Health center boards must develop policies and procedures that foster aggressive information collection and review. They must plan for equipment (hardware) and applications (software) that meet the health center compliance and performance needs. CHC boards must also budget for appropriate training of staff to fully utilize the systems once they are established.

Finance and Management Information Systems Questions

◆ **Fees and Billing-** While the questions do not specifically address the board, the intent is to ensure that CHCs are doing everything possible to maximize reimbursement. *For every federal grant \$1 received, healthy CHCs should be bringing in \$3-\$4 more from other sources* (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid, third-party payors, self-pay). Two questions on the assessment tool reference board-approved procedures: *Is a procedure in place to identify and find missing encounter forms on a timely basis? What is the billing procedure?* Boards should review the page of questions designed to help identify problem areas and ensure proper billing systems are in place for optimum fiscal performance.

◆ **Sliding Fee Scale Discount (SFSD) Program**

Does the center have a written policy for the Sliding Fee Scale Discount (SFSD) program (Y/N) including discount scale based on current Federal Poverty Standards (Y/N), eligibility standards (Y/N), application form (Y/N)? Does the SFSD application define family/household in accordance with Board policy (Y/N)? Boards should develop SFSD policy that documents household size, age, and income. SFSD application forms must have a place for a signature and a statement regarding false information. CHCs should post signage announcing the availability of discounts for low-income persons. CHCs should also work with other providers so that SFSD patients can receive discounted services elsewhere if not provided at the health center (e.g., lab, x-ray or pharmacy).

◆ **Financial Management**

Are monthly financial statements prepared for review by the Finance Committee and Board (Y/N)? Do the last three monthly financial statements reveal trends (Y/N)? Does the center have written purchasing and cash disbursement policies [approved by the board] (Y/N)? Is provider productivity being tracked and reported on a regular basis (Y/N)? Boards are held accountable as stewards of 330 funding and should diligently review the monthly statements to ensure financial stability and future growth.

◆ **Management Information Systems (MIS)**

Are the reports available to meet management needs (Y/N), Board of Director needs (Y/N), Clinical Staff (Y/N), Billing Staff (Y/N)? Are [board-approved] MIS policies documented (Y/N)? Do they address data collection (Y/N), organization (Y/N), storage (Y/N), maintenance (Y/N), security (Y/N), presentation (Y/N), external access (Y/N), and transfer of information (Y/N)? While HRSA requires CHCs to have MIS that will allow for Uniform Data System (UDS) reporting, there are many other reasons to have sound information collection systems in place. Health centers can monitor performance by using both internal and external benchmarks. MIS should be used as a tool to track trends, support management decisions and develop strategies. Health centers must invest the dollars necessary to effectively generate and use data for successfully managing operations and delivering high quality patient care to the community.

To review the *BPHC New Start Protocol* document, visit the 'CHC Boards' section of www.okpca.org.

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