

SMALL RURAL HOSPITAL IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM (SHIP) TIP SHEET FOR SHIP PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The purpose of this document is to provide **suggestions** for SHIP Coordinators in administering their programs. These are **not** rules or requirements, but rather a collection of current practices based upon a survey of SHIP Coordinators. The tips have been organized based upon the progression of the SHIP application: ***Application Planning, Tracking/Monitoring Investments and Incomplete Expenditure of Project Funds***. Each section also includes tips for network/consortia where applicable. This Tip Sheet can be used in conjunction with other supporting material found in the SHIP Coordinator Guide. Finally, these tips are useful in providing guidance for program integrity and ensuring effective monitoring and use of Federal funds.

Application Planning

- Perform an environmental scan between hospital programs to get more background on who is doing what and where there may be in the way of gaps that SHIP could potentially fill
- Encourage networks to provide services for all SHIP hospitals
- Work with Hospital Association to ensure hospitals are spending their SHIP dollars on approved projects
- Hospitals identify appropriate benchmarks and project deliverables; hospital administrators are required to develop a work plan as part of the grant process

Tracking/Monitoring of SHIP Hospital Investments

- Conduct a webinar with participating SHIP hospitals to reinforce expectations at the start of the grant period
- Disperse SHIP funds through annual contracts with the payment to the hospital (or network/consortia) made in make two equal payments:
 - Payment 1: upon execution on this contract
 - Payment 2: upon receipt and approval of mid-year expense and or invoices and final activity report
- Random selection of hospitals for site visits to review purchases, documentation, and progress reporting forms
- Create a project management database or spreadsheet to record projects submitted on the hospital application form. Compare information to what is reported on hospital progress reports to ensure there is a match with the projects. Use the information from the database when developing site visit agendas
- If dealing with a health system, contact system auditors to ensure the grant amounts, contract numbers and projects recorded match what the hospitals report to the system fiscal offices

Network/Consortia specific:

- Require quarterly reporting to SORH on the network project
- Conduct periodic check-ins with the vendor/contractor
- Random selection of network hospitals to review service delivery and network operations

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Hospitals That Do Not Fully Expend Funds/Complete Projects

- Provide reimbursements only following hospital purchases in alignment with approved activities or with prior approval of change. Send phone and email reminders to those not requesting reimbursement within one week of the pre-determined date, explaining they will miss the opportunity for reimbursement and the next year's SHIP funding if purchase receipts and documents are not submitted by the deadline
- Dependent upon circumstances, non-compliant hospitals are ineligible for SHIP funds the following year. No action is taken if a hospital fails to expend funding for one year. If this occurs again in the next grant cycle, the hospital is deemed ineligible to participate in SHIP the following year.
- Hospitals are required to submit a refund check to the SORH if funds are not spent as indicated in the application or with prior approval

Network/Consortia specific:

- Flag contractor as “high risk” and withhold payment until funds are appropriately spent.