NATIONAL
RURAL HEALTH
RESOURCE CENTER

UPDATED Sliding Fee Scale Discount Guide for Critical Access Hospitals and Rural Health Clinics

New information for rural health clinics as well as updates for critical access hospitals

In cooperation with the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, the Sliding Fee Scale Discount Guide for Critical Access Hospitals and Rural Health Clinics has been updated with new information as well and details relevant to rural health clinics.

This guide provides critical access hospital and rural health clinic executives and management teams with concepts and guidance in developing a sliding fee scale discount program. It also assists in gaining an understanding of how sliding fee scale discount programs relate to Internal Revenue Code Section 501(r) compliance and participation in the National Health Service Corps.

The Updated Guide Includes:

- Reasons to implement a sliding fee scale discount program
- *Updated* Consideration for 501(r) compliance
- *Updated* National Health Service Corps participation
- Developing a sliding fee schedule discount program
- Setting policies
- Creating a sliding fee scale discount structure
- Using a sliding fee scale discount program at your organization
- *Updated* Appendix: Example sliding fee schedule

What is a Sliding Fee Scale Discount Program?

A sliding fee scale discount program adjusts the amount an eligible patient owes for health care services based on the patient's ability to pay. Sliding fee scales are a means of addressing the need for equitable access to health service for all individuals.

Why Should My Hospital or Clinic Consider a Sliding Fee Discount Program?

There are several reasons a facility may wish to consider the use of a sliding fee discount program:

- The early detection of collectable amounts on account balances
- Meeting the requirements of Internal Revenue Code Section 501(r), if applicable
- Allowing a facility to become a National Health Services Corps approved site

These and other considerations are described in detail in the Sliding Fee Scale Discount Guide.