



**GEORGIA DEPARTMENT  
OF COMMUNITY HEALTH**

# **NOTICE OF DIRECT AWARD**

**STATE OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH**

**GEORGIA HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION RESEARCH AND EDUCATION  
FOUNDATION (GHAREF)**

**MEDICARE RURAL HOSPITAL FLEXIBILITY (FLEX) PROGRAM  
QUALITY IMPROVEMENT GRANT**

**November 15, 2018**

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## **DIRECT AWARD JUSTIFICATION**

### **GEORGIA HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION RESEARCH AND EDUCATION FOUNDATION (GHAREF) MEDICARE RURAL HOSPITAL FLEXIBILITY (FLEX) PROGRAM QUALITY IMPROVEMENT GRANT**

<b>AGENCY BACKGROUND</b>	<p>The Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) has the responsibility for insuring over ten million people in the State of Georgia; maximizing the State’s health care purchasing power; coordinating health planning for State agencies; and proposing cost-effective solutions for reducing the number of uninsured individuals. Within DCH, the State Office of Rural Health (“SORH”) serves Georgians by improving access to health care in rural and underserved areas designed to improve health status and reduce health disparities.</p>
<b>PROGRAM OVERVIEW</b>	<p>DCH, SORH, provides funding for institutional framework that links small rural communities with State &amp; Federal resources to help develop long-term solutions to rural health problems.</p> <p>The primary objectives include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Empowering communities to strengthen and maintain the best possible health care using existing resources;</li><li>• Providing up-to-date health systems information and technical assistance;</li><li>• Building strong partnerships to meet local and regional needs;</li><li>• Providing incentives to local areas to implement integrated service delivery systems; and</li><li>• Being the single point of contact for all regional issues related to health care.</li></ul> <p>“The Flex Program” refers to the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program, which was created by Congress in 1997. It allows small hospitals to be certified as Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) and offers grants to States to help implement initiatives to strengthen the rural health care infrastructure.</p>
<b>AWARD JUSTIFICATION</b>	<p>The Georgia Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility (Flex) Program, Quality Improvement (QI) Grant, referred to as the Medicare Beneficiary Quality Improvement Project (MBQIP), will focus on improving the quality of health care provided by critical access hospitals (CAHs). MBQIP activities are focused on four (4) different quality domains; 1) Patient Safety, 2) Patient Engagement, 3) Care Transitions, and 4) Outpatient Care. Building and maintaining the participation of all CAHs in MBQIP through these sets of quality measurement and reporting activities are required. The program additionally will provide education and training, comparison data for benchmarking, and technical assistance for data collection and reporting to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Hospital Compare website.</p>
<b>AWARD(S)</b>	<b>TOTAL DIRECT AWARD FUNDS AVAILABLE: \$205,000.00</b>

### **FOR QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS DIRECT AWARD NOTIFICATION**

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