



## Program Information Notice

DATE: December 17, 2010 DOCUMENT NUMBER: ONC-UBT-PIN-002

SUBJECT: Clarification on the enrollment of “new students” for UBT supported training positions

TO: Grantees of the Program of Assistance for University-Based Training (UBT)

The purpose of this Program Information Notice (PIN) is to clarify what defines a “new student” for the purpose of grantee recruitment and enrollment of students for UBT-funded training positions. The UBT funding opportunity announcement (FOA) noted that grant applicants were only to propose recruiting and enrolling “new students,” those not enrolled in a HIT training program as of the FOA publication date. This date—December 17, 2009—was not intended to be a single point in time during the life of the grant program. As the intent of the UBT grant program is to expand the capacity to train and increase the HIT workforce, grantees should continue to only recruit and enroll “new students.” These “new students” would be students **not enrolled** in any program specifically intended to prepare them for a career in HIT at **any institution** of higher education from the date the FOA was published through the end of the UBT grant period; that is, December 17, 2009 through July 1, 2013. Students currently enrolled in a HIT program during these dates are not considered “new students” for the purposes of this grant program and thus are ineligible to be selected to receive financial support through the UBT program.

If you have any questions or require further guidance, please email [university-based-training@hhs.gov](mailto:university-based-training@hhs.gov).

Sincerely,

/David Blumenthal/

David Blumenthal, M.D., M.P.P.  
National Coordinator for Health Information Technology  
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this PIN is to clarify the recruitment of “new students” noted on page 12 of the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) of the “Information Technology Professional in Health Care: Program of Assistance for University-Based Training” (UBT).

## II. APPLICABILITY

This policy is applicable to all UBT grantees and their sub-awardees.

## III. BACKGROUND

The UBT program was launched with the aim to rapidly increase the training capacity of universities and the availability of individuals qualified to meet the anticipated growth of HIT/EHRs that will place even more demands on a insufficient HIT workforce. As such, page 12 of the FOA published on December 17, 2009, noted that “only applications that propose to establish and support additional training positions and to fill them with ‘new students’ will be considered. For the purposes of this program, ‘new students’ are those who, as of the date this FOA was published, were not enrolled in any program specifically intended to prepare trainees for a career in health IT.”

Furthermore, page 14, “Allocation and Use of Funds” states:

“Funding will not be provided to support students in training positions already existing as of the date on which this FOA was published, or for students who were enrolled in a health IT professional training program of the applicant (or, in the case of consortia applications, the lead or any consortium member institution) or any other institution of higher education as of the date on which this FOA was published.”

Additionally, during the post-award phase the following FAQs were released to address the issue of “new students” and the intent of the grant program:

1. **Q-20100427-3:** “Can a student that was enrolled in a health information management bachelor’s program as of December 17, 2009, and who graduates in June, 2010, be supported under this grant if s/he would be training for a different role than that for which the completed bachelor’s program prepares students?”

**Answer:** “No. This program aims to rapidly increase the availability of individuals qualified to serve in specific health information technology professional roles requiring university-based training. Applications proposing to retain students already enrolled in any health information management or health IT professional preparatory programs as of the date this FOA was published, whether at the applicant institution or another, would have been deemed to be non-responsive to this FOA and will not be considered for award. Thus, a student enrolled in such a preparatory program as of the December 17, 2009, publication date of the FOA is not a new student as defined in the FOA and is not eligible for support under this grant.”

2. **Q-20100427-4:** “How should an awardee view a student who was not enrolled in any school as of December 17,2009, but who had previously completed a bachelor’s degree, graduate certificate, or master’s degree in health informatics suited to one role, but who now wants to enroll in a supported training position for another role?”

**Answer:** “As stated in the FOA, this program aims to rapidly increase the availability of individuals qualified to serve in health IT professional roles. Training slots are intended for persons who require this training to initially enter health IT professional practice. Awardees should encourage current health IT professionals wishing to change areas of emphasis or otherwise obtain additional credentials to seek financial support outside this grant.”

#### IV. REQUIREMENT TO RECRUIT NEW STUDENTS

In keeping with intent of the UBT grant program, grantees must use the UBT funds to expand their capacity to recruit and train highly qualified HIT workers to meet the increasing HIT workforce demands. The statement in the FOA that “new students” were those not enrolled in a HIT training program as of the FOA publication date was for purposes of responding to the FOA, and was not intended to be a single point in time for post-award recruitment efforts. The UBT program is an educational and workforce capacity building effort not to be confused with a scholarship program. Therefore, when executing the grant, grantees should continue to only recruit and enroll students **not enrolled** in any program specifically intended to prepare them for a career in HIT at **any institution** of higher education from the date the FOA was published (12/17/2009) through the end of the UBT grant period (07/01/2013). Students currently enrolled in a HIT program during these dates (12/17/09-07/01/13) would not be considered “new students” for the purposes of this grant program.