

## **Effect of Loss of Title VII Funding on Geriatric Medicine Fellowship Positions**

### **ADGAP Status of Geriatric Workforce Study** Elizabeth Bragg, PhD, RN and Gregg Warshaw, MD

In 2005, Congress eliminated Title VII funding for Geriatric Fellowship Training for Physicians, Dentists, and Mental Health Professionals. At that time, 13 geriatric medicine fellowship programs received Title VII funding from the Bureau of Health Professions. We surveyed these 13 programs to determine the impact of the loss of these funds on the future number of physician geriatric medicine fellows they would train. Eleven of the 13 programs completed the survey.

#### First Year Fellows

Funding sources for first-year geriatric fellowship training are different than for training beyond the first year. Sources of first year support include primarily Medicare and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) graduate medical education (GME) funds, with additional support coming from faculty clinical revenue, medical school revenue, other state or federal support (including Title VII), and foundation or private support. Because of the complex funding mechanism of Medicare's GME funding it is difficult to determine how many first year positions are funded by Medicare. However in academic year (AY) 04/05, the VA funded 56% of first year geriatric medicine fellowship positions (167 out of 298).

In the current AY, 06/07 five fellowship programs reported they were affected by the loss of Title VII funding, while seven were not affected. The loss of funding resulted in 7 fewer first year fellows being trained. The five programs affected had previously trained 25 fellows, but had to decrease that number to 18 in 2006. Programs were using HRSA carryover funds, discretionary dollars, private funds, and funds from their affiliated hospital or the VA to lessen the impact of the loss of Title VII funding.

A greater impact is anticipated for the following AY 07/08. Seven programs reported being affected with a loss of 12-13 first year fellows going from 33-34 to 21 fellows. Only one program reported another source of funding (private dollars).

#### Second Year Fellows

Funding sources for fellows beyond the first year of training include the VA's special fellowship program that funds two year fellowship programs at seven [will be 16 sites in AY 07/08] geriatric research, education, and clinical centers (GRECC), private foundations, and federal support from the Bureau of Health Professions (Title VII) and the NIA. There were only 36 second year and beyond fellows in training reported in the AAMC and AMA National Census for AY 04/05.

In the current AY, 06/07, eight of the eleven programs were affected. These programs reported a loss of 11-12 second year fellows going from 17-18 down to 6. Four programs reported using discretionary funds, carryover grant funds, T32 award dollars, and funding from their hospital to support their second year fellows.

In AY 07/08, nine programs plan to reduce the number of second year fellows they will train. These programs project a loss of 11 to 13 fellows, going from training 22-24 to training 10 to 11 fellows. Only one program reported using another source of funding (T32 dollars).