

## RHC Certification: Designation Types & Criteria

Criteria	HPSA Geographic	HPSA low-income population	MUA (hard to meet criteria)	CMS Exception - Essential provider (proposed)	Governor's Designation (proposed for WI)
Rational Service Area	Yes, fed. criteria	Yes, fed. criteria	Yes, fed. criteria	Non-urbanized	Non-urbanized, contiguous
Ratio of population to physician FTEs	≥ 3500: 1 FTE ≥ 3000: 1 FTE for high need *	3000: 1 FTE	Weighted in Index formula	No	≥ 2400: 1 FTE ≥ 2000: 1 FTE high need
% population < 200% federal poverty level		≥ 30%			Above state average
% population < 100% federal poverty level	High need criteria		Weighted in Index formula		
% population 65 or older			Weighted in Index formula		Above state average
% population unemployed					Above state average
% uninsured					Above state average
Infant mortality/low birth weight	High need criteria		Weighted in Index formula		
Serve MA, MR, & sliding fee		Yes		** 'Sole provider', 'Major provider' or 'Specialty clinic' – financial access & major source of care for MA, MR, low- income, uninsured	Yes
Contiguous area providers not available	Yes, fed. criteria	Yes, fed. criteria	No		No

\* HPSA high-need criteria includes: high rates for fertility or infant mortality, high % below 100% of federal poverty, or overutilization of physicians in service area (long wait times, not accepting new patients).

\*\* CMS proposed “essential provider” must provide financial access to Medicaid (MA), Medicare (MR), low-income and uninsured populations (CMS RHC Rule - Federal Register, June 26, 2008)

## **DISCUSSION NOTES:**

Table provides a quick comparison of the different types of shortage designations that can be used for CMS RHC certification

### **Types are across the top of table:**

HPSA - both geographic and low-income population Health Professional Shortage Areas measure shortages of providers.

MUA - a Medically Underserved Area designation is used primarily for eligibility for federal community health center funding. It is based on measuring both provider shortage and population high need criteria to calculate an index of medical underservice score.

CMS proposed exception for an “essential provider” measures geographic and financial access to care.

Governor’s Designation proposed – measures provider shortages and can acknowledge high need population criteria.

### **Major criteria are listed for each designation type:**

Population to primary care physician FTE - This is a standard measure of provider availability or provider shortage. The larger the population size per 1.0 FTE physician, the greater the shortage of providers.

- A staffing ratio of 1500-1800 patients per 1.0 FTE physician was a common benchmark back in the 1980’s.
- You can see that to be eligible for a HPSA designation, the area must have a much more severe shortage of providers (ratio of 3500:1 or 3000:1 for high need or low-income populations), compared to what is proposed for a new Governor’s Designation.

Serve Medicaid, Medicare, and have a sliding fee/discount schedule for low-income and uninsured patients – a criteria that measures financial access to care.

- You can see that the HPSA for low-income populations, the CMS proposed “essential provider” exception, and the proposed Governor’s Designation all have a criteria focused on providing financial access to care.