

Supporting Statement B for:

**Generic Clearance to Conduct Voluntary  
Customer/Partner Surveys (NLM)**

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Name: David Sharlip  
Address: National Library of Medicine  
8600 Rockville Pike  
Bldg. 38A, Rm. B2N12  
Bethesda, MD 20894-3844  
Telephone: 301-402-9680  
Fax: 301-402-0871  
Email: [sharlipd@nlm.nih.gov](mailto:sharlipd@nlm.nih.gov)

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## **B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS**

### **B.1 Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods**

NLM will separately identify the respondent universe for each program whose customers or partners are to be surveyed. Where necessary, developmental activities such as focus groups will be designed to assure inclusion of an appropriate range of customers or partners. Quantitative activities will be carried out using sampling procedures developed to insure appropriate representation of the program universe.

NLM will design surveys to minimize the burden on respondents while obtaining essential information. Projected completion time for NLM surveys should range from 8-16 minutes, with an average completion time of about 12 minutes.

Respondents will be drawn from the users of NLM's on line Web sites and services such as MEDLINEplus, Entrez, and TOXNET. Appropriate probability sampling techniques will be used to select samples.

### **B.2 Procedures for the Collection of Information**

NLM will collect all information in a manner that is consistent with the following principles:

- Appropriate sample sizes will be determined for each activity to assure that burden is minimized while reliable estimates are produced.
- Participation will be fully voluntary, and nonparticipation will have no impact on eligibility for or receipt of future services. If necessary, steps will be taken to ensure unbiased completion of questionnaires by use of third party distribution and receipt by a party not directly involved in provision of the service being assessed.
- Information to be collected will be limited to that needed to assess customer satisfaction. Repeated implementation of quantitative surveys will be at intervals appropriate to measure the impact of changes and to monitor ongoing levels of satisfaction.
- Efforts will be made to obtain the highest possible response rates, given the voluntary nature of the data collection efforts. To the extent feasible, efforts will be made to assess non-response bias.

### **B.3 Methods to Maximize Response Rates and Deal with Non-response**

Consistent with sound survey methodology, the design of each quantitative survey will include approaches to maximize response rates, while retaining the voluntary nature of the effort. The response rate for the majority of the surveys conducted under this clearance is expected to range between 80-85%.

The survey population will be sampled via multiple modalities. When reaching out to educators, the invitation to voluntarily participate in the survey may be distributed via direct emails to teachers, school visits, and flyers and promotional information sent to principals. Typically, surveys are to be kept short and internal reviews will be conducted to ensure that all collection instruments only ask questions that will provide useful, actionable information. The length of the survey instruments will be transparent, stating in the introduction the total number of questions and the average expected completion time. Several rounds of survey question reviews will be conducted to maintain the clarity and comprehensibility of the collection instrument and to avoid participants' dropping-out during the actual response process. When a survey invitation is conducted via links from a web site, the invitation will appear on multiple pages as well as the home page to better address visitors who enter at various points via search engine referrals.

### **B.4 Test of Procedures or Methods to be Undertaken**

It is anticipated that most surveys will use a formal pre-test of the instrument to assess if the proposed survey is understandable, directions are easy to follow and if respondent response times (and burden hours) are within expected estimates. All pre-testing will be carried out at a level and in a manner consistent with the specific survey.

### **B.5 Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects and Individuals Collecting and/or Analyzing Data**

Each program will obtain input from in-house staff that are skilled in survey research methodology and information systems technology. Where necessary, NLM will retain the consultative services of DHHS statisticians or from contracted services.