

Health Care Workforce Strategic Plan Advisory Group - Minutes

Wednesday, July 31, 2024, 10:00 AM

Attendees: Wendy Trafton, Heri Troche, Suzanne Tremblay, Elizabeth Cote, Jessa Barnard, Maureen Hebert, Anne Bilodeau, Patrick Gallivan, Jill Olson, Johanna Beliveau, Jerry Baake, Betsy Hassan, Mary Anne Sheahan, Rebecca Kapsalis, Beth Demers, Jessica

General Updates:

Suzanne reviewed two forecasted HRSA workforce related grant opportunities and updated the group regarding a WORC grant the Northern AHEC team applied for:

- [Rural Residency Planning & Development](#) : Estimated Post Date Nov. 19th
Provides start-up funding to improve and expand access to health care in rural areas
- [Rural Northern Border Behavioral Health Workforce Program](#): Estimated Post Dec. 3rd
The purpose is to strengthen the behavioral health workforce in rural Northern Border service areas through supporting the recruitment and retention of behavioral health care providers.
- **Northern AHEC**: Awards in September & State HCWD has an Advisory Role
Work Opportunity for Rural Communities Grant Step Up to Health Careers: will develop and deliver employability and technical skills training to underserved youth and young adults. The goal is to uplift the unemployed & underemployed with jobs and career pathways in health care.

Legislative Discussion Round Robin:

VNA's:

- Still building agenda; have a board meeting this week
- Supports further funding of the various loan repayment programs; they really help
- Supports critical occupations program
- Need to continue trying to fund state strategies for Health Care Workforce

Vermont Talent Pipeline:

- Seed funding for health care providers who want to create career pathways for nursing roles or health care technician roles that are in high demand
 - A member noted: It is hard for small home health agencies to build these individually; looking to develop strategies so each organization doesn't need to do that level of administrative lift. Something that is highly needed but there are no administrative people to write grants or run the program.
 - Another noted: Cedar Hill has a talented team to support best practice. We should think about sharing best practices for grant piece as well and how to support smaller organizations

- Could include original partnership between hospital, FQHC, HH, SNF/Res Care

UVMMC

- Priorities are still nursing workforce pathways and continued funding streams
- The Nurse Preceptor Program: though incomplete, is going well for the medical center. The limitations are that the grant only recognizes VT medical students. Would like to expand that program beyond VT and identify other ways to incentivize the working nurse workforce.
- Nursing apprenticeship licensure – working with the BON on an apprentice scope of practice for nursing students. The body of work came from the AL board of nursing. MA passed it last year and it's being implemented now.

Also, UVMHN

- Would love to see focus on other tech positions. Need RAD techs, Med techs, lab techs, LNAs, prep for respiratory therapies and other therapies.
 - Mary Anne - We have new hiring and vacancy data from all hospitals for Rad Techs, Med Techs, Surgical Tech, OR Tech, Pharmacy Tech, Resp Therapy...
- Strategy: requiring all high schools to offer Health Care Classes and Licensure for LNA's & MA's

Vermont Medical Society

- Build data on how it is working
- Family Residency Program (LHP – would like to hear from them about that)

AHEC

- Funding specific to workforce recruitment and retention
- Expand network on early pipeline grades 5-12 (need more funding for full market saturation)
- Have infrastructure and curriculum; but need more money
- More funding for educational loan repayment

Someone from UVMMC mentioned:

- [Colorado Nursing Center](#) – when thinking about legislative priorities, think about this resource.

Representing Dentistry:

- Supports request for funding as primary way of recruiting dentists
- Looking to build a dental clinic and partnering with a Detroit dental school; Would go to Detroit for 2 years and then to VT for 2 years; would go to independent private practices and FQHCs. Hope to keep 5-6 students from each graduating class. The clinic would be Medicaid-funded so would support access to care. Hope to launch in the spring 2027.

CCV:

- VTSU – priorities are loan repayment; seeding pipeline programs; interested in administrative support for smaller groups. All of these are on our mind as well as Tech. Have a pharmacy tech as well that leads to certification.
- Encouraged the group to reach out with ideas.

Other Discussion: Workgroups

- A workgroup is more useful for things that require a detailed operational discussion
 - Topical and targeted efforts like how to create an administrative efficiency or how to communicate- could be done in this group. Associations are not operational.
- Some agreed that a subgroup could focus on certain topic areas and could meet on months that this group isn't meeting.
- It may depend on the topic area; group could decide how often they meet
- Several people mentioned loan repayment; it would be helpful to do a lay of the land and where there are gaps going into the legislative session.
 - Financial Incentives Subgroup: Scholarships, loan repayment, loan forgiveness
 - VSAC has a workforce opportunity loan program that is employer sponsored (for the healthcare industry).

Meeting Wrap & Next Steps:

- The next committee meeting will be held on Wednesday September 25, 2024, at 10am.
- It was requested that we send out funding opportunities prior to the meetings.
- Was asked to send calendar invites for the rest of the year
- Based on our discussion- Suzanne will redesign the workgroup poll and send as follow up
- Noted that a collaborated effort between VNA's for Nursing Pipeline would be welcomed
- Agenda item requests
 - Get full picture past AHEC
 - Mary Anne– has data for an upcoming meeting
 - Review Financial Incentives
 - LHP Residency Program

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Suzanne Tremblay

Health Care Workforce Development Director