Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Workforce Development Programs

Connecting students to health careers, health professionals to underserved communities, and communities to better health.

A Budget Blueprint for Fiscal Year 2021

The Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition (HPNEC) is an alliance of 80 national organizations dedicated to training a health care workforce that meets the needs of all patients.
Why We Need the Title VII and Title VIII Programs

The U.S. Census Bureau projects that by 2045, the population will grow by over 18%, one in five Americans will be over age 65, and more than half the country will come from a racial or ethnic minority group.1 As our population grows, ages, and becomes increasingly diverse, our health professions workforce must adapt to the ever-changing health needs of patients from all backgrounds in communities across the country.

According to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), 14,392 primary care, 10,258 oral health, and over 6,250 mental health practitioners would be needed to eliminate federally designated Health Professional Shortage Areas, which are home to over 117 million patients across the country.2 The impact of these shortages is often worse for patients in rural areas or with low socioeconomic status, who are more likely to lack access to quality care.3

The Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs, which are authorized under the Public Health Service Act and administered by the HRSA, increase the supply, distribution, and diversity of the health care workforce, reaching over 400,000 direct participants.4 These programs improve access to and quality of care for vulnerable populations — including children and families living on low incomes and in rural and underserved communities. In addition, as we face ever-changing public health threats impacting patients across the country, such as substance use disorder epidemics, continued investment in Titles VII and VIII programs is essential to addressing the health challenges of today and the future.

HPNEC recommends $790 million for the HRSA Title VII and Title VIII programs in FY 2021.
Cultivate and Retain a Diverse and Culturally Competent Health Workforce

Title VII and Title VIII programs play an essential role in improving the diversity of the health workforce and connecting students to health careers by supporting recruitment, education, training, and mentorship opportunities. Inclusive and diverse education and training experiences expose providers to backgrounds and perspectives other than their own and heighten cultural awareness in health care, resulting in benefits for all patients. These programs include:

**Centers of Excellence:** Provides grants for mentorship and training programs. In academic year (AY) 2018-19, this program supported over 1,300 trainees, of which 99% were underrepresented minorities and 64% were from financially or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds.

**Health Career Opportunity Program:** Invests in K-16 health outreach and education programs through partnerships between health professions schools and local community-based organizations. In AY 2018-19, over 4,000 students from rural and disadvantaged backgrounds were exposed to the health professions pipeline.

**Nursing Workforce Diversity:** Provides grants to institutions to help recruit and retain students from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds. In AY 2018-19, the program supported more than 11,000 students, including 5,405 students who graduated or completed their nursing program, with approximately 46% of the training sites located in underserved communities and 37% in primary care settings.

**Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students:** Grants scholarships for health professions students from minority and/or socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. In AY 2018-19, 69% of recipients intended to work or pursue additional training in rural and medically underserved communities, and 50% planned to practice in a primary care setting.

**Faculty Loan Repayment:** Provides loan repayment awards to retain minority health professions faculty in academic settings to serve as mentors to the next generation of providers. In fiscal year (FY) 2019, 22 underrepresented minority faculty participated in the program.
Strengthen the Primary Care Workforce

Title VII programs fortify our nation's primary care workforce by training future clinicians, teachers, and researchers who practice as general pediatricians, general internists, family medicine practitioners, and physician assistants. These programs include:

**Primary Care Training and Enhancement (PCTE):** Supports training programs for physicians and physician assistants to encourage practice in primary care, promote leadership in health care transformation, and enhance teaching in community-based settings. In AY 2018-19, PCTE grantees trained over 13,000 individuals at nearly 1,000 sites, with 61% in medically underserved communities and 30% in rural areas.

**Medical Student Education:** Supports the primary care workforce by expanding training for medical students to become primary care clinicians, targeting institutions of higher education in states with the highest primary care workforce shortages. Through grants, the program develops partnerships among institutions, federally recognized tribes, and community-based organizations to train medical students to provide care that improves health outcomes for those living on tribal reservations or in rural and underserved communities.
Enhance Interdisciplinary Care and Community-Based Linkages

By assessing the needs of the local communities they serve, Title VII programs can fill gaps in the workforce and increase access to care for all populations. The programs emphasize interprofessional education and training, bringing together knowledge and skills across disciplines to provide effective, efficient, and coordinated care. These programs test educational innovations, respond to changing delivery systems and models of care, and timely address emerging health issues in their communities.

**Area Health Education Centers (AHECs):** Respond to local health needs and serve as a crucial link between academic training programs and community-based outreach programs. In AY 2018-19, AHECs supported 192,000 pipeline program participants, provided over 34,000 clinical training rotations for health professions trainees, and placed over 92,000 trainees in rural and underserved training sites.

**Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training:** Addresses the behavioral health needs of local communities. Grantees partnered with 2,355 training sites in AY 2018-19, providing over 1.3 million hours of behavioral health services to patients. Over 20% of these sites offered opioid use treatment services, and 49% provided substance use treatment services.

**Mental and Behavioral Health:** Funds training programs to expand access to mental and behavioral health services for vulnerable and underserved populations. In AY 2018-19, the Graduate Psychology Education program partnered with 184 sites to provide clinical training experiences for psychology students. Of these sites, 48% offered substance use disorder treatment services, and 38% offered telehealth services.

**Geriatric Programs:** Train practitioners across the provider continuum through interprofessional and team-based care to address gaps in health care for older adults. The Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program provided 1,342 unique continuing education courses to 187,955 faculty and practicing professionals in AY 2018-19, including 445 courses on Alzheimer’s and dementia-related diseases.
Support a Robust and Diverse Nursing Workforce

The Title VIII nursing workforce development programs provide federal support to address all aspects of nursing workforce demands, including education, practice, recruitment, and retention, with a focus on the health care needs of rural and underserved communities.

Advanced Nursing Education Programs: Supports innovative clinical and experiential training for students in primary care, anesthesia, nurse midwifery, and other specialty care. In AY 2018-19, grantees partnered with nearly 4,000 health care delivery sites and supported over 9,000 nursing students, including 3,125 students who graduated that year.

Nurse Education Practice, Quality, and Retention: Helps meet shifting demand in health care through innovative programs. This included the training of over 2,500 individuals by Interprofessional Collaborative Practice Program (IPCP) grantees in AY 2018-19. Of IPCP clinical training sites, 77% were in medically underserved communities and 77% were in primary care settings.

Nurse Corps: Recruits nursing students and nurses entering into practice to health care facilities facing a critical shortage of nurses. In FY 2019, 58% of Nurse Corps loan repayment program participants extended their service commitment for an additional year, and 96% of Nurse Corps scholarship awardees were pursuing their baccalaureate or advanced practice degree.

Nurse Faculty Loan Program: Supports graduate nursing students committed to serving as faculty to educate the next generation of nurses, including 2,277 trainees from 80 institutions in AY 2018-19.
Bolster the Public Health Workforce

Title VII programs support education and training in public health and preventive medicine to help protect our nation’s public health.

Public Health Workforce Training Centers: Provide clinical training and public health residency experiences. Public health student trainees partnered with 241 sites supporting more than 304 clinical training experiences in AY 2018-19, with 75% of these training sites located in medically underserved communities and 25% in rural areas.

Sustain Our Oral Health Workforce:

As our nation faces a shortage of oral health professionals in rural and other underserved geographic areas, Title VII grants assist in expanding the dental primary care workforce in general, pediatric, and public health dentistry.

Oral Health Training: Increases access to high-quality dental health services in rural and underserved communities through grants, faculty loan repayment, and training programs. These funds supported over 11,000 oral health professionals in AY 2018-19.

Assess Our Nation’s Health Workforce

Title VII grantees provide high-quality projections and analysis to ensure a workforce sufficient in size and skill to meet the nation’s changing health care needs.

Workforce Assessment: Provides funding for the National Center for Health Workforce Analysis as well as grants to seven Health Workforce Research Centers across the country that perform and disseminate research and data analysis on health workforce issues of national importance.


Additional References


Members of the Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition

- Academic Pediatric Association
- Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine
- American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry
- American Academy of Family Physicians
- American Academy of PAs
- American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Association for Dental Research
- American Association of Colleges of Nursing
- American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
- American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
- American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine
- American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training
- American Association of Nurse Practitioners
- American College of Cardiology
- American College of Osteopathic Internists
- American College of Physicians
- American College of Preventive Medicine
- American Dental Association
- American Dental Education Association
- American Federation of Teachers
- American Geriatrics Society
- American Medical Student Association
- American Music Therapy Association
- American Neurological Association
- American Occupational Therapy Association
- American Organization for Nursing Leadership
- American Pediatric Society
- American Psychiatric Association
- American Psychological Association
- American Public Health Association
- American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science
- American Society for Clinical Pathology
- American Society for Reproductive Medicine
- American Surgical Association
- Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries
- Association of American Indian Physicians
- Association of American Medical Colleges
- Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
- Association of Chairs of Departments of Physiology
- Association of Chiropractic Colleges
- Association of Departments of Family Medicine
- Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors
- Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
- Association of Minority Health Professions Schools
- Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
- Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
- Association of Schools Advancing Health Professions
- Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry
- Association of University Professors of Neurology
- Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
- College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists
- Council of Graduate Schools
- Council on Social Work Education
- Eldercare Workforce Alliance
- Emergency Nurses Association
- Health Professions Network
- Hematology/Oncology Pharmacist Association
- International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium
- National AHEC Organization
- National Association for Geriatric Education
- National Association of Geriatric Education Centers
- National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
- National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
- National Athletic Trainers’ Association
- National Council for Diversity in the Health Professions
- National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
- National Hispanic Medical Association
- National League of Nursing
- National Medical Association
- National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties
- North American Primary Care Research Group
- Oncology Nursing Society
- Pediatric Policy Council
- Physician Assistant Education Association
- Pre-Health Dreamers
- Society for Pediatric Research
- Society of General Internal Medicine
- Society of Teachers of Family Medicine
- Student National Medical Association