

## **Health Resources and Services Administration Workforce Development Programs**

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

A Budget Blueprint for Fiscal Year 2025

The Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition (HPNEC) is an alliance of more than 90 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 Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Title VII Health Professions and Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs are essential to shaping, educating, and bolstering the health workforce at all stages. These programs have proven successful in recruiting, training, and supporting nurses, physicians and physician assistants, geriatricians, mental health providers, and public health professionals and other health professionals who are critical to addressing country's evolving health care needs and future unexpected crises.

Our nation's health workforce carried us through overlapping public health emergencies, despite health professional shortages, provider burnout, and an overcapacity health system. Simultaneously, the pandemic has underscored the need to increase and continuously reshape our health workforce. The HRSA Title VII and Title VIII programs have helped the nation's health workforce combat overlapping public health emergencies, despite the challenges and burden placed on grantees.

Health workforce shortages, especially in critical areas, have highlighted the pervasive health inequities facing rural, urban, and underserved communities and led to widening gaps in care for our most vulnerable patients, including an aging population that requires more health care services. The Title VII and Title VIII programs educate current and future providers to serve the nation's ever-growing needs, while preparing providers for the health care demands of tomorrow. Furthermore, these programs have led to increases in the number of students from rural and historically marginalized communities enrolling in health professions schools and attracting health professionals more likely to treat underserved patients. A health care workforce that comes from and reflects the communities they serve improves access to care, patient satisfaction, and health professions learning environments.<sup>1</sup> Studies show that Title VII and Title VIII programs increase the number of underrepresented students enrolled in health professions schools, heighten awareness of factors contributing to health disparities, and attract health professionals more likely to serve in underserved areas.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, the HRSA health professions and nursing workforce programs advance new innovative delivery systems and models of care — for example, promoting interprofessional teams, training providers with simulation-based technology, and integrating behavioral health and maternal health services with primary care. Whether developing a new curriculum to address emerging public health crises or collaborating with community leaders in educating providers to deliver personalized, community-centered care, the Title VII and Title VIII programs help ensure our health workforce is at the forefront of meeting all patients' health needs.

**HPNEC recommends \$1.51 billion for the HRSA Title VII and Title VIII programs in FY 2025.**

**Cultivate and Retain a Health Workforce from Rural and Underrepresented Communities:**

Title VII and Title VIII programs play an essential role in connecting students from rural, underrepresented, and disadvantaged backgrounds to health careers by supporting recruitment, education, training, and mentorship opportunities. Innovative and varied education and training experiences expose providers to backgrounds and perspectives other than their own. These experiences also heighten awareness and understanding in health care, resulting in benefits for all patients.<sup>2</sup> These programs include:

*Centers of Excellence (COE)*: Provides grants for mentorship and training programs. In academic year (AY) 2022-23, this program supported over 4,512 trainees, of which 77% were underrepresented minorities. Out of the students who intended to apply to a health professions school after completing a COE structured program, 56% had applied and been admitted into a health professions program one year later.

*Health Career Opportunity Program (HCOP)*: Invests in K-16 health outreach and education programs through partnerships between health professions schools and local community-based organizations. In AY 2022-2023, 4,805 students went through a health career opportunity program and were exposed to the health professions pathway program. One year later, 63% of the program alumni had both applied and been accepted to a health professions training program. HCOP awardees also partnered with 21 health care delivery sites to provide clinical training experiences.

*Nursing Workforce Diversity*: Provides grants to institutions to help recruit and retain students and increases opportunities for those individuals underrepresented in the nursing profession. The goal of this program is to build a high-quality nursing workforce that reflects the communities they serve. Such was the case in AY 2021-2022, where 65% of the graduates of this program worked or trained in medically underserved areas one year later. In AY 2022-23, the program trained 2,033 students.

*Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students (SDS)*: Grants scholarships for health professions students from minority and/or socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. In AY 2022-23, this program provided scholarships to 2,613 students from disadvantaged backgrounds. A total of 1,236 SDS trainees graduated, including 471 nursing students, 299 behavioral health students, 39 allied health students. After a one-year follow-up, 59 percent of respondents currently work in medically underserved communities and 30 percent currently work in primary care settings.

*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) 2023, 41 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 2022-23, PCTE grantees trained over 7,388 individuals. As of January 2023, 81% alumni were employed in Health Professional Shortage Areas, 36% at a National Health Service Corps approved site, and 27% of trainees receiving a portion of their clinical training in an underserved area. A total of 2,113 completed the Primary Care Training and Enhancement Program, including 1,052 physician assistant students and 383 physicians in

residency or fellowship programs. Medical students will experience clinical rotations in rural and underserved settings where they can practice incorporating behavioral health into primary care service delivery.

*Medical Student Education (MSE)*: Established in FY 2019, this program 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. In AY 2022-23, awardees of this program trained nearly 3680 students and a total of 806 medical students graduated. 45% of these graduates went to primary care residencies and 44% matched to residencies where they trained in HPSAs.

*Pediatric Subspecialty Loan Repayment Program*: Designed to increase access to care for children with special health care and mental health needs by providing loan repayment to pediatric subspecialists and child mental health professionals who agree to serve in underserved areas. Millions of children reside 1.5 hours or more from access to needed specialty care.

### **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 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 2022-23, AHECs supported over 378,853 pipeline program participants, provided over 29,112 28,000 clinical training rotations for health professions trainees. 64% of these training sites were in underserved communities, 41% were in rural areas, and 36 % were in primary care settings.

*Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training (BHWET)*: Addresses the behavioral health needs of local communities. Over 4,739 behavioral health professionals and 2,261 behavioral health paraprofessionals were trained through the program in AY 2022-23. 75% of these sites were in underserved communities. At the end of the academic year, 200,000 patient encounters occurred in medically underserved communities, and 2.9 million hours of patient care occurred in medically underserved areas.

*Mental and Behavioral Health*: Funds training programs to expand access to mental and behavioral health services for vulnerable and underserved populations. In AY 2022-23, the Graduate Psychology Education program trained 414 graduate-level students in practicum, internships, or post-doctoral residency programs in psychology. At the end of the academic year, 64% of respondents were already working in medically underserved communities, and 36% were already working in a primary care setting. Upon follow-up after a year, 55% of respondents work or train in medically underserved communities.

*Geriatric Programs*: Includes two programs, the Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP) and the Geriatrics Academic Career Award (GACA) program (the Geriatrics Programs). GWEP educates and trains the primary care and geriatrics workforces to care for older adults in integrated geriatrics and

primary care models and partners with community-based organizations to address gaps in health care for older adults, promote age-friendly health systems and dementia-friendly communities, and address the social determinants of health. Select Geriatrics Program outcomes included 410,643 individuals receiving unique continuing education courses to over 1.3 million health care professionals, students, patients, and caregivers in AY 2022-23, including 529 courses on Alzheimer's and dementia-related diseases. GACA supports junior faculty who will provide interprofessional clinical training and become leaders in academic geriatrics. The GACA program provides awardees with the skills to lead health care transformation in a variety of settings including rural settings, medically underserved settings, and age-friendly settings that provide interprofessional training in clinical geriatrics. In FY 2023, the Geriatrics Programs supported 280,242 patients and caregivers, 81,641 health professionals, and 48,760 other professionals.

### **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 qualified nursing students in primary care, anesthesia, nurse midwifery, and other specialty care. In AY 2022-23, the program funded training for 8,017 advanced practice nurses. A total of 3,474 nurses completed their training program or graduated from a nursing degree program, including 1,322 nurse anesthetist and 1,552 nurse practitioners among others. This program resulted in over 2 million hours of patient care with just under 900,000 patient encounters in medically underserved areas. 72% of these nurses worked in underserved areas after graduation, many of whom are hired by the grantee or partner organization, and 60% remaining in a medically underserved community and/or rural area one year after graduation.

One of the Advanced Nursing Education programs, the Advanced Nursing Education Workforce (ANEW) Program also supported specialized training to meet national needs, including clinical traineeships in rural and medically underserved communities. From AY 2017-2022, 6,906 advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) graduated ANEW supported degree programs and entered the workforce.

*Nurse Education Practice, Quality, and Retention (NEPQR):* Helps meet shifting demand in health care through innovative programs that enhance nursing education, improve patient care, increase nurse retention and strengthen the nursing workforce. This included the training of 10,342 nurses and nursing students, including 2,255 participants who completed clinical training in high-need areas and community-based setting in AY 2022-23. Further, this funding helped develop 853 courses, workshops, simulations, clinical rotations, and practicums on several topics including primary care and evidence-based practice. NEPQR programs educated 42,465 nurses and nursing students through these curricula.

*Nurse Corps:* Recruits nursing students and nurses entering practice to health care facilities facing a critical shortage of nurses. In FY 2023, 41% of Nurse Corps loan repayment program participants extended their service commitment for an additional year, 89% were retained in service for up to two years after the completion of their service commitment, and 78% of Nurse Corps scholarship awardees are 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. This program also encourages APRNs to serve as preceptors within an academic-practice partnership framework in an effort to expand clinical training opportunities for nursing students. In AY 2022-23, awardees provided loans to 2,746 advanced practice nursing students. In AY 2021-2022, 74% of respondents were in faculty roles one year later.

### **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 (PHTC)*: Provide clinical training and public health residency experiences. In Academic Year (AY) 2022-2023, the PHTC Program supported 10 regional PHTCs, reached over 321,765 public health professionals through 2,957 unique continuing education courses. Upon one-year follow up, 43% of respondents currently work in or are pursuing further training in medically underserved communities, 41% currently work in public health or prevention-focused settings, and 12% currently work at state, local and Tribal health departments.

### **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 5,540 oral health professionals in AY 2022-2023. Upon follow-up, nearly 20% of alumni of the Postdoctoral Dental program were already working in primary care settings and 69% were already working in medically underserved communities. In FY 2023 there were 111 Awardees that provided 1.5 million patient encounters in medically underserved areas.

### **Supporting 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. Title VII grantees also implement evidence-informed strategies to help the health care workforce respond to workplace stressors, better endure hardships, reduce burnout, and foster healthy workplace environments that promote mental health and resilience.

*Workforce Assessment*: Provides funding for the National Center for Health Workforce Analysis as well as grants to nine Health Workforce Research Centers across the country that perform and disseminate research and data analysis on health workforce issues of national importance, including (but not limited to) occupations in oral health, long term services and supports, allied health, behavioral health, emerging health workforce issues, public health, and health equity in health workforce education and training.

*Supporting the Mental Health of the Health Professions Workforce:* Provides funding to establish or expand evidence-informed programs dedicated to promoting mental and behavioral health among their employees or members who are working on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic. In AY 2021-22, 52,727 health professionals, health support staff, public safety officers, medical residents, and students participated in burnout prevention and provider resiliency programs through the Health and Public Safety Workforce Resiliency Training Program (HPSWRTP) and the Promoting Resilience and Mental Health Among Health Professional Workforce (PRMHW) Programs.

### **Members of the Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition**

*Note:* Data not otherwise cited are from: Health Resources and Services Administration. Department of Health and Human Services Fiscal Year 2025 Justification of Estimates for Appropriations Committees. [budget-justification-fy2025.pdf \(hrsa.gov\)](https://www.hrsa.gov/budget-justification-fy2025.pdf)

#### Additional References

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