State Policy Levers to Address Workforce Shortages

Sydne Enlund, Senior Policy Specialist, National Conference of State Legislatures

Rural Health Policy Roundtable – Southeastern States

April 23, 2022
Strengthening the legislative institution
How NCSL Strengthens Legislatures

**Policy Research**
NCSL provides trusted, nonpartisan policy research and analysis

**Connections**
NCSL links legislators and staff with each other and with experts

**Training**
NCSL delivers training tailored specifically for legislators and staff

**State Voice in D.C.**
NCSL represents and advocates on behalf of states on Capitol Hill

**Meetings**
NCSL meetings facilitate information exchange and policy discussions
Increasing Access to Primary Health Care

- Health Care Providers
- Access to Hospitals and Clinics
- Broadband Access
- Quality
- Coverage Status
- Health Care Delivery
- Health Care Costs
- Premiums and Deductibles
• Population growth expected to grow by 25 million.
• Increased life expectancy creates additional need for health care workers to care for the older population.
• In the coming years, 25% of physicians will be over the age of 60.
• During the COVID-19 pandemic, 20% of people left health care workforce positions.
Shortage designations, like Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs), identify an area, population or facility experiencing a shortage of health care services.

HPSAs have a shortage of primary, dental or mental health care providers.

Three scoring criteria are common across all HPSA disciplines:

- Population to provider ratio
- Percent of population below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
- Travel time to the nearest source of care outside the HPSA designation area
Primary Care Health Professional Shortages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Primary Care HPSAs</th>
<th>Percent of Need Met</th>
<th>Practitioners Needed to Remove HPSA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>643</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>1402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>1505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>416</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

https://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/primary-care-health-professional-shortage-areas-hpsas
Georgia – Primary Care HPSAs, by County, 2022

Source: data.HRSA.gov, January 2022
Kentucky – Primary Care HPSAs, by County, 2022

Source: data.HRSA.gov, January 2022
North Carolina – Primary Care HPSAs, by County, 2022

Source: data.HRSA.gov, January 2022
South Carolina – Primary Care HPSAs, by County, 2022

Source: data.HRSA.gov, January 2022
Tennessee – Primary Care HPSAs, by County, 2022

Source: data.HRSA.gov, January 2022
Virginia – Primary Care HPSAs, by County, 2022

Source: data.HRSA.gov, January 2022
Expanding and Retaining the Health Workforce

Licensing
- Interstate Medical Licensure Compact
- Nurse Licensure Compact

Scope of Practice
- Nurse Practitioners
- Physician Assistants
- ScopeofPracticePolicy.org

Recruitment and Retention
- Tax Credits
- Federal Funding
- Loan Repayment/Forgiveness

Training and Education
- Career Pathways
- Residencies

ScopeofPracticePolicy.org
Interstate Compacts

- Doctors
- Nurses
- Physical Therapists
- Emergency Medical Services
- Psychologists
- Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists (active starting in 2023)
- Licensed Professional Counselors (not currently active)
- Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (not currently active)
Scope of Practice

Providers
○ Advanced practice nurses
○ Optometrists
○ Pharmacists
○ Physician assistants

NCSL’s Scope of Practice Policy Website
○ Nine provider types
○ 21 policy areas
○ Legislative database (2015-Present)
Recruitment and Retention

### Tax Credits and Federal Funding
- **Louisiana**: Small Town Health Professionals Credit
- **New Mexico**: Rural Health Professional Tax Credit
- **Maine**: Maine Health Care Provider Loan Repayment Program Fund
- **Massachusetts**: Funding for pandemic response and recovery efforts

### Loan Forgiveness
- **Kansas**: Loan repayment to primary care and psychiatry residents
- **Minnesota**: Loan forgiveness for primary care providers in rural areas
- **Utah**: Provides educational loan repayment assistance to behavioral health professionals in HPSAs

### Training, Development and Licensure
- **Hawaii**: Short-term training at University of Hawaii community colleges in recession-resistant fields
- **Kentucky**: Authorized the board of medical licensure, board of EMS and board of nursing to reactivate the licenses of inactive and retired health care providers
- **Vermont**: Retired residents with expired licenses to return to the workforce in a state of emergency
Career Pathways

○ **Colorado**: Developed career pathways for counseling, therapy, social work, psychology, psychiatry and psychiatric nursing professions.

○ **Washington**: Appropriated $1.5 million to establish apprenticeship programs, compensate providers and apprentices, develop on-the-job training and provide incentives for providers.

Pathways

Residencies

○ **Iowa**: Required psychiatry residency programs to provide rural rotations as an option for residents.

○ **New Jersey**: Appropriated $4 million for 10 four-year psychiatry residencies focused on the treatment of lower income individuals, including those with serious mental illness and co-occurring mental health and substance misuse conditions.
Aug. 1-3 | NCSL.org/Summit2022
Stay Connected

- Learn about NCSL training
- Subscribe to policy newsletters
- Read State Legislatures magazine
- Bookmark the NCSL Blog
- Listen to “Our American States” podcast
- Watch recorded policy webinars and training sessions
- Attend a meeting or training
- Follow @NCSLorg on social media
Sydne Enlund
Senior Policy Specialist
sydne.enlund@ncsl.org | 303.856.1401

NCSL Resources

• Scope of Practice Policy website
• Meeting Health Care Needs With an Emerging Workforce (Policy Report, May 2020)
• Health Innovations State Law Database
• State Action on Coronavirus (COVID-19) Database
• State Strategies to Recruit and Retain the Behavioral Health Workforce (Policy Report, coming soon)