



Iowa Rural Healthcare Workforce Initiative

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN POLICY UPDATE

JUNE 23, 2022

A Statewide Strategy

Iowa Healthcare Workforce Strategic Planning and Stakeholder Engagement Initiative

Modern changes in healthcare delivery from a volume-based system to a value-centered system has increased strain on the rural healthcare providers. Rural communities currently face aging populations, higher comorbidity rates, an ongoing opioid epidemic, and lower incomes. All of these challenges shape the healthcare experience in these communities. The state of Iowa is covered in large part by rural healthcare, boasting 82 critical access hospitals and 170 rural health centers with its 78 rural counties. Iowa currently ranks 43rd in the nation in physicians per capita. In addition, the vast majority of Iowa's rural counties contain shortage areas for primary care, mental health, and dental health services. Shortage area locations can be seen on the next page. These shortages are particularly severe in rural communities and result in decreased access to medical care. Increasing and assisting rural healthcare providers is paramount to healthcare provision for Iowans across the state.

The Iowa Medical Society (IMS), in coordination with the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), Iowa Hospital Association (IHA), the Iowa Pharmacy Association (IPA), and the Iowa Primary Care Association (IOWA PCA), leads the Iowa Healthcare Workforce Strategic Planning and Stakeholder Engagement Initiative. The goal of this project is to use input from local communities and healthcare workforce stakeholders to identify actionable solutions that would advance Iowa's healthcare workforce. Through a variety of stakeholder events and meetings with healthcare providers, this initiative has gathered the insight necessary to assemble a Strategic Action Plan.



Iowa Rural Healthcare Workforce Strategic Action Plan A Multi-Stakeholder Strategy to Improve Healthcare Workforce

Intention: To identify and develop collaborative, innovative opportunities to address cross-cutting healthcare workforce issues affecting all disciplines, all settings, and all populations served with an attention on rural workforce.

Timeline: One to three years with immediate opportunities to recognize the multi-year investment and effort required to transform the workforce.

Workforce Audience: All healthcare providers and professionals: health, pharmacy, public health, long term services & supports, administration, etc.

Priorities: Interprofessional collaboration; resource & strategy

Goal 1: Recruitment

Grassroots and Pipeline Recruitment

Increase opportunities to institute health care apprenticeship programs in smaller organizations to create apprenticeship programs and amplifying resources and toolkits currently available.

Expand recruitment efforts among middle school and high school Education Agency efforts and addressing regulatory barrier educator roles.

Revive job-training and work-based learning programs, relationships between local care settings, schools, and community organizations to facilitate innovative approaches, such as integrative healthcare delivery models.

Facilitate opportunities for progressive education and training, advancing healthcare roles through scholarships and/or loan forgiveness, and restrictive to employment setting.

Utilize the Iowa Rural Healthcare Workforce Connection portal to highlight healthcare workforce opportunities, working to actively engage community leaders, and healthcare professionals with the state. Partner with economic development for cross-promotion for quality of life and Iowa community vitality, amplifying markets to live and work.

Create training packages to help recruiting agencies better understand opportunities in rural areas, building off of cross-promotional successful practices of other industries, such as armed forces.

Goal 2: Education and Training

Expand Education Opportunities & Access

Increase availability and access to education and training programs (clinical, seeking to increase the number of spaces available; scholarships, reimbursement programs, and exploring health and reviewing barrier inhibiting programs and addressing local educator roles.

Seek out opportunities to increase available and willing faculty programs through analysis of current gaps, barriers, regulatory opportunities to provide adaptive faculty roles/models.

Utilize available opportunities to host internships and preceptor programs, such as AmeriCorps, to aid professional development of professionals and potential permanent recruitment to Iowa.

Enhance and expand collaboration between community colleges and increase presence of curriculum to advanced degree programs. Examine avenues to improve portability of licensure, credentialing, competencies, standards, and scopes of practice, and facilitate state lines.

Enhance & Evolve Residency & Training Programs

Pursue full funding of medical residency and dental school programs, collaborating with national accreditation to ensure rural locations can fulfill residency and training requirements.

across disciplines and training settings, seeking to increase responsive support for residency programs in rural states with significant healthcare shortage areas.

Establish a cooperative liaison group of healthcare leaders and stakeholders to meet with federal officials to strengthen the Iowa voice, presence and advocacy efforts.

Progress opportunities to ease Iowa regulatory burdens that limit ability to train and better aid intern accessibility without adding to student financial educational affiliate agreement burden.

Examine regulatory burdens and avenues to improve portability of licensure training that streamlines competencies, standards, and scopes of practice mobilization across settings and state lines.

Goal 3: Retention

Better Payment & Incentive Packages

Amplify efforts to increase reimbursement and payment at both individual compensation, championing value-based models that are tied to rural-based services and providers and rewards delivery of quality solutions that better balance payment with cost/expense, quality.

Partner directly with payers to evaluate current reimbursement models together to foster mutual understanding and build opportunities to develop expanded programs to provide similar incentivization and high demand providers and health professionals.

Work to expand the list of eligible professionals for loan reimbursement develop expanded programs to provide similar incentivization and high demand providers and health professionals.

Consider opportunities to create "career ladder" development employees in advancing their healthcare careers from entry-level roles within the healthcare organization.

Work with healthcare employers to create and boost employment as no-cost advanced training, education, or certification access employer.

Goal 4: Sustainability

Partnership & Collaboration

Establish greater collaboration among healthcare systems, professional associations, and healthcare non-profits, and support service organizations, creating unified voices towards common goals, shared advocacy and regulatory burden relief with urgency and emphasis placed on workforce.

Facilitate cross-sector collaboration, inclusive of the full spectrum of care delivery, public health, education, economic development, and others to foster shared investment, pursuit, and operations that improve health, wellness, and vitality in Iowa.

Examine opportunities to increase interoperability of data platforms, access and exchange of health information and data, and greater alignment of healthcare coding & billing processes across health professions.

Strengthen direct working relationships directly with payers, both commercial and public health insurance options, to reinforce collective development and investment in healthcare payment solutions.

Invest in and cultivate diverse partnerships, engaging directly with communities, including patients, families, and caregivers in the process of design and evolution of our healthcare system.

Create and execute a mutually-invested healthcare workforce strategy to align and prioritize strategies, drive collaboration, and accelerate progress.

Community Development & Vitality

Prioritize and invest in needed community infrastructure, such as broadband, multi-sector employment, education, childcare, housing, transportation, social and long-term support services, etc., to make Iowa a desirable place to live, work, and thrive.

Take advantage of and seek additional federal and state appropriations and programs to support funding and magnify local investments in community infrastructure development, maintenance, and sustainability.

Seek and utilize state-level infrastructure data to inform and direct community revitalization and infrastructure investments.

Four Common, Consistent Goals

Goal 1: Recruitment

Goal 2: Training & Education

Goal 3: Retention

Goal 4: Sustainability

Priority Opportunities – Goal 1

Goal 1: Recruitment

Grassroots and Pipeline Recruitment

Seek and Welcome Diverse Demographics

Payment & Loan Reimbursement

Market Healthcare Professions & Rural Communities

Goal 1: Recruitment

Policy Elements

Health Care Apprenticeships	Recruit Non-Traditional Students	Family-Inclusive Recruitment & Support	Increase Telehealth Utilization
Governor Proposed Creation of Iowa Health Careers Registered Apprenticeship Grant Program	Expedited Pathways for Licensure & Registration, Interstate Compacts	Increased Access to Childcare	Telehealth Coverage & Payment Parity; Coverage for Audio-Only Telehealth
Not Enacted	Expedited Licensure for Mil. Spouses	Multiple Bills Enacted	Medicaid Expanding Coverage
Payment & Reimbursement Solutions	Enhance Existing Loan Repayment Programs	Additional Loan Repayment Programs	Expand Scholarship Programs
DHS-Convened Stakeholder Groups to Evaluate Reimbursement Models & Recommend Changes	Governor's Budget Fully Funds Rural Physician Loan Repayment & Health Care Loan Repayment Programs	HF 2137 – Mental Health Loan Repayment Program	Expand Future Ready Iowa & Last Dollar Scholarships
Workgroups Continuing	\$1 M New Funding; Expand & Flex. Added	\$520K MH Loan Repayment Created	Local Flex. To Expand Qualifying Professions

Priority Opportunities – Goal 2

Goal 2: Education & Training

Expand Education Opportunities & Access

Enhance & Evolve Residency & Training Programs

Ease Regulatory Barriers

Goal 2: Education & Training

Policy Elements

Increase Availability of Training Programs	Increase Portability of Licensure & Credentials	Increase the Number of Direct Care Training Opportunities	Incentivize More Preceptors & Mentors
HF 2157 – Psychiatric Residency Program with MHIs	Interstate Compacts	GEER Model Expansion & Facility-Based Programs	Preceptor Tax Credit
\$1.4M Increased Funding; 12 New Slots Created	Expedited Licensure for Mil. Spouses	GEER I, Component 2 – Round 2 Applications thru June 30	Not Enacted

Fewer Immediate Policy Elements, Greater Emphasis on Alignment and Collaboration Amongst Educational Institutions

Priority Opportunities – Goal 3

Goal 3: Retention

Better Payment & Incentive Packages

Better Practice Environments

Policy Elements

Payment & Reimbursement Solutions	Increase Telehealth Utilization	Improve Medical Liability Climate	Family-Inclusive Recruitment & Support
DHS-Convened Stakeholder Groups to Evaluate Reimbursement Models & Recommend Changes	Telehealth Coverage & Payment Parity; Coverage for Audio-Only Telehealth	HF 2279 – Hard Cap on Noneconomic Damages	Increased Access to Childcare
Workgroups Continuing	Medicaid Expanding Coverage	Not Enacted	Multiple Bills Enacted

Priority Opportunities – Goal 4

Goal 4: Sustainability

Partnership & Collaboration

Community Development & Vitality

Policy Elements

Increase Interoperability	Workforce Strategies with Broad Stakeholder Buy-In	Invest in Community Infrastructure	Prioritize Mental Health Funding
Enhanced Bed Tracking & Referral Networks	Continue the Iowa Rural Healthcare Workforce Initiative Through IDPH	Broadband, Childcare, Education, Quality of Life Initiatives	Governor Proposing \$120 Million for MHDS Regions
Psych Inpatient Tiered Rates Enacted (Bed Tacking Workgroup Recommendation)	IDPH Funding Continued	Expanded Broadband Funding (State & Federal); Multiple Childcare Bills	Status Quo Funding; Flex. for Regional Realignment

Goal 4: Sustainability

Policy Elements

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Enhanced Bed Tracking & Referral Networks	Continue the Iowa Rural Healthcare Workforce Initiative Through IDPH	Broadband, Childcare, Education, Quality of Life Initiatives	Governor Proposing \$120 Million for MHDS Regions
Psych Inpatient Tiered Rates	IDPH Funding Continued	Multiple Measures Enacted	Status Quo Funding
Utilize Federal Funds to Magnify Local & State Investments	Evaluate Medicaid Program & Opportunities to Maximize Operations	Continue Focus on Value-Based Care Arrangements	Implement New Integrated Care Delivery Models
Strategically Deploy Federal Infrastructure & COVID Relief Funding	DHS Convened Stakeholder Groups Continually Evaluating Individual Programs & Providing Recommendations	Build Upon Efforts Begun Under State Innovation Model	Medicaid Coverage for Integrated Behavioral Health & SUD Services
Fed. Broadband & Childcare Grant Progs.	Workgroups Continuing	Workgroups Continuing	Functional Fam. Therapy SPA

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