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# Recruitment and Retention of Health Professionals

Council on Linkages  
Between  
Academia and Public Health Practice

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## *Goals of the New AAMC Center for Workforce Studies*

- Study and document physician workforce issues related to supply, demand, use and distribution by specialty and region
- Support more informed decisions by the medical education community, policy makers and the public to encourage a supply of physicians consistent with demand and need
- Undertake and promote more systematic physician workforce data collection and analysis
- Collaborate with physician associations, specialty societies, medical schools, and other organizations on workforce studies and data collection

# *The Causes of Health Worker Shortages*

- Shortages usually reflect both supply and demand factors
  
- There are short term, long term and workplace factors that contribute to shortages of health workers

# *Factors Contributing to Health Workforce Shortages*

## Short term factors

- Competition for workers and the economy
- Growing demand
- Increased intensity and complexity of services
- Educational system cycles and response lags

# *Factors Contributing to Health Workforce Shortages, continued*

## Workplace factors

- Physically and emotionally demanding work
- Non-competitive wages and benefits
- Job design and working conditions
- Paperwork and lack of efficient information systems
- Poorly trained managers

# *Factors Contributing to Health Workforce Shortages, continued*

## Long term factors

- Changing racial/ethnic mix in the US
- Expanded career choices for women
- The economy and public expectations
- Increases in credential requirements
- The aging of America: increase in demand
- The aging of America: decrease in supply of health workers

# *Options for Responding to Health Worker Shortages*



# *The Need to Build Coalitions: Key Stakeholders*

- Government (U.S., states and local)
- Health professions education programs
- Health facilities and associations
- Professional associations
- Consumers/public
- Unions representing health workers

# *The Federal Role*

- Bureau of Labor Statistic (BLS) data on jobs and compensation and forecasts of job growth
- Workforce Investment Act Funding (DOL)
- HRSA studies on the health workforce including the National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses
- AHRQ studies on outcomes
- Web Site on Health Careers (DOL)
- Titles VII and VIII
- Nurse Re-Investment Act

# *State Government Roles*

- **Public health responsibilities and agencies**
- **Licensure and regulation of health professionals**
- **Regulation of health facilities**
- **Regulation of educational programs**
- **State colleges and universities**
- **Medicaid reimbursement policies, insurer of state employees and regulation of private insurance**
- **Employment data/Labor Department training programs**
- **Employer in state facilities and agencies**
- **Health workforce data collection**

# *Options for Responding to Workforce Shortages*

- Increase the pipeline
- Improve retention
- Reduce demand
- Government Interventions
- Better data and information

# *Increasing the Supply Through Education and Training Initiatives*

1. Scholarships and loan repayment
2. Grants for faculty, capacity expansion or program start up
3. High school health careers programs
4. Marketing health careers/Public Service Announcements
5. Promote health provider and education partnerships
6. Use Labor Department and other training funds

# *Increasing the Supply Through Education and Training Initiatives, cont.*

7. Education demonstrations and development, (i.e. distance learning, computer assisted learning)
8. Support efforts to increase minority recruitment and retention
9. Mandates or incentives for educational programs
10. Programs for foreign educated professionals already living in state
11. Support efforts to bring non-traditional groups into the profession

# *Increasing Supply by Improving Retention & Job Related Strategies*

1. Reimbursement support for higher wages/benefits
2. Support for career ladders
3. Best practices conferences on job design and retention
4. Funding for demonstrations to improve working conditions and redesign jobs
5. Management and supervisor training

*Increasing supply by Improving  
Retention & Job Related Strategies,  
cont.*

6. Encourage improved benefits for workers, i.e. health insurance, portable benefits within industry
7. Support the development of technology that supports workers



# *Modify Demand and Improve Productivity*

1. Demonstrations and evaluation of job redesign and use of alternative personnel
2. Dissemination of information/best practices conferences on efficient and productive care
3. Regulatory changes on scope of practice and use of workers
4. Promote technology to support efficiency and effectiveness

## *Other Responses to Shortages*

1. Better data collection and needs assessments
2. Establish Task Forces, Commissions, and Committees