



## Memorandum

**DATE:** July 7, 2010  
**TO:** Legislative Health and Human Services Committee  
Chairperson: Danice Picraux  
**FROM:** Len Malry, Director Workforce Education  
**SUBJECT:** Legislative Health and Human Services Presentation

I wish to thank you for the opportunity to present before you, the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee. Your work is important. As Director of Workforce Education, for the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED), I recognize the value of a commitment from higher education to further your work and look forward to demonstrating our ability to help students succeed as they prepare for careers in health care. As requested, I have forwarded information as it relates to what the department is currently doing related to health care workforce education initiatives.

### **Definition of Health Care Workforce (PPACA)**

The term "health care workforce" includes all health care providers with direct patient care and support responsibilities, such as physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, primary care providers, preventive medicine physicians, optometrists, ophthalmologists, physician assistants, pharmacists, dentists, dental hygienists, and other oral healthcare professionals, allied health professionals, doctors of chiropractic, community health workers, health care paraprofessionals, direct care workers, psychologists and other behavioral and mental health professionals (including substance abuse prevention and treatment providers), social workers, physical and occupational therapists, certified nurse midwives, podiatrists, the EMS workforce (including professional and volunteer ambulance personnel and firefighters who perform emergency medical services), licensed complementary and alternative medicine providers, integrative health practitioners, public health professionals, and any other health professional that the Comptroller General of the United States determines appropriate.

### **What is the NMHED doing now related to health care workforce education?**

#### **New Mexico Investment**

The State of New Mexico offers many incentives to encourage individuals to pursue health related education. The NMHED oversees many of these incentives that may provide financial assistance to students or funding directly to health related educational programs, such as nursing to improve retention and graduation rates. For example, from FY04 to FY09 over approximately \$16 million has been allocated to New Mexico's public postsecondary institutions in supplemental funding for nursing program enhancement. In addition, \$1 million has been allocated for nursing faculty salary enhancement to institutions by formula. Additional funding has been distributed to individuals through the state's financial aid and nurse loan-for-service and nurse educator's loan-for-service programs. Funding for these initiatives comes from a variety of sources including: state general funds, federal grant funds, state special funds, and private funds. Descriptions of the financial incentives are presented in detail below.

### **Program Development Enhancement Fund (Nursing)**

The funding for this program was initiated in 2003 with a total amount of \$2 million distributed to sixteen different institutions. Most recently (2008), a total of \$7 million was awarded via a two-year allocation to eighteen different institutions via a competitive process, in which the universities responded to request for proposals and were subsequently evaluated. This program allows New Mexico's public colleges and universities to support the expansion of nursing programs by providing salaries for more nursing instructors and/or expanded facilities and increasing the number of graduates in the field of nursing. In addition, funds have been utilized for the recruitment and retention of quality faculty, staff, and students; student stipends; lab equipment; professional development and student preparation/retention efforts.

### **Nursing Faculty Enhancement Program**

This program funding is disseminated by formula to institutions to provide a supplemental compensation package for nursing faculty and staff at public postsecondary institutions. The state has provided supplemental funding in the amount of \$500,000 in FY07 and FY08 to institutions in an effort make faculty salaries more competitive with the market.

### **Nursing Loan-For-Service Program**

Established in 1987, the purpose of the Nursing Loan for Service is to increase the number of nurses in areas of the state which have experienced shortages by making educational loans to students entering nursing programs. The award amounts are \$12,000 per year. A student may receive an award up to four years. As a condition of each loan, the student shall declare their intent to practice as a health professional in a designated shortage area. For every year of service, a portion of their loan will be forgiven. The maximum a student must provide service is 3 years. If the entire service agreement is fulfilled, 100% of the loan is eligible for forgiveness.

Since inception through FY08, there have been 436 nursing students who have received over \$3.5 million in service-based student loans. Of the 436 students, nearly 40% have completed their service obligation to the state, 25% are still enrolled in the nursing program, in grace period or are currently fulfilling their service obligation and 35% are in repayment status.

### **Nurse Educator Loan-For-Service Program**

Established in 2006, the Nurse Educator Loan for Service's purpose is to enhance the ability of college- and university-employed nursing educators to obtain Bachelor of Science, Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy degrees. The loan is for \$5,000 per academic year. As a condition of each loan, the student shall declare intent to serve in a nurse faculty position in a New Mexico public, post-secondary institution. For every academic year of service, a portion of the loan will be forgiven. If the entire service agreement is fulfilled, 100% of the loan is eligible for forgiveness.

### **Dental Hygiene Program**

This program provides state appropriated funding for the implementation of a statewide interactive distance learning program in dental hygiene and assisting. Funding is allocated to three schools; Luna Community College, Eastern New Mexico University-Roswell, and Dona Ana Community College totaling \$750,000.

### **Medical Loan-For-Service Program**

The purpose of this program is to increase the number of physicians in areas of the state which have experienced shortages of health professionals by making educational loans to students entering medical school. As a condition of each loan, the student shall declare his/her intent to practice as a health professional in a designated shortage area. For every year of service, a portion of the loan will be forgiven. If the entire service agreement is fulfilled, 100% of the loan is eligible for forgiveness.

### **Allied Health Loan-For-Service Program**

The purpose of the Allied Health Loan-for-Service is to increase the number if physician assistants in areas of the state which have experienced shortages of health practitioners, by making educational loans to students seeking certification/licensers in an eligible health field, which are:

Physical Therapy	Occupational Therapy	Speech-language Pathology	Audiology
Pharmacy	Respiratory Care	Laboratory Technology	Mental Health Services
Nutrition	Emergency Medical Services		

As a condition of each loan, the student shall declare his/her intent to practice as a health professional in a designated shortage area.

### **Teacher Loan-For-Service Program**

This program serves to proactively address New Mexico's teacher shortage by providing students with the financial resources to complete or enhance their post-secondary teacher preparation education.

### **Minority Doctoral Loan-For-Service Program**

This program was enacted to increase the number of ethnic minorities and women available to teach engineering, physical or life sciences, mathematics and other academic disciplines in which ethnic minorities or women are demonstrably underrepresented in New Mexico Colleges. The state encourages partnerships between the New Mexico Higher Education Department, institutions of higher education and students interested in entering a doctoral program to cultivate greater participation by underrepresented groups in doctoral programs leading to careers as university faculty. An additional outcome will be the increase of role models from diverse backgrounds in disciplines where few faculty from underrepresented groups presently exist.

### **WICHE Loan-For-Service Program**

The purpose of the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE) Loan-for-Service Program is to allow New Mexico students to enroll at selected out-of-state graduate or professional programs which are not offered at New Mexico public universities. Exchange students receive preference in admission. They pay reduced levels of tuition: for most students, resident tuition in public institutions or reduced standard tuition at private schools. New Mexico pays a support fee to the admitting school to help cover the cost of students' education. Fields supported by New Mexico are listed below.

- Dentistry; Graduate Library Studies; Optometry; Veterinary Medicine; Osteopathic Medicine

### **Cultural Competence**

In 2007, the 48<sup>th</sup> Legislature enacted Senate Bill 600 to establish a task force to design cultural competence education requirements in certain health education programs. The NMHED oversees this taskforce in which the curriculum developed will ensure students are provided cultural and competence in their respective health service fields. Core competencies have been identified as the foundation for the development of a curriculum framework in the disciplines of medicine, nursing, social work and occupational therapy.

### **Articulation**

With representatives from colleges and universities, the NMHED has formed an Articulation Task Force designed to develop a procedure for institutions to submit courses to be included in a commonly accepted general education core. The Task Force has clarified exactly which courses and course modules transfer automatically between institutions of higher education. More specifically, nursing programs have begun to articulate coursework from two year to four year institutions.

### **HED/PED Partnership (Dual Credit)**

The NMHED is an integral partner in the dual credit initiative. The new statewide Dual Credit Program falls squarely within New Mexico's high school redesign efforts. SB943 (2007) and SB31 (2008) create a dual credit program that allows public high school students in school districts, charter schools and state-supported schools in the state to earn both high school and college credit for qualifying dual credit courses. In fall 2008 to the spring 2009 (1,694) students were enrolled in health related dual credit programs.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to present to you regarding the development of our health care workforce.