

# Office of Rural Health & Primary Care

## Health Care Workforce Programs

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*The Minnesota Office of Rural Health and Primary Care (ORHPC) is a comprehensive source for health care workforce data, analysis, shortage information, and financial and technical assistance for health professionals.*

### Health Care Workforce Analysis Program

The Workforce Analysis Program gathers workforce information, analyzes workforce trends and distributes findings to policymakers, educators, professionals and employers.

Information collected varies by profession, and generally provides information about:

- Age and gender
- Racial and ethnic background
- Types of work sites and locations
- Hours worked
- Degrees and career plans
- Professional specialties.

### Health Workforce Datasets and Surveys

ORHPC coordinates with Minnesota's licensing boards, collecting data from and surveying the following health professions at the time of the licensure or registration renewal:

- Dentists
- Dental Assistants
- Dental Hygienists
- Dental Therapists
- Licensed Practical Nurses
- Marriage and Family Therapists
- Physical Therapists
- Physical Therapist Assistants
- Physician Assistants
- Physicians
- Registered Nurses
- Respiratory Therapists
- Social Workers

The ORHPC uses data from surveys and other sources to inform and enable stakeholders to respond to emerging health care workforce issues, such as:

- Current supply of health care personnel
- Geographic distribution of professions
- Occupation-wide shortages
- Recruitment and retention strategies
- Age and race distribution
- Educational training
- Demand by profession
- Types of practice settings.

The ORHPC is working to expand data collection and surveying to additional professions, including:

- Psychologists
- Pharmacists

Workforce data, summaries and reports are available online at:

[www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce/index.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce/index.html) or by contacting:

- Teri Fritsma at [teri.fritsma@state.mn.us](mailto:teri.fritsma@state.mn.us) or 651-201-4004
- Angie Sechler at [angie.sechler@state.mn.us](mailto:angie.sechler@state.mn.us) or 651-201-3862



## Health Workforce

### Shortage Designations

Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA) and Medically Underserved Areas/Populations (MUAP) are federal designations that identify shortages of health care providers and services. ORHPC collects statistical information and prepares applications for federal shortage area designation. Maps showing dental, primary care and mental health shortage areas and medically underserved areas are online at [www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/shortage/index.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/shortage/index.html).

For more information about Minnesota's health workforce shortage areas and medically underserved areas, contact:

Lee Schutz at [leona.schutz@state.mn.us](mailto:leona.schutz@state.mn.us) or 651-201-3860.

### Loan Forgiveness and Repayment

The Office of Rural Health and Primary Care's state-funded Loan Forgiveness Programs help recruit and retain health professionals to needed areas and facilities within Minnesota. The program benefits professionals as well as the care facilities and communities experiencing a shortage of access to primary health care services.

Information is available at [www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/funding/loans/index.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/funding/loans/index.html), or contact Brenda Flattum at [Brenda.flattum@state.mn.us](mailto:Brenda.flattum@state.mn.us) or 651-201-3870

With funding from the federal government, providers working in federally designated Health Professional Shortage Areas may be eligible to apply for loan repayment through the Minnesota State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) or the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Federal Loan Repayment Program.

Information is available at: [www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/funding/loans/state.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/funding/loans/state.html), or contact Deb Jahnke at [debra.jahnke@state.mn.us](mailto:debra.jahnke@state.mn.us) or 651-201-3845.

### MERC

The Medical Education and Research Costs (MERC) program distributes grants to clinical training sites around the state to offset the higher cost structures and lost patient care revenue for those facilities. Since its inception in 1997, the MERC program has distributed over \$500 million in grant funds to hospitals, clinics, and other clinical training sites throughout Minnesota.

Information is available at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpsc/hep/merc/index.html> or contact Diane Reger at [diane.reger@state.mn.us](mailto:diane.reger@state.mn.us) or 651-201-3566.

### J-1 Visa Waivers

Many communities turn to foreign medical graduates with J-1 Visa Waivers to fill their physician vacancies. J-1 physicians, also known as foreign medical graduates or international medical graduates, are physicians from other countries with a J-1 exchange visitor visa. The waivers, recommended by ORHPC allow these doctors to remain in the United States during the 2 year foreign residency requirement after their studies are completed.

Information is online at: [www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce/j1/index.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce/j1/index.html), or contact Darwin Flores Trujillo at [Darwin.flores.trujillo@state.mn.us](mailto:Darwin.flores.trujillo@state.mn.us) or 651-201-3850.



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