

**Vermont State Workforce Development Board**

Vermont Health Care Workforce Development Strategic Plan Advisory Group - Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2022

9:00 am – 10:00 am

**Committee Members in Attendance**: Ena Backus, Rebecca Kapsalis, Stephanie Pagliuca, Patrick Gallivan, Baron Glassgow, Laura Pelosi, Jill Olson, Lisa Fox

**Guests in Attendance**: Abby Rhim, Mary Anne Sheahan, Devon Green, Cheryle Wilcox, Wendy Trafton, Betsy Hassan, Laura Wreschnig, Jessica Fredette

Premium Pay for Recruitment and Retention

-Ena highlighted that the Premium Pay Program is aimed at the support, retention and recruitment of healthcare professionals with $60 million worth of funds allocated. Now in a second phase of the program using remaining funds, certain provider types will be added as eligible and allowed access (primary care, dentist, private therapeutic community residences, high tech nurses).

-Wendy noted that they are trying to open the application portal as quickly as possible. In the meantime, they are hoping to provide outreach and education to providers in advance to opening. -Rebecca asked how much it falls on this advisory group to distribute information? She asked that it be clear what expectations are. She currently believes that outreach does not fall on group members. Ena then confirmed.

-Jill asked if the next round would be open to existing provider types. Ena clarified that this next round is only open to new provider types, not an extension for existing provider types, however, if additional funds remain, it would be recommended they be put towards workforce development activities.

-Devon asked how this funding will help in the short term to ensure that the healthcare system does not collapse? Ena noted that this is only one component of funding and there are other strategies in place.

Synthesis of feedback on health care employer nursing pipeline and apprenticeship program

-Wendy shared that she is hoping to bring on a contractor to implement the program.

-Mary Anne shared that she has spoken to Central Vermont Medical Center, UVM Medical Center and Rutland Regional Medical Center, and all have asked that the money be used for paid release time for education and more clinical educators in house. She also mentioned a loan repayment model that will reduce the cost for participants through VSAC. If participants don’t qualify for VSAC services, there are wrap around services through a program called the Education Opportunity Center.

-Betsy stressed that clinical faculty is a huge barrier. If joint appointments or partnerships could be developed, that would help.

-Jill asked if Mary Anne’s program was limited to hospitals? Mary Anne said no. Jill stressed that the overall system loses nurses to hospitals all the time, and programs need to focus on all healthcare facilities, not just hospitals.

-Laura Pelosi echoed Jill’s point and the idea of focusing on long-term and post-acute settings, not just hospitals.

Update on student licensure approach

-Ena noted that at a previous meeting, student licensure and the ability for students to be licensed and perform tasks independently is something that could alleviate some workforce pressures by having more people in the workforce perform tasks.

-Betsy added that this came from a successful program in Alabama. For Vermont to implement a program like this, it requires statutory (Vermont Practice Act) and a rule change. The administrative rules for nursing are currently out for public comment until December.

Update on preceptor working group

-Under Act 183, recommendations must be put forth regarding efficiencies and a better precepting model, statewide. There is a working group underway.

-Laura Wreschnig shared that the working group’s meeting will be in early December, with hopefully two more before January 15th, the date set for deliverables. She added that the group still needs a representative from the FQHC and primary care.

Primary care survey

-Ena explained that last year, the Agency of Human Services, the Department of Financial Services and the Green Mountain Care Board looked at access to special services in Vermont. Now, the group is examining access to primary care.

-Laura Wreschnig noted that she sent an email to practice contacts regarding workforce challenges and access to care. This survey is designed to be easier and take less time. They are looking to close the survey by December 15th.

Immediate health care workforce needs: information gathering

-Laura is working on an additional survey to address workforce needs. This includes what vacancies and turnover rates currently look like and what initiatives are still missing, outside of Act 183 and strategies currently underway. She is looking for feedback on how that survey gets out to the right people.

-Laura Wreschnig asked the group to report on what type of data is currently being reported and who can be contacted to access.

-Rebecca shared that UVM struggles to get solid vacancy data and haven’t completely honed in on exactly what makes sense to measure.

-Jill added that it is difficult to collect data because there aren’t consistent definitions about how people measure things.

-Laura Wreschnig noted that this survey is in the initial stages, focusing on what data is being collect and who the contact person would be.

-Laura Pelosi urged the group to understand that the response rate from long term facilities will likely be lacking. They do not have the capacity.

-Stephanie asked for clarification on if the survey was directed towards this group, health center folks, individual members of organizations or someone else?

-Ena clarified that the survey is intended for members of the advisory group, while recognizing that not all members of the group have this data.

One-Stop-Shop: resources for health care professionals or professionals in training

-Ena noted that a small team will make an inventory of resources, gather them on a document and then identify how to direct everyone to a webpage that will likely sit within the Agency of Human Resources. She added that the advisory group could help with links to different resources.