



*Washington's Health Care Personnel Shortage Task Force:
State and local plans, partnerships
and initiatives*

Presenter

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<http://www.wtb.wa.gov>





The Health Care Personnel Shortage Task Force

BACKGROUND

- Industry leaders called upon the state to address a growing problem – difficulty recruiting health care personnel.
- The Health Care Personnel Shortage Task Force published a state plan in January 2003: **“Crisis or Opportunity?”**
- **In 2007 the Task Force updated the state plan:**
<http://www.wtb.wa.gov/HCTFAbout.asp>



Who is on the Task Force?

- *Michele Johnson, Chair (Chancellor - Pierce College District)
- *Bill Gray, Vice Chair (WSU Spokane)
- *Washington State Hospital Association
- *Washington State Nurses Association
- *Higher Education Coordinating Board
- *State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
- *Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- *Long-Term Care
- *Workforce Board (WTECB)
- *Service Employees International Union (Allied Health)
- *United Food and Commercial Workers Union (Allied Health)
- *Migrant and Community Health Centers
- *WA Dental Association
- *WA State Medical Assoc.
- *Allied Health
- *Group Health Cooperative
- *Department of Health
- *Rural Health
- *State Board of Health
- *WA Center for Nursing



What is the nature of the health care personnel shortages?

- Severe shortages across a wide range of health professions
- All areas of the state are reporting shortages
- The shortages are structural rather than cyclical due to demographic changes (the population is aging)

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Shortages: Current Status

Shortages continue to become more severe...as predicted

- Spring 2008 job vacancy survey reported over 16,092 in the health care industry compared to 12,085 vacancies the for spring 2007
- Numbers declined dramatically in Spring 2009 but health care still reporting the highest vacancies (nurses: over 2,600 vacancies)
- Majority of health care job vacancies are for occupations that require postsecondary preparation.

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Updated State Plan for Addressing Shortages

6 Goals:

1. Increase educational capacity in health care education and training programs to enable more people to gain qualifications to work in health care occupations.
2. Recruit more individuals, especially targeted populations into health care occupations, and promote adequate preparation prior to entry.
3. Develop a data collection and analysis system to assess health workforce supply and demand.

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The strategy for creating an adequate supply of health care personnel

6 Goals (continued...):

4. Retain current health care workers.
5. Enable local communities and organizations around the state to implement strategies to alleviate the health care personnel shortages in their areas.
6. Ensure continued collaboration among stakeholders to meet Washington's future health workforce needs future health workforce needs.

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Outcome Measures

We track...

1. The gap between Supply and Demand
2. Education enrollment, completion and diversity.
3. The number of school districts and high schools offering a health option as part of the Health and Human Services Pathway.
4. Diversity of the Health Care Workforce (updated information is reliant on the new Health Workforce Survey).

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Legislative Highlights

- ✓ Allocated High Demand funds to expand education programs (2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003)
- ✓ Allocated funds to support incumbent worker training in hospitals (2008)
- ✓ ESSB 6193 – conduct a survey of all credentialed health care personnel every two years (2006), and funds for collection (08)
- ✓ Allocated funds to expand the health scholarship and loan repayment program (2006, 2004)
- ✓ SHB 2382 - improve articulation in nursing programs (2004)

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Legislative Highlights (continued...)

- ✓ SCR 8419 – establish committee on “health disparities” (2004)
- ✓ ESSB 6554 - eliminate barriers to credentialing (2003)
- ✓ SHB 1189 – improve recruitment for hospital districts (2003)
- ✓ SSB 5966 - reduce barriers for dentists from other states to practice in Washington (2003), SHB 1099 – created dental auxiliary (2007), HB 2991 – report on licenses for foreign-trained dentists (2008)

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Expanded Educational Capacity

➤ Between 2003 and 2008 about **\$31 million** in state appropriated funds was directed toward expanding capacity in health care education and training programs:

- ✓ **High Demand funds** to expand sub-baccalaureate and baccalaureate programs
 - In 2008, funds to expand medical, dentistry, and nursing programs at four-year public universities totaled \$13.7 million
- ✓ **Workforce development funds**

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Expanded Educational Capacity (continued...)

High Demand Allocations to Health Care Programs at Community and Technical colleges in 2007 – 2009

- Total 360 FTE in 2007-08, and 158 FTE in 2008-09
- Programs include Associate Degree Nurse, Surgical Technologist, Allied Health, Occupational Therapy, Highline International Worker Re-entry, Health Information Management, Online Physical Therapy, Programs to create ladder from LPN to RN

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Expanded Educational Capacity (continued...)

- Other funds: local workforce development council funds leveraged federal grants, and private contributions via health skill panels
- Educational supply has increased.

✓ Summarizing: About **3,000 additional students are completing** health care occupational programs (aggregating completions for 36 high demand occupations.) We compared 2003 completions to 2006 completions.

See page 9 in Part 1 of the 2007 Health Care Personnel Shortage Task Force Annual Progress report and Part 3 of the report for full breakdown by program. ¹³



Education Expansion: Clinical Site Coordination

- **Southwest region** expanded student placement (nursing programs) from 300 placements in 2005 to over 900 placements in 2007. Also, Multicare has begun placing other allied health professions and has increased capacity by 300 students from 06-07.
- **Eastern region:** piloting a web-based grid system for clinical placement. Placements with agencies for Yakima Valley Community College, WSU, & Heritage University. 900 nursing students placed in three acute care facilities in the Yakima area.
- **Northwest region** –Building relationships with healthcare facilities and educational institutions. This year the consortium is tasked with finding sustainable funding. ¹⁴



Expanded Educational Capacity: Employer / Labor Initiatives

- Legislature provided \$1.5 million for HEET initiative, incumbent worker training, intent is to focus on current workers and include workplace-based learning
- Employer sponsored: Faculty sharing arrangements; equipment sharing; opening new classes through employer donations (e.g. St Pete's)



Education: Sharing Best Practices, Career and Program Information

- Yakima Valley Community College a Center of Excellence in Allied Health: statewide resource
 - ❖Convenes an annual conference to share best practices.
 - ❖Developed core curricula in allied health;
 - ❖Created WAHOTT.com a statewide health careers website aimed at youth
- I-BEST: Integrating Basic English and ESL with occupational training, health care one of the major areas of expansion

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Recruitment and Retention Initiatives

- ✓ 2008 Legislature increased biennial funding for the health scholarship and loan repayment program to \$8.7 million (also increases in 2004 and 2006)
- ✓ Incumbent worker training
- ✓ Washington's \$3 million federal award for surpassing performance targets for workforce development programs has been utilized by Workforce Development Councils, in partnership with community and technical colleges and K-12, to fund health career workshops for youth, scholarships for students, and other recruitment programs
- ✓ Other – financial aid programs, WorkSource workshops, translated recruitment and marketing materials...

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Improving Data

- Health Workforce Survey commenced in 2007
- Have surveyed:
 - Dental Hygienists
 - Registered Nurses
 - Licensed Practical Nurses
 - Dentists
 - Physicians
 - Physician Assistants
- A need for basic analysis
- ...2009 Budget crisis has led to discontinuation of survey ☹

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Empowering Local Communities

Health Skill Panels (workforce development councils):

- ✓ Olympic – Health Care Certifications for current employees
- ✓ Spokane - Teach the teacher
- ✓ Seattle - Nursing Career Ladders
- ✓ SW WA, NW WA, Tacoma-Pierce - revolving loan funds to pay for training up front and reimburse employers, pool resources to hire on-site case managers for entry-level employees
- ✓ South Central – Opportunity Partnership mentors
- ✓ ...and a lot more

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Ongoing Challenges: Demand/ Supply Gap Analysis

➤ Gap analysis:

- ❖ 512 more registered nurses each year than are currently entering the workforce
- ❖ 311 more physicians, surgeons and specialists
- ❖ 186 more medical and clinical lab technologists
- ❖ And gaps for medical and clinical lab technicians, medical equipment preparers, physical therapists, speech-language pathologists, chiropractors, dentists, respiratory therapists, physical therapist aides, surgical technologists, radiologic technologists, pharmacists, occupational therapists, dieticians and nutritionists, optometrists, cardiovascular technologists, psychiatric technicians, diagnostic medical sonographers

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Challenges and Opportunities

- Continue to expand high employer demand programs of study
- Basic analysis of health workforce survey
- Develop and expand workplace-based learning for entry-level health care workers (HEET expansion)
- Support financial aid: Health Scholarship and Loan Repayment, and Opportunity Grants, SNG expanded for part-time students / working adults

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Challenges and Opportunities (continued...)

- Incentivize preparation of faculty (financial aid, share best practices in recruitment)
- Support clinical coordination and program articulation
- Enhance diversity (I-BEST, Opportunity Grant)
- Prepare young people for entry to postsecondary health care programs, and provide work-based learning opportunities

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For publications and other information go to the Task Force web page at:

<http://www.wtb.wa.gov/HEALTHCARETASKFORCE.HTM>

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