



The Hospital + Healthsystem
Association of Pennsylvania

Leading for Better Health

January 4, 2021

The Honorable Tom Wolf
Office of the Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
225 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Wolf:

The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania (HAP), which represents approximately 240 member hospitals and health systems across the commonwealth, has a mission to empower Pennsylvania's hospitals and health systems to be the leading advocates for improving health in their communities. To be able to do that, hospitals and health systems need to have a strong workforce.

HAP understands that developing Pennsylvania's workforce is one of your administration's most important priorities, and we applaud you for your work in this area. To provide you and other leaders with suggested strategies to develop a strong health care workforce, HAP embarked upon a journey to develop strategies that would help to attract and retain the talent pool needed to provide quality patient-centered care to Pennsylvania's communities.

Early in 2020, HAP released a workforce report entitled "Addressing Pennsylvania's Health Care Workforce Challenges." This report is the culmination of a year-long process by HAP's Health Care Talent Task Force that guided the development of strategies to support HAP's goal in assisting members to enhance their health care team talent pool and transform their health care workforce. A copy of the report is attached.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, developing a strong and robust health care workforce has become more important than ever, as the pandemic has forced many health care professionals to leave the workforce early or reduce their hours to deal with the challenges of remote learning. Recent events have also reinforced the need to promote diversity and inclusion, which was a theme of HAP's report.

While many of the recommendations included in our report require legislative action, many others can be implemented by action of the administration. Specifically, the report recommends that Pennsylvania:

- Develop opportunities to promote workforce diversity, including providing resources for training and developing an infrastructure to support workforce diversity initiatives
- Strengthen the focus of the Keystone Workforce and Economic Development Command Center on the health care workforce, by creating a Health Care Workforce Committee within the command center



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- Establish an independent entity within state government to collect and analyze workforce and economic data
- Promote regular evaluation of workforce needs by the Joint State Government Commission (or other appropriate, qualified body) every three years
- Expand and develop supply/demand studies for more categories of health care professionals to improve the data available to make policy and funding decisions
- Develop benchmarking studies using state and national data sources
- Develop strategies to devote additional staff resources and/or creating administrative flexibility for the Pennsylvania Department of Health to better administer the ARC J-1 VISA and Conrad 30 programs
- Revise state loan repayment programs to enhance awards and increase length of service commitments to compete with contiguous states
- Develop opportunities that support efforts to expand current physician and advance practice provider residency programs targeted to rural and underserved areas

We would also like to discuss the issues our members have had with regard to licensure and other practice applications not being processed in a timely manner. The backlog of applications receiving approval hinders a practitioner's ability to practice as well as impedes patients' access to care.

Your leadership team, including Chief of Staff Mike Brunelle, meets with the HAP team on a periodic basis, and we plan to raise these recommendations during an upcoming meeting.

Ultimately, we would like to meet with you to discuss our recommendations and evaluate how we can work together to address the workforce needs of Pennsylvania's health care community.

Sincerely,

Andy Carter
President and Chief Executive Officer

[Attachment](#)

c: Hugh Lavery, Chair, HAP's Health Care Talent Task Force