



Dear Governor Shapiro:

The undersigned organizations urge you to establish, via [executive order](#), the Governor's Office of Health Workforce Innovation and Reform to address the Commonwealth's health care workforce crises.

A 2021 U.S. Healthcare Labor Market Report from [Mercer](#) examined the health care labor market over the next five to 10 years and found Pennsylvania to be among the states that will experience the greatest shortages of registered nurses, mental health workers, and nursing support staff. Among the commonwealth's 67 counties, 63 are entirely or partially primary care health professional shortage areas (HPSAs) and 53 are entirely or partially mental health HPSAs.

Specifically, Pennsylvania is projected to have a deficit of more than 277,711 health care workers, such as medical assistants, home health aides, and nursing assistants by 2026. Pennsylvania also is projected to have a shortfall of 20,345 registered nurses by 2026, the largest in the nation. Health care professionals also are leaving the workforce in record numbers and there is extraordinary strain on the number of well-trained medical professionals to care for those needing health care. The scope and extent of this crisis is extraordinary, and urgent action is necessary to address it.

Your administration has an opportunity to join other states in establishing a Governor-led effort to develop strategies to address the commonwealth's short-term and long-term health care workforce; assess current and projected workforce needs; establish a health care data center; coordinate workforce-related policies, programs, and initiatives across agencies; and facilitate the talent pipeline of a diverse and culturally competent workforce.

The attached draft executive order provides suggested elements of this effort, including the establishment of the Governor's Office of Health Workforce Innovation and Reform, as well as the creation of the Governor's Health Workforce Reform Cabinet and Advisory Council. The effort must be led by an experienced Director, with sufficient experience and delegated authority to succeed in this effort.

As reflected by the scope and extent of the signatories of this letter, there is enormous support for your leadership to establish a structure to address Pennsylvania's health care workforce challenges, reach a consensus on necessary bi-partisan policy solutions, and drive progress. The Governor's Office of Health Workforce Innovation and Reform, if launched this summer, can be tasked with the responsibility to develop a strategic plan by the end of the year, along with specific policy recommendations and budget priorities.

Pennsylvania needs your leadership to address this crisis, and we stand ready to work with you, the legislature, and other policymakers to prioritize the health care talent infrastructure, support health care workers, strengthen the health care community, and ensure that high-quality care remains available to all Pennsylvanians.

Sincerely,

**1889 Foundation**

Susan Mann  
President

**Alternative Community  
Resource Program, Inc.  
(ACRP)**

Frank Janakovic  
Executive Director

**American Association of  
Retired Persons (AARP)  
Pennsylvania**

Teresa Osborne  
State Advocacy Director

**Anthracite Regional Center  
for Independent Living  
(ARCIL)**

Geysa Rodriguez  
IL Skills Director

**Baker Industries**

Rich Bevan  
President

**Blue Mountain Escape Inc.**

Stacy Nazay  
Executive Director

**Bucks County Women's  
Advocacy Coalition**

Tam StClaire  
President Emerita

**Capacity for Change, LLC**

Jason Alexander  
Principal

**AccessMatters**

Audrey Ross  
Senior Manager,  
Communications and Policy

**Alzheimer's Association**

Jennifer Ebersole  
Director of State Government  
Affairs

**Ann's Heart**

Kristen McGee  
Executive Director

**APTA Pennsylvania, A  
Chapter of the American  
Physical Therapy Association**

Scott Voshell  
President

**Barnstone Art for Kids**

Sean Halloran  
Executive Director

**Bucks County Center for  
Independent Living**

Seth Hoderewski  
Acting Executive Director

**Buhl Regional Health  
Foundation**

Jennifer Barborak  
Executive Director

**Center for Advocacy for the  
Rights and Interests of Elders  
(CARIE)**

Kathy Cubit  
Advocacy Manager

**Alianzas de Phoenixville**

Nina Guzman  
Executive Director

**Ambulance Association of  
Pennsylvania**

Heather Sharar  
Executive Director

**Anthracite Regional Center  
for Independent Living  
(ARCIL)**

Denise Corcoran  
Executive Director

**Art As Social Inquiry**

Theresa Browngold  
Founder/Artist

**Berks County Community  
Foundation**

Monica Reyes  
Vice President for Programs  
and Initiatives

**Bucks County Health  
Improvement Partnership**

Kimberly Everett  
Executive Director

**Camphill Village Kimberton  
Hills**

Robert Martin  
Director of Development

**Center for Independent Living  
Opportunities**

Hillary Hasson  
Executive Director

**Center for Population Health**  
Jeannine McMillan  
Executive Director

**Centre Care Rehabilitation  
and Wellness Services**  
Felicia Heaton  
Assistant Administrator

**Clarion Area Agency on Aging**  
Marcella Dill  
Executive Director

**Color & Culture**  
George Fernandez  
Chief Executive Officer

**Community College of  
Philadelphia**  
Barbara McLaughlin  
Head, Department of Nursing

**Community Foundation for  
the Alleghenies**  
Mike Kane  
President

**Consumer Workforce Council  
of Pennsylvania**  
Guy Anthony K Brooks  
President

**CoreCare Systems, Inc.**  
Rose DiOttavio  
President/CEO

**Crescendo Phoenixville**  
Elizabeth Grimshaw  
Founder and Executive  
Director

**Daemion Counseling Center**  
Kaitlen Langerhans  
Executive Director

**Disability Empowerment  
Center**  
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Executive Director

**Disability Pride PA**  
Vicki Landers  
Founder & Executive Director

**Disability Rights Pennsylvania**  
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Board Member

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Kymberlee Montgomery  
Vice Dean, Nursing and  
Student Affairs

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Brian Duke  
President

**Episcopal Church of the  
Nativity and St. Stephen**  
Rebecca Myers  
Rector

**Family Promise of the Main  
Line**  
Susannah Coleman  
Interim Executive Director

**Family Service of Chester  
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Mark Butler  
Executive Director

**FISA Foundation**  
Kristy Trautmann  
Executive Director

**Foundation for Health Equity**  
Bethany Flood  
Executive Director

**Free Clinic Association of  
Pennsylvania**  
Kristen Rapp  
Executive Director

**Good Samaritan Services**  
Stephanie Washington  
Resource Coordinator

**Good Samaritan Services /  
Lancaster**  
Christine Hibbert  
Resource Coordinator

**Good Samaritan Services /  
Phoenixville**  
Richard Baxter  
Lead Resource Coordinator

**Health Care Access**  
Renaë Bierer  
Executive Director

**HealthSpark Foundation**  
Emma Hertz  
President, CEO

**Highmark Wholecare**  
Joseph Glinka  
Director, HealthChoices

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**HopePHL**

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**Housing Authority of Chester County**

Steven Wayock  
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Executive Director

**La Salle University**

Kathleen Czekanski  
Dean and Professor, School of Nursing and Health Sciences

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Executive Director

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Executive Director

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Thomas Earle  
CEO

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Robert Mecca  
Executive Director

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Director of Nursing

**LutherCare**

Carl McAloose  
President & Chief Executive Officer

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Marianne Fray  
CEO

**Mental Health America of Lancaster County**

Kydonia McDevitt  
Executive Director

**Mental Health America of Lancaster County**

Shelby Witmer  
Family and Child Services Coordinator

**Mental Health America of Southwestern PA**

Laurie Barnett Levine  
CEO

**Mental Health Association in PA**

Laurie Barnett Levine  
Board Vice President

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Executive Director

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Danielle Breslin  
President and CEO

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Johanna Byrd  
Executive Director

**National Nurse-Led Care Consortium**

Sarah Hexem Hubbard  
Executive Director

**Neighbors Helping Neighbors  
on the Main Line**

Muneera Walker  
Executive Director

**Orion Communities**

Kris Keller  
Executive Director

**PA Association of Home and  
Community Based Service  
Providers**

Ted Mowatt  
Executive Director

**PA Chapter, American College  
of Physicians**

Ibrahim Ghobrial, MBBCh  
President

**PA Homecare Association**

Katie Dotto  
Director - Government  
Relations

**PA Rheumatology Society**

Dr. Michael Borofsky  
Advocacy Committee  
Chairman

**Partnership for Better Health**

Carol Thornton  
Director of Grants & Public  
Policy

**Penn State Ross and Carol  
Nese College of Nursing**

Laurie Badzek  
Dean and Professor

**Pennsylvania Action Coalition**

Jennifer Horn Gimbel  
Director

**New Directions Treatment  
Services (NDTS)**

Margaret Desmond  
Executive Director

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Association (PASA)**

Connie Haas  
CEO

**PA Chapter of the American  
Disabled for Attendant  
Programs Today (PA ADAPT)**

Pam Auer  
Organizer

**PA Health Funders  
Collaborative**

Ann Torregrossa  
Director

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Joe Webster  
Representative

**PA Statewide Independent  
Living Council (PA SILC)**

Matthew Seeley  
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**Penn Medicine/LGH**

Tracey Lavallias  
Executive Director

**Pennsylvania Academy of  
Anesthesiologist Assistants**

Brienne Seekford  
President

**Pennsylvania Ambulatory  
Surgery Association (PASA)**

Melanie Greene  
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Cheri Rinehart  
President and CEO

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Academy of Pediatrics**

Annette Myarick  
Executive Director

**PA Home of the Sparrow**

Michelle Venema  
CEO

**PA Medicaid Managed Care  
Organizations (PAMCO)**

Emily Katz  
Executive Director

**ParentChild+**

Malkia Ofori-Agyekum  
Pennsylvania State Director

**Penn Psychiatric Center**

Christopher Carbo  
Director of Programs

**Pennsylvania Academy of  
Family Physicians**

Brent Ennis  
Executive Vice President &  
CEO

**Pennsylvania Association of  
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Laura Wiggins, DNP, CRNA  
President

**Pennsylvania Association of School Nurses and Practitioners (PASNAP)**  
Valerie Zanotti  
Certified School Nurse

**Pennsylvania Coalition for Oral Health**  
Helen Hawkey  
Executive Director

**Pennsylvania College of Health Sciences**  
Melissa Snyder  
Dean of Nursing

**Pennsylvania Geriatrics Society-Western Division**  
Eileen Taylor  
Administrator

**Pennsylvania Health Law Project**  
Amy Lowenstein  
Director of Policy

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Jesse Jones, OD  
President

**Pennsylvania Psychiatric Leadership Council**  
Lloyd Wertz  
Administrator

**Pennsylvania Resident**  
Ann Kolanowski PhD, RN, FAAN  
Professor Emerita, Retired

**Pennsylvania Resident**  
Diana Doherty  
Executive Director of VNA Foundation of Greater North Penn

**Pennsylvania Athletic Trainers' Society**  
Nicole Cattano  
President

**Pennsylvania Coalition of Nurse Practitioners**  
Peggy Pearl  
Executive Director

**Pennsylvania Council on Independent Living**  
Michael Grier  
Executive Director

**Pennsylvania Health Access Network**  
Patrick Keenan  
Director of Policy & Partnerships

**Pennsylvania Home of the Sparrow**  
Michelle Venema  
CEO

**Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children**  
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**Pennsylvania Psychological Association**  
Rachael Baturin  
Director of Government, Legal and Regulatory Affairs

**Pennsylvania Resident**  
Bruria Tal  
Researcher

**Pennsylvania Resident**  
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Director of Government Relations

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David Thompson  
Senior Director, Legislative Affairs

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Abby Keiser  
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Daniel Haimowitz  
Multi-facility Medical Director

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Lori Obrien  
Service Coordinator

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Lori Warren  
Senior Family Peer Support  
Partner at Hopeworx

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Marie Boltz  
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Mark Edwards  
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**Pennsylvania Resident**  
Mary McKenna  
Retired Educator

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Mary Ann Nagel  
Medical Social Work

**Pennsylvania Resident**  
Meaghan Conlisk  
Board Member for the  
Foundation for Health Equity

**Pennsylvania Resident**  
Milagros Abreu  
Advocate, Turning Point of  
Lehigh Valley

**Pennsylvania Resident**  
Nancy Hodgson  
Professor of Nursing at  
University of Pennsylvania

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Women's Christian Association  
(YWCA) Greater Pittsburgh

**Pennsylvania Resident**  
Terri Greenberg

**Pennsylvania Resident**  
Yulanda Myers  
Peer Support Specialist CRS,  
CFRS, SBFW

**Pennsylvania Section of the  
American College of  
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**Pottstown Cluster of Religious Communities (PCRC)**  
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Sr Director, Program Services

**Project Home Healthcare Services**  
Bill (William) Kurtycz  
VP

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CEO

**Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Healthcare Pennsylvania**  
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President

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Lauren Faux  
Programs Manager

**St Peters Episcopal Church**  
Gary Russell  
Director Food Program, St. Peter's Episcopal Church

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CEO/President

**Phoenixville Community Health Foundation**  
Tamela Luce  
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Penny Cook  
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Richard Newell  
CEO

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Malcolm Yates  
Director of Government Relations

**Saint Francis University**  
Rita Trofino  
Associate Dean, School of Health Sciences & Education; Professor and Nursing Department Chair

**Seton Hill University**  
Diane Kondas  
Nursing Program Director

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**Staunton Farm Foundation**  
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**Villanova University College of Nursing**

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Susan Collini  
Administrative & Facility Director

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Donna Raziano  
Medical Director

**University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing**

Antonia Villarruel  
Professor and Margaret Bond Simon Dean of Nursing

**University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work**

Daniel Rosen  
Professor and Director of Integrated Healthcare Certificate

**VNA Community Services, Inc.**

Sandra Devine Saia  
Director, Personal Navigator & SOAR

**West Chester University**

Nancy Barker  
Nursing Chair

**The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania**

Nicole Stallings  
President and CEO

**The Phoenixville Community Health Foundation**

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Director of Finance and Operations

**Thomas Jefferson University - College of Nursing**

Marie Ann Marino  
Dean and Professor

**Touchstone Foundation**

Anna Kennedy  
Executive Director

**United Way of Southwestern PA**

Bobbi Watt Geer  
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John Galley  
Chief Human Resources Officer

**Valley Forge Park Alliance**

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Executive Director

**Why Not Prosper Inc**

Michelle Simmons  
CEO/Founder

**Widener University**  
Anne Krouse  
Dean

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Executive Director

**Young Women's Christian  
Association (YWCA) Greater  
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Angela Reynolds  
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