Alaska’s Health Care Workforce

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University of Alaska

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• Health care is big business
• Shortages are widespread and expensive
• Itinerant workers are a major cost to employers, and a drain to our local economies
• Collaborations are happening
• Solutions must be resourced at every level
Big Industry

- 8%+ of AK’s workforce - 26,500 people
- 62% employment growth from 1992-2002, *triple all-industry growth*
- 11 of the 15 fastest growing Alaska jobs are in health care
- Training continuum ranges from OJT to PhD
- Shortages exist in virtually all occupations
- Lifelong satisfying jobs in local communities
Big Employers

• Providence Health System - Alaska’s largest employer since 2001 with about 4000 employees
• 5 of top 20 employers are in health care
• 24 of top 100 employers are health and social services organizations
• Health topped $5 billion in 2005, 1/3 the value of North Slope oil exports that year

1-3 Data from Alaska Dept of Labor and Workforce Development, Research & Analysis Section
4 Data from Institute for Social and Economic Research, UAA
Many Of Alaska’s Health Care Workers Are Employed In Rural Alaska

And Many are Rural Alaska’s Largest Employers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation</td>
<td>1292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE Alaska Regional Health Consortium</td>
<td>826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maniilaq Association</td>
<td>555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norton Sound Health Corporation</td>
<td>478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where Alaska's Health Care Services Jobs Are-2008:

- Doctor's Offices: 33%
- Hospitals: 41%
- Other Ambulatory: 1%
- Outpatient Care Center: 9%
- Home Health Care: 5%
- Nursing & Residential: 10%
- Public Sector: 0%

*Includes public sector
*Includes offices of physicians, dentists, and offices of other health practitioners

Data from Alaska Dept of Labor and Workforce Development, Research & Analysis Section


* includes public sector
** includes offices of physicians, dentists, and offices of other health practitioners

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section
### Shortages: An Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation Group</th>
<th># Vacancies (estimated statewide)</th>
<th>Vacancy Rate</th>
<th>Mean Length of Longest Vacancy (months)</th>
<th>% Workers 50+ Years in 2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physicians</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>18 months</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician Assistants</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Nurses</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>24 months</td>
<td>38.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health</td>
<td>1033</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>17 months</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allied Health</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>6.0-9.3%</td>
<td>11 months</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentists</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>19 months</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacists</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>15 months</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapists (PT,OT, ST, SLP)</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>15.6-29.3%</td>
<td>24 months</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Occupations</td>
<td>994</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>3529</td>
<td><strong>10.2%</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2007 Vacancy Study and 2006 SORRAS Study, Alaska Center for Rural Health
Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, 2009
Industry Perspective

Itinerant workers and expensive out-of-state recruitments mean dollars lost to employers, and resources not invested in local economies

- In 2005, 80 Alaska health care organizations spent over $11M in recruitment and $13M in itinerants ($24M total), for 16 occupations
- FMH spent over $640K in recruitment, and $920K on itinerants
- FMH has saved at least $3.0M in nurse recruiting since local training started- 60 nurses trained
Prospects

Participants: Formal Training or OJT

Alaska Trained Professionals

Active Practitioners
Alaska HC Workforce
Direct Care
Non-Direct

Possibles: Alaska Population 663,661

- Universe of future possible health workers, and people seeking to enter health careers
- Actively in health training:
  - About 4,000 in UA system in Fall 2008
  - OJT and Other (unknown)
- Alaska Trained Professionals
- 26,500 employed in health and social service orgs, mean vacancy rate of 10%

Retirement

Attrition

Temporary In Migration

Trained outside AK
What’s Working: UA Health Students

• University of Alaska Health Students
  – Increase of 68% in students (2001-2008)
  – Increase of 66% in program completers

Health Student Locations
Bethel Limited Radiography Students and Faculty
Students in UA Health Programs*

*Those leading to degrees, Regents’ certificates, and occupational endorsements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2007 Health Program* Areas:</th>
<th>Fall 2007 Enrollment (Majors and Pre-Majors)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allied Health</td>
<td>662 19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health</td>
<td>1,297 37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>1,351 39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>191 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Health Programs</td>
<td>3,501 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
University Health Programs

More than 80 program areas state wide: allied and behavioral health, emergency services, health management, medical office, nursing, primary care, public health, therapies

- **Recent expansions/additions**
  - Nursing doubled in size to more than 220 admitted to AAS and BS programs per year; AAS distributed to 12 communities
  - Medicine doubled from 10-20
  - Radiologic technology implemented in 6 sites
  - Occupational therapy with Creighton University
  - Speech/Language/Audiology Pathology with East Carolina University
  - Distance Master’s in Social Work expanded
  - Rural Allied Health training via distance delivery
  - More than double MPH enrollment to about 70 distance students
Next Steps

• **Coming soon**
  – Physician Assistant program – increasing from 8 to 24, entire program in Alaska
  – Bachelor’s degree in dietetics and nutrition – via distance
  – Pharmacy – with Creighton University, distance delivered
  – Accredited internship in clinical psychology
  – Ultrasonography program
  – Dental expanded functions training for dental assistants/hygienists
  – Health Sciences Building and campus in Anchorage

• **In the future**
  – Pharmacy education strategic options study
  – Physical therapy and physical therapy assistant programs
  – Doctorate in nursing practice (DNP)
  – Possible partnerships in dentistry
  – Additional programs in health education and health care management
Health Sciences Building

- The Health Sciences Building will house four programs: Nursing, Medicine, Physician Assistant, and Medical Laboratory.
- It is expected to open in Fall 2011.
- The second floor will house several clinical simulation environments that will provide opportunities for interdisciplinary professional education.
- This building is expected to be the first phase of a multi-building health campus.
Health Sciences Campus

UAA Health Sciences Building - Phase 1
$46M total project cost
62,000 gross sq. ft.
57,110 program sq. ft.
Surface Parking for 180 cars
Funding Partners

• AK Mental Health Trust Authority (Trust)
• Denali Commission
• State of Alaska (HSS)
• Federal Government (HHS, DOL)
• Alaska’s Hospitals and Health Care Providers

Collaborations – Selected Examples

• Trust Workforce Development Initiative (30)
• HSS Primary Care Council (17)
• Alaska Center for Rural Health-AHEC Board of Directors (18)

Internal Coordination and Collaboration
Alaska’s AHEC

Goals

1. Alaskans Into Health Careers
2. Clinical Rotations to Underserved Areas
3. CE/CME in Underserved Areas
Critical Actions: Grow Our Own

• Institutionalize Regional System to Recruit and Prepare K-20
• Training Cooperatives
• Apprenticeships/Clinical Rotations
• Increased Resources at Postsecondary Level
• Loan Repayment Program
• Training Plan
Recommendations

• Make Health Workforce Reform a part of Health Care Reform
• Keep it a standing item on your work plan
• Demand cooperation, collaboration
• Continue planning, collaboration, and state investment in Grow Our Own initiatives, including in the health professions
• Make progress on postgraduate programs: internships, residencies
Recommendations

• Strengthen pipeline programs
  • AHEC
  • U-DOC/Della Keats/NIDDK
  • Nursing Workforce Diversity
  • Recruitment and Retention of Alaska Natives Into Nursing (RRANN) – 101 Alaska Native/American Indian nursing graduates since 1998
• Other programs for academically disadvantaged health students, and those from underrepresented and underserved populations