

Alaska SHARP Program FAQs for SHARP-II

FEDERAL AND STATE DESIGNATED SHORTAGE AREAS

1. Q. What role do federal Health Profession Shortage Areas (HPSAs) play in SHARP-II and how do I determine if an area or facility is considered a federal HPSA?

A: Sites federally designated as HPSAs are “grandfathered” into SHARP-II. Prioritization of the sites by the SHARP-II Advisory Body is a different matter, however. Location within a federal HPSA does not guarantee selection in SHARP-II.

The link <http://hpsafind.hrsa.gov/> will take you to the HRSA website where you can find shortage areas by both geographic region and facility address.

2. Q. What is the process for determining if a site is eligible as a state-designated Health Care Services Shortage Area?

A:

- The general factors upon which site eligibility is scored consist of :
 - Population to provider ratio
 - Remoteness/Isolation
 - Health status
 - Economic status
 - Impact of seasonal population
- Some of the factors are very site-specific, and the Site Application provides some of the needed information.
- Both HPSAs and Alaska-designated Health Care Services Shortage Areas are designated in three sub-categories: Primary Care, Behavioral Health Care/Mental Health, and Dental Care. In addition to designation as a Health Care Services Shortage Area, a site must meet other eligibility requirements as outlined in the site application.
- In sum, each Site Applicant will end up receiving a score, and those scores will then be ranked.

3. Q. How is the needs assessment score calculated?

A: The needs assessment score is calculated using data from a number of state and national sources, including the Alaska Department of Labor, Bureau of Vital Statistics, Alaska Cancer Registry, Alaska Trauma Registry, American Community Survey, and Alaska Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System. The needs assessment score is comprised of the following elements:

- 35% - Population-to-Provider Ratio
- 30% - Remoteness/Isolation
- 15% - Health Status
- 15% - Economic Status
- 5% - Impact of seasonal population

Note that for population-to-provider ratio and health status elements of the score, sub-category-specific (Primary Care Medical, Behavioral Health, & Dental) criteria will be counted. Therefore, a single site may have different needs assessment scores in these sub-categories which may affect the eligible provider types.

While many sites may be considered eligible, state law stipulates that eligible sites be prioritized based on needs assessment score and percentage of underserved patients treated at the site. For purposes of SHARP-II, an underserved patient is defined as a patient who is uninsured or who receives or is eligible to receive Medicare, Medicaid, or other federal health program benefits.

4. Q. How do I know if positions located in federal Health Profession Service Areas (HPSAs) will qualify as very hard-to-fill under SHARP-II?

A: Having a federal HPSA status does not necessarily mean that a given position within that HPSA will be considered very hard-to-fill. Those designations will be established by the SHARP-II Advisory Body.