

## **PROJECT ABSTRACT**

Project Title: Alaska's SHARP Program  
Applicant: Department of Health and Social Services, State of Alaska  
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HRSA Request: \$4,000,000 total over 4 years (HRSA-18-011, CFDA 93.165)  
Total Budget: \$16,800,000 total over 4 years (federal & non-federal)

**Purpose:** Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) is again applying for federal funding to build upon its solidly established SHARP Program. This will be SHARP's fourth consecutive grant from the U.S. Health Resources & Services Administration's (HRSA) State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP). Alaska's SHARP-1 component is designed to increase retention and recruitment of primary healthcare clinicians, and thereby improve access to care for underserved and vulnerable populations. The strategy is to provide solid support-for-service financial benefit contingent upon clinicians working with such populations. A variety of healthcare organizations and governmental entities have documented the need to increase the number and improve the distribution of outpatient generalist clinicians. They have agreed that continuation of our joint state-federal program with at least 50% non-federal match is a critical step for support-for-service in Alaska. Over time, the National Health Service Corp and Indian Health Service have contributed to Alaska's supply of clinicians, however much more is needed. The proposed SHARP-1 project will help reduce the loss of clinicians to other states.

**Need:** Alaska Physician Supply Task Force Report (2006), two Status of Recruitment Resources and Strategies (SORRAS) reports (2004, 2006), the Alaska 2015-2016 Primary Care Needs Assessment, the University of Alaska's vacancy studies (2007, 2009 & 2012) and other studies have all documented high shortages and vacancies, recruitment costs, time-to-fill positions, as well as looming state and national shortages.

**Program and Capacity:** To date, SHARP has produced 254 clinician-contracts. This project will add at least another 282 clinician-contracts at a minimum. SHARP consists of: (1) program management (including clinician and site eligibility); (2) interagency guidance provided by Alaska's SHARP Council, composed of prominent external partners; (3) loan and lender verification, (4) payment and accounting services consistent with state and federal guidelines, (5) program evaluation, and (6) a sustainability plan. Total proposed budget is \$16.8 M. Funding for loan repayment is derived from both federal (\$4.0M) and non-federal (\$12.8 M) sources, with the later composed of \$12.0 from employers and \$0.8M from the Alaska Mental Health Trust.

**Clinicians:** Number of clinicians to participate, by type, during the four-year project beginning in FFY 2018 (9/1/18-8/31/22), with 2 sequential cohorts, each with two-year clinician contracts: 282 total FTE, comprised of 107 primary care medical; 70 oral health; and 105 behavioral health clinicians, with about 70% to be located in rural and remote areas.