

Health Workforce Council 2024 Recommendations

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Staff to Health Workforce Council

Nov. 19, 2024





Rural health workforce strategy

Version developed with Council/stakeholder input in September

The Council will develop and advocate for policy recommendations that enable rural students and workers to access and succeed in health professional training programs and career advancement opportunities without having to leave their communities.

Are Council members in agreement on this strategy to guide work in 2025?



Educational debt recommendations

Originally made in 2022, reissued in 2023

Recommendation 1: The Council recommends policymakers appropriate additional funds to support both behavioral health and other health professional loan repayment awards through the Washington Health Corps to address immediate retention challenges within a variety of healthcare settings.



Educational debt recommendations

Recent General Fund – State Appropriations for Washington Health Corps*

Program	19-21 Biennium	21-23 Biennium	23-25 Biennium
State Health Program	\$7.65M	\$7.65M	\$17.6M
Behavioral Health Program	\$2M	\$12.25M	\$12M
Nurse Educator Program	-	\$3M	\$6M

*This does not include the Federal Health Program. For the FHP, \$2M federal dollars are matched with \$1.1M GFS. Due to grant requirements, this program has less flexibility than the state-only funded programs.

Source: Washington Student Achievement Council

Is this still a Council priority?

If so, is the request still “additional” or to “maintain.”



Educational debt recommendations

Originally made in 2022, updated and reissued in 2023

Recommendation 2: As part of supporting investments made in loan repayment programs in Washington, the Council recommends policymakers appropriate funds for an evaluation of program outcomes.

Evaluation work is underway at WSAC. Work currently ends June 2025. Does Council wish to affirm commitment to evaluation and request funds/work be extended to allow more time?



Educational debt recommendations

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Recommendation 3: The Council recommends policymakers require eligible healthcare employers provide Public Service Loan Forgiveness educational materials and information about the Office of the Student Loan Advocate when hiring new employees, annually after hiring, and at the time of employee separation. The Office of the Student Loan Advocate should conduct outreach to eligible healthcare employers and assess if additional staff members are needed to serve demand.



Educational debt recommendations

Recommendation 3

OFM is in the final approval stage before releasing a report required under RCW 43.41.425.

The report includes a recommendation that, with different wording, is substantially like the recommendations made by the Health Workforce Council.

Does Council want to (tentatively) affirm the OFM recommendations? Staff will forward the final report when publicly available and final decision/concerns can be shared via email.



Community resources recommendation

Originally made in 2022, updated and reissued in 2023

Recommendation 4: The Council affirms that access to high-quality, reliable child care, affordable housing, and transportation are key community resources for the current and future healthcare workforce. Having access to these resources in their communities allows the state's healthcare workers to accept and maintain employment. Additionally, child care, housing, and transportation are vital to developing future workforce efforts. Students and educators in the health professions are also highly impacted by lack of access to these community resources. The Council recommends that the Governor and Legislature continue to take action to address the need for dramatically increased access to affordable child care, housing, and transportation services in Washington.

The Council also encourages healthcare employers to consider innovative approaches to help support their workers needs for these community resources.



Community resources recommendation

Recommendation 4

These barriers continued to be raised by employers in 2024 as key issues impacting their ability to recruit/retain workers.

Does Council want to continue to include this as a recommendation area?

Given our staff limitations, is it sufficient to continue to draw attention to the topic and use our voice to carry forward the challenges reported by employers/workers/students?

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Staff to the Health Workforce Council

