



Legislative Update

National Advisory Committee on National Health Service Corps (NHSC)

June 22, 2021

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Bureau of Health Workforce (BHW)

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)





Agenda

- **Recently enacted legislation**
- **Recently proposed legislation**
- **Maternity Care Target Areas**
- **Questions**

American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act:

- Section 2602: appropriated \$800 million for the NHSC programs, including a \$100 million set aside for the State Loan Repayment Program
- The State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) funding contains additional flexibilities to assist states in administering the program, including:
 - Removing the \$1 for \$1 state matching funds requirement
 - Allowing for up to 10% of funding to be spent on program administration
- The SLRP program will hold a new competition in FY 2022, using the ARP funding.

Recently Proposed Legislation

- S. 54 (Sens. Dick Durbin (D-IL) & Marco Rubio (R-FL)): **Strengthening America's Healthcare Readiness Act**: proposed an additional \$5B appropriation for the NHSC program, with a 40% set aside for racial and ethnic minorities and students from low-income urban and rural areas. The bill would also establish a demonstration program to mobilize the NHSC workforce to serve in emergency capacities via National Disaster Medical System (NDMS).
- S. 1587 / HR 3150 (Sens. Tina Smith (D-MN) & Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Rep. John Katko (R-NY)): **Mental Health Professionals Workforce Shortage Loan Repayment Act**: bipartisan, bicameral bill reintroduced from 115th & 116th Congresses; proposes to amend Title VII of the PHSA to provide up to \$250k in eligible student loan repayment for mental health professionals who work in mental health HPSAs.
- S. 1593 (Sens. Brian Schatz (D-HI) and John Barrasso (R-WY)): **Ensuring Access to General Surgery Act**: proposes to amend the Public Health Service Act to require the Secretary to designate general surgery shortage areas.

Recently Proposed Legislation

- S. 924: (Sens. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), Richard Durbin (D-IL), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), & Tina Smith (D-MN)): **Rural America Health Corps Act**: proposes to establish an NHSC LRP demonstration program for rural providers. Eligible individuals would be the same as the traditional LRP under section 338B; participants would be required to complete 5 years of service in a rural HPSA in exchange for \$200,000 in loan repayment.
- HR 3297: (Reps. Jason Crow (D-CO), Michael Burgess (R-TX), Anna Eshoo (D-CA), & Brett Guthrie (R-KY)): **Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment Act**: proposes to establish a Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment Program to promote the recruitment of public health professionals at local, state, and tribal public health agencies in section 330J of the PHSA. Qualifying individuals must be in their final year of pursuing a public health or health professions degree, or have graduated within the last 10 years. Individuals would agree to a 3 year service commitment at a local, state, or tribal public health agency in exchange for up to \$35,000 of loan repayment per year of service.

Recently Proposed Legislation

- HR 2295: **HIV Epidemic Loan Repayment Program (HELP) Act**: reintroduced from the 116th Congress (originally introduced by the late Rep. John Lewis (D-GA)); authorizes a new LRP in Title VII of the PHSA, which will offer up to \$250,000 in loan repayment in exchange for 5 years of service. Eligible providers include physicians, NPs, PAs, pharmacists, and dentists who provide HIV treatment in HPSAs or Ryan White-funded sites.
- HR 3759: (Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO)): **Physical Therapist Workforce and Patient Access Act**: proposes to amend section 338B of the Public Health Service Act to extend eligibility for the NHSC Loan Repayment Program to physical therapists.
- S. 1010 (Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH)): **Turn the Tide Act**: an appropriations bill which proposes to provide additional funding for programs under the SUPPORT Act. The bill proposes to appropriate additional funding for section 781 of the PHSA to appropriate \$25M for each of FY 2021-2024 for the Substance Use Disorder Treatment Workforce (STAR) LRP.



GAO Report: National Health Service Corps Program Directs Funding to Areas with Greatest Provider Shortages

- Released June 1, 2021
- Reports that in 2020, 14,000 primary care providers participated in an NHSC program and that physicians, nurse practitioners, and licensed clinical social workers were the provider types that received the largest number of awards.
- Reports that 40% of applicants did not receive funding because their designated NHSC site's degree of need was not high enough.
- Reports that these rejected applicants still provided care at sites in high need for primary care providers and would have been considered if more funding was available.

The Improving Access to Maternity Care Act passed in December 2019

- Requires HRSA to:
 - Identify areas with shortages of maternity care professionals (MCTAs) within existing Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs)
 - Distribute maternity care health professionals in the National Health Service Corps using MCTA scores
 - Collect and publish data in the Federal Register comparing the availability and need of maternity care health services in HPSAs; and
 - Seek input from relevant provider organizations and other stakeholders.
- HRSA published an RFI in May 2020 to seek public comment on the criteria used for MCTA scoring. HRSA is currently reviewing responses and potential data sources to draft MCTA scoring criteria.





Support & Resources Master

Contact Us

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