



88th LEGISLATIVE SESSION MCALLEN DAY IN AUSTIN

Boosting the Health Care Workforce Pipeline

Long-term workforce challenges existed well before the COVID-19 pandemic, with an aging workforce and shortages of nurse faculty and clinical training sites. Roughly 500,000 nurses are expected to leave the workforce bringing the overall shortage to 1.1 million nurses in Texas. To keep up with the state’s rising population and growing health care needs, increased support should be prioritized for educational and loan programs.

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- **Nursing Shortage Reduction Fund** – provides grants to nursing education programs for public and private schools of higher education. In 2013, the state appropriates \$35 million to the fund, however, by 2021 it falls to \$19 million. Significant funding is needed to increase nurse graduates and grow the number of bedside nurses.
- **Graduate Medical Education Expansion Program** - supports the effort to increase first-year physician residency programs. The 87th Legislature appropriated \$199 million to the program for the 2022-2023 biennium.
- **Nursing Faculty Loan Repayment Assistance Program** – encourages qualified nurses to serve as faculty at eligible institutions of higher education. In 2021, the program had about \$3 million in appropriations. Hospitals support additional funding to increase the availability of nurse faculty.
- **Physician Education Loan Repayment Program** – encourages qualified physicians to practice medicine in a Health Professional Shortage Area or to provide Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance program services. Texas hospitals support an increase in physicians in rural and underserved areas.
- **Loan Repayment Program for Mental Health Professionals** – provides assistance to behavioral health providers including psychiatrists, psychologists, mental health advanced practice nurses, counselors and social workers. Currently funded at \$2 million per biennium, THA supports increasing funding to help address the critical shortage of behavioral health professionals.
- **Hospitals support the growth of the allied health care workforce** – the Texas Legislature needs to direct an evaluation of acute and ongoing allied health care workforce and develop strategies to increase these professionals.
- **Health Workforce And Nursing Shortages** – Health care workforce shortages (particularly nursing) have strained the state’s health care system and threatens hospitals’ ability to care for patients. Investments are needed to build a robust pipeline of health care professions in shortage, with a strategic focus on nursing.
- **State-of-the-Art Research Facility for Hispanic Health in the Rio Grande Valley** - Building a state-of-the-art research facility will provide the foundation needed to establish Texas a national leader in Hispanic focused medical research and provide a strong bioscience ecosystem and economic engine for the State of Texas. The research conducted at the facility will directly impact the welfare of Texans who will be majority Hispanic by 2030, and draw hundreds of millions of dollars in investment into the state, fuel economic growth, and further cement the State of Texas as the future of the bio-science industry and the epicenter for Hispanic research nationally.

Provided by:
The Texas Hospital Association