

# Health & Human Services Partnerships w/ Higher Education Workgroup Minutes

August 16, 2022 | Rhode Island Nursing Education Center

Co-facilitators: Amy Grzybowski, RI Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner & Rick Brooks, RI Executive Office of Health & Human Services (standing in for Sandra Victorino)

## General Meeting Overview:

Cofacilitators went over high-level updates on subcommittees generated by both the 'Health Workforce Data Collection & Analytics' and 'Health Career Pathways & Pipelines' workgroups.

- 'Health Workforce Data Collection & Analytics' workgroup subcommittees:
  - Authorized vs. delivered service hours for homecare and beyond (as a proxy for workforce shortages)
  - Healthcare salary & vacancy surveys
  - Sharing of RIDOH licensure data with EOHHS EcoSystem & DataSpark
  - Expand core data elements collected in RIDOH licensing system
  - Inventory of available workforce/higher education data sources (overlapping subcommittee with HHS Partnerships w/ Higher Ed. workgroup)
    - It was noted that EOHHS has an updated [healthcare education & trainings webpage](#).
    - It was also noted that EOHHS is in the process of developing a one-stop webpage for identifying training programs across higher education institutions and agencies.
  
- 'Health Career Pathways & Pipelines' workgroup subcommittees:
  - Career Development Day
    - Cody Fino, CCRI, gave a brief verbal update on the subgroup meeting held on 8/15. We will need manpower for this event planning. Once we nail down resources and capacity we will look to those on the education & training sides to participate. We will need to do extensive marketing and outreach in order to get folks to the event.
  - Health & Human Services Career Ladders & Pathways (not yet active)
    - Rachael Sardinha, RIDOH, noted that RIDOH also has an intern who is working on developing a career pathways document and will share this with the Health Career Pathways & Pipelines workgroup once the RIDOH communications team signs off on the document.

This was followed by detailed discussion of 'Health & Human Services Partnerships w/ Higher Education' subcommittees, with report-outs from subcommittee leads. There were no updates for two initiatives, **RIDE/CTE Enhanced Partnerships & Simulation Lab Partnerships**; these subcommittees will begin to be

active in September. To reiterate, please refer to the [supplemental meeting material](#) for overview of these and all subcommittees.

Below are supplemental, granular 'Health & Human Services Partnerships w/ Higher Education' subcommittee updates, and ideas that were stimulated through full workgroup discussion:

- Clinical Placements Solutions
  - This is a long-term initiative but very interested in ideas for short term tasks.
  - This subgroup is looking for more participants – email Sue if interested.
  - Currently, there are various problematic aspects of providing clinical placements and internship opportunities for health professional students.
    - Some higher ed institutions have difficulty finding clinical placements while some provider organizations would like to accept placements but do not know how to do so.
    - Providers need assistance in identifying preceptors.
    - Some providers have issues dedicating staff (often requires pulling supervisors out of providing billable service hours)
  - Current proposed legislation in two states addresses the idea of public support for funding preceptors in various approaches, including allowing for a students' time to be paid for by Managed Care Organizations.
    - We need to have one unified approach as a State to this legislation.
  - Subcommittee is putting together a survey to capture clinical placement procedure information from higher ed institutions, looking at how placements work across all health professional academic programs with clinical placement requirements (BH, nursing, OT, etc.) including differing lengths of stay, differences between pre- and post-licensure, the manner in which preceptors are currently identified, etc.
    - This information must be collected in the least burdensome manner possible, so collection process is TBD.
- Research project: What other states are doing to address similar issues identified by this higher education workgroup
  - This is a longer-term, ongoing research project; this group will operate independently, gathering information and sharing significant discoveries with subgroups/full workgroups, as appropriate.

Other concurrent activities relevant to this health workforce planning initiative were then discussed.

- The 'Health Professional Equity Initiative' – With a focus on pursuing equitable outcomes for racial, ethnic, and culturally diverse individuals, EOHHHS and OPC have partnered to support paraprofessionals who currently work in home and community-based services to pursue higher education leading to a health professional credential, degree and/or license. These supports may include tuition assistance, books, fees, childcare, tutoring and more. **135** individuals have been accepted into this program. The time for spending these funds has extended to March 2025; the program will support individuals until the funding runs out, at which time they will be

connected with other resources. The workgroup will be notified when the application process reopens and roughly how many spots will be left to fill.

- Health professional loan repayment resources:
  - EOHHS, with support from a RIC graduate intern and RIDOH, are developing a health professional loan repayment resource tool. Group members provided helpful input on the mechanics of a resource tool.
  - Barry O'Connor from Commerce RI discussed RI's Wavemaker Fellowship tax credit program which has recently been expanded to include a healthcare cohort, likely to begin an application cycle in Fall 2022 or early Spring 2023, once an advisory committee puts necessary rules and regulations in place.
  - Discussion was held regarding if/how providers promote various federal and state loan repayment options for health professionals through their hiring processes, as well as if/how loan repayment options are promoted to higher ed students along their academic journey (such as a recruitment strategy, at new-student orientation as applicable, incorporated into guidance counseling or academic programming, etc.)
  - Generally, it seemed that this is an area with significant room for improvement on both the provider and higher education sides. Loan repayment options should be a key recruitment strategy for both IHEs and providers.
  - It is imperative that health professional loan repayment information is incorporated into high school curriculum. This area of focus will be brought to the health career pathways workgroup as well.
  - Several workgroup members volunteered to be part of a loan repayment subcommittee, were one to be in place. The internal planning team plans to discuss emerging subcommittees and will contact volunteers with any developments.
- U.S. Department of Labor forecasted grant: [Nursing Expansion Program](#). This link can be accessed for further information on this grant, which is intended to address bottlenecks in training the nursing workforce and expand and diversify the pipeline of qualified nursing professionals through two training tracks. The group briefly reviewed this forecasted grant (estimated to be posted 9/30/22) and concluded that we should aim to submit one consolidated application as a state.

Finally, the idea of revisiting the workgroup and subgroup meeting cadence was discussed. Several workgroup members noted that, especially as we move into the Fall and schedules get busier, most participants will have less availability to meet. This is a shared sentiment across workgroups; as such, the internal planning team will re-evaluate the meeting cadence and will come back to the workgroup with a solution.

### Next Steps:

- The next meeting date for the Health & Human Services Partnerships with Higher Education Workgroup is **TBD**. For now, we will keep the September 20<sup>th</sup> meeting on the calendar, and we will send scheduling updates to workgroup participants in advance of the next scheduled meeting.
- Please refer to the [supplemental meeting material](#) on the EOHHS Health Workforce Planning & Implementation webpage for full subgroup status updates and subcommittee leads contact information.

## Workgroup Attendees:

1. Co-facilitator - Amy Grzybowski, OPC
2. Co-facilitator - Rick Brooks, EOHHS
3. Linda Mahoney, BHDDH
4. Jen Ricci, RIDOH
5. Rachael Sardinha, RIDOH
6. Aryana Huskey, EOHHS
7. Barry O'Connor, Commerce RI
8. Cody Fino, Community College of RI (CCRI)
9. Suzanne Carr, CCRI
10. Rosemary Costigan, CCRI
11. Sue Pearlmutter, Rhode Island College
12. Bryan Blissmer, University of RI (URI)
13. MJ Kanaczet, URI
14. Sharon Stager, Salve Regina University
15. Alan Resnick, New England Institute of Technology
16. Laura Galligan, Johnson & Wales University
17. Amy Weinstein, Western Governor's University
18. Elena Nicolella, RI Health Center Assoc.
19. David Bodah, RI Assisted Living Assoc.
20. Howard Dulude, Hospital Association of RI (HARI)
21. Katie Norman, RI Health Care Assoc.
22. Jim Nyberg, Leading Age RI
23. Stacy Paterno, RI Medical Society
24. Sandra Olivo Peterson, Bayada
25. Sue Kershaw-Sczuroski, Tides Family Services
26. Caroline Peters, PACE
27. Ariane Famiglietti, Lifespan/Gateway