



**New Jersey Health Care Workforce Council Recommendations
Approved by the NJ State Employment and Training Commission
November 29, 2012**

The intersection of a rapidly changing economy recovering from a severe recession and the fundamental shifts underway in the U.S. health care system has created a unique opportunity for key health care workforce stakeholders to identify shared interests, resolve long-standing issues, and create a collaborative concept for future workforce development.

The future provision of health care services in New Jersey is dependent on the existence of an adequately trained, skilled workforce. Significant factors, including national policy, technological advances and health care economics, are changing the way that health care is delivered. Additional factors, most notably the aging of the baby boom generation and rising rates of chronic health conditions are increasing the demand for health care services. Employment in the health care industry grew steadily, even during the recession and is expected maintain this growth trajectory in the years ahead. In response to this analysis, New Jersey has launched a statewide Health Care Workforce Council in order to ensure that there is an adequate supply of appropriately skilled health care workers to meet the current and future health care system demand.

In 2010, the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) was awarded an Affordable Care Act State Health Care Workforce Development Planning Grant (HRSA-10-284) to fund a planning effort to assess New Jersey's health care workforce needs. To support and guide this effort, the SETC formed the New Jersey Health Care Workforce Council, chaired by Robert P. Wise, CEO of Hunterdon Healthcare System. The Council's 34 members represent health care employers, educators, workforce experts, organized labor, industry and professional associations, foundations, and State government.

Launched in December 2010, the mission of the Council is to develop and strengthen New Jersey's health care workforce and to support a sustainable, quality health care system for the good of the State and all of its residents. The Council makes recommendations to the State Employment and Training Commission to ensure strategic investments to meet the needs of health care employers for a highly-trained and diverse workforce that will benefit individuals who are starting or advancing in health care careers.

The goals of the Health Care Workforce Council are to:

- Develop policy recommendations to improve the health care workforce in New Jersey.
- Review and assess workforce models that increase accountability and efficiencies, both in the streamlining of the education process as well as in the delivery and accessibility of quality health care.
- Identify ways to increase access to health care careers by new workers and ways to up-skill incumbent health care workers.
- Determine the most successful strategies to "fast-track", cross-train, and up-skill workers to create a viable pipeline of health care workers who are educated and trained at levels required by health care employers.



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Background and Context

Central to workforce development is the need to move individuals from unemployment to employment in self-sustaining wage jobs that support economic growth; to ensure that incumbent workers attain the competencies they need to succeed in health care careers and to advance in their occupation; to meet the needs of employers for highly skilled workers; and to cultivate a culturally competent workforce that reflects the regional diversity of New Jersey health care consumers.

Employers are critical partners in the development of workforce training programs. Business input is vital when creating health care education and training curricula to ensure that relevant, in-demand skill sets and competencies are developed. Expanding worker supply without attention to the changing structure of the health care labor force and true skills demand will risk the paradox of producing trained, highly-educated health care workers who are unemployed, while experiencing a critical shortage of health care professionals with skills and competencies that are needed by business. To avoid this, all partners must be engaged to examine assumptions and find shared interests in order to reach agreement about common standards and curricula across health care occupations that will contribute to a flexible and accessible workforce development system.

Fundamental questions of when, where, and how much health care is delivered; who will pay for it; and who will deliver it will all need to be addressed in order to adequately prepare the future health care workforce. A nationally recognized health care model that grew out of asking these questions was begun nine years ago in New Jersey. A group of primary care providers led by Dr. Jeff Brenner began discussions about the issues they faced while practicing in Camden, which led to developing a strategy to improve the quality, capacity, and accessibility of health care for the most vulnerable residents of Camden. Central to the success of the Camden Coalition of Health Providers is efficiency of care through communication, genuine collaboration, and data-driven initiatives that result in sustainability. The team care concept, comprised of workers with a wide range of skill sets, was strongly supported by the Council. This concept is recognized by the Council as an effective way to deliver care across urban, suburban, and rural communities. Team care models could provide cost savings if implemented statewide, through the reduction of the inappropriate use of hospital emergency services.

The Council also recognized the barrier created when health care resources are siloed into localized delivery systems and supports the exploration of regional delivery of care based on population health needs. By considering the regional demand for health care, the State can better project the workforce skills and occupations needed for the future.

These concepts and issues were a frame of reference used by the Council as members engaged in an examination of New Jersey's health care workforce that resulted in the recommendations below. These recommendations reflect the thinking and intent of Council members who recognize the importance of a unified and coordinated workforce development system that has employer-driven needs as its touchstone, as well as the importance of education and training that satisfies the long-term needs of both workers and employers.



| Recommendations | Work Groups |
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| <p>Priority 1: Develop systemic institutionalized processes to ensure that health care education and training investments are based on skill needs of employers</p> <p>A. Institutionalize the work of the Health Care Workforce Council to continue to maximize the industry intelligence and expertise in the creation of policies and th programs’ responses to health care employers.</p> <p>B. Continue the efforts of the Health Care Talent Network to build connections between employers, educational institutions, jobseekers, and students to continue to create systemic workforce connections.</p> <p>C. Work with higher education, foundations and employers to establish a Health Care Workforce Data Center.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish a repository for the collection, aggregation, and analysis of health care workforce data. ○ Build an infrastructure that improves the collection, use, and distribution of health care workforce data among multiple state agencies, partners and stakeholders. ○ Revise regulations and create data sharing agreements to enable state agencies to share and merge data relevant to the health care workforce, public health, and health occupation education. <p>D. Collect basic workforce and demographic data (Minimum Data Sets) at the time of licensure/certification and re-licensure/recertification.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Betsy Garlatti (group lead) ● Deb Briggs ● Jeannie Cimiotti ● Pat Orchard ● Ann Twomey |
| <p>Priority 2: To ensure that students and jobseekers have access to information on health care careers.</p> <p>Health Care Workforce / Career Awareness Website: Develop a website dedicated to New Jersey’s health care workforce targeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individuals interested in entering a health care career, advancing/up-skilling in a health care career, or changing a health care career path ○ Workforce professionals and para-professionals who want to stay connected and involved in the health care field, particularly during periods of unemployment <p>The site, an offshoot of www.Jobs4Jersey.com, should be established by the Health Care Talent Network. It would function as a clearinghouse, providing information on health care careers, professional networking sites, health care workforce data, career pathways and education/training opportunities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Padma Arvind (group lead) ● Jeff Flatley (or designate) ● Dept. of Education rep. (TBD) |



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| <p>Priority 3: Review licensing and certification processes to eliminate barriers and recommend viable solutions to incent workforce preparedness.</p> <p>Establish a Licensing and Certification Committee, of the Health Care Workforce Council to identify barriers to practice and recommend viable solutions.</p> <p>Work should commence with issues identified through the initial work of the Health Care Workforce Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Delays in licensure and certification, due to administrative processing issues ○ Penalties assessed to unemployed workers who do not maintain active licensure/certification, which act as a disincentive to continuing in health care careers ○ Requirements for licensure and certification (i.e. to allow job-based learning opportunities for direct care workers, specifically for Certified Nursing Assistants). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Padma Arvind (group lead) ● Bill Dwyer ● Doug Placa ● Kathy Weaver ● NJHA rep (TBD - Belinda Cooper) ● Division of Consumer Affairs (TBD) |
| <p>Priority 4: Create a responsive training and education system to build the current and future capacity of the health care workforce</p> <p>A. Create Health Care Career Pathways through the integrated work of employers and educational institutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish a process to develop coordinated, state-wide education pathways to health care careers for top health care labor demand occupations. ○ Establish and support programs for seamless, affordable, and accelerated degree completion that meet the needs of employers and non-traditional students. (i.e. granting credit for Registered Nurse work experience through testing and portfolios assessment.) <p>B. Enhance Job-Based Training and Inter-Professional Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support efforts and programs that advance new health care models of inter-professional education and collaboration. ○ Support transition-to-practice programs to improve retention rates, expand competencies, and improve patient outcomes (i.e. nurse residency programs). ○ Identify and work to eliminate barriers to health care internship and apprenticeship programs. ○ Support fast-tracking military veterans in certification and degree programs through military credit assessment and work experience portfolios assessment. <p>C. Development of new training programs for unemployed and incumbent workers tied directly to employers and industry need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish a consortium of employers, unions, and community-based organizations engaged in job-based training and education with direct links to the statewide pathways mapping effort. ○ Support efforts and programs that facilitate the alignment of training and education with employer and workplace needs through job-based training and education. ○ Provide incentives to employers for developing, implementing, or maintaining job-based training and education programs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sue Schurman (group lead) ● Susan Bakewell-Sachs ● Jane Brady ● Deb Briggs (4B) ● Jeannie Cimiotti ● Geri Dickson ● Donna Scalia ● Sid Seligman ● Deanna Sperling |



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The NJ Health Care Workforce Council gratefully acknowledges the contributions of its members and member designates who contributed time, knowledge, and expertise to generate these recommendations:

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