

MA/CHW/HN Workgroup Recommendations

The recommendations that can inform strategies for the advancement of a regional health workforce development approach that makes optimal use of limited resources for training, recruitment, employment, advancement, and retention are summarized below.

There are three categories of recommendations that outline a strategy to building a regional approach to the training: engagement, advancement, and retention of allied health professionals and key areas of focus within the process.

A. Infrastructure

1. Establish a regional advisory board of education, workforce, and healthcare employers with the charge to form a regional planning entity and infrastructure to coordinate allied health profession workforce training resources, employment, and career advancement.
 - Reach common agreement on the roles and core competencies required for advancing the allied health professions within healthcare settings.
 - **Form a regional chapter of a national medical assisting association to support regional AHW advocacy efforts and formal workforce representation.**
2. Provide organizational infrastructure and resources for training programs to continuously monitor, assess, and improve upon program designs to be both responsive and specific to local workforce developments, prospective employer needs, and community issues.
3. Invest in a pooled faculty development program for allied health programs to address the regional faculty shortage and ensure that training programs have the capacity to deliver consistent quality.
 - Design and implement strategies to build knowledge among preceptors that optimizes the mobilization of trainee skills and competencies.

B. Training

1. Conduct a follow up targeted analysis of projected workforce needs for allied health professionals in the near (1-2 years) and medium (3-5 years) term, specifically current roles, desired competencies, and post-hire training needs.
2. Conduct a regional assessment of the current capacity, expansion potential, and geographic proximity of training programs in academic and community settings to meet projected healthcare employer needs.
3. Under the auspices of the regional advisory board (A1), develop strategies to align, strengthen, and address gaps in existing allied health training programs.
 - Develop up-skilling training programs for incumbent workers as a retention strategy and to align tiered salary structures across organizations.
 - Develop core competency-based modules to capture complementary strengths of college- and community-based training programs
 - **Develop specialized training modules that address skill gaps in which employers currently invest significant resources in (e.g., EHR).**
4. Explore traditional and non- sources of public and private sector funding through organizations such as the MAA, SNAP (SSA), and GGP for health education reimbursement to ensure the sustainability of allied health training programs.

C. Staffing and Retention

1. Create a regional employment exchange for allied health professionals to serve as an intermediate and qualified clearinghouse for employers' human resource needs as well as facilitate internships and job placements for students and graduates.
 - Build collaborative relationships with K-12 schools, adult education, and career advancement programs to increase awareness of post-secondary educational programs, work-based learning and links to health career pathway opportunities.
2. **Develop co-investment strategies for employers to establish a per diem pool of qualified allied health professionals to increase workforce stability, reduce demand for costly contractual replacements, and avoid workplace disruptions**
3. Explore the apprenticeship model as an employer-defined strategy for experiential work-based learning to create opportunities for mentorship and offer paid employment.