

Meeting Minutes: Health Care Workforce & Education Committee

DATE: May 1, 2024

Committee Member Attendance

- Susan Culican –University of Minnesota
- David Dahlen – Mayo Clinic
- Kelly Frisch— HealthPartners
- Miranda Gilmore – Fraser Integrated Healthcare
- Badrinath Konety—Allina
- Robert Miner – Allina Health/Abbott Northwestern
- Christine Mueller –University of Minnesota
- Nate Mussell —Fairview
- Peter Nalin – University of Minnesota Medical School, Duluth campus
- Michelle Noltimier—HealthPartners Institute
- Sheila Riggs – University of Minnesota
- Troy Taubenheim – Chair - Metro Minnesota Council on GME
- Meghan Walsh –Hennepin County Medical Center
- Linda Welage—University of Minnesota

Not in Attendance:

- Brad Benson—M Health-Fairview
- Roger Dearth—Mayo Clinic
- Kimberly Lakhan—College of St. Scholastica
- Thomas Satre – Vice Chair – CentraCare Health

Health Department Staff: Kelsey Besse, Cirrie Byrnes, Megan Loew, Nitika Moibi, Zora Radosevich, Diane Reger, Melissa Stevens.

Department of Human Services Staff: Susan Hammersten

Agenda Items

- Welcome – Troy Taubenheim, Chair

- Legislative Updates: Contingent Proposal to Fund GME, Academic Health Center Task Force, Health Professions Workforce Advisory Council Proposal
- State Programs/Grant Updates
 - Office of Rural Health & Primary Care Program Updates – Zora Radosevich, MDH
 - Rural Rotations and Clinical Experience Training
 - Site Based Clinical Training
 - Medical Education & Research Cost Program – Diane Reger, MDH
- Future Meetings
 - 2024 dates – **September 18 (revised date)** and November 6 – all web-based teleconference, 1 – 3 p.m.
 - Submit topics to committee chairs or health.merc@state.mn.us.

Meeting Notes

Welcome and Introductions: Troy Taubenheim, Chair

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m. Draft minutes from the February 7 committee meeting were approved as written.

Legislative Updates

Contingent Proposal to Fund GME: Dan Pollock reported that bills have gone to both the House and Senate. Teaching hospitals would come together to seek GME funding based on Medicaid support. He pointed out that the data shows Minnesota is underfunded in this area. Mr. Pollock noted funding could come from a teaching hospital surcharge and federal match that could be distributed through a Medicaid supplemental payment. There was discussion around the impact to current GME funding and whether the proposal would gain CMS approval.

Academic Health Center Task Force: Dr. Meghan Walsh reported that there is no future plan for the task force to meet. She stated that the main goal of the task force was to determine possible GME funding options.

Health Professions Workforce Advisory Council Proposal: Zora Radosevich discussed the current proposal to form an advisory council for Health Professions Workforce.

State Programs/Grant Updates –Zora Radosevich, MDH

Rural and Underserved Clinical Rotations Grant Program: The program focuses on integrating rural rotations into health professional training programs and providing students with the option to gain experience in rural settings. The RFP is open. Applications are due May 31. This grant has turned into a multi-year funding opportunity.

Rural Residency Planning and Development Grant: It is expected that this grant will open early summer.

Site Based Clinical Training Grant: The Site-Based Clinical Training grant is in addition to the MERC program. The grant was authorized under [Minnesota Statute Sec. 144.1508](#) to support clinical health care training.

- This grant cycle is a pilot for developing the grant process. The goals for this new grant are to:

- increase the clinical training that happens in rural areas, high need areas, and high need professions,
- reduce the barriers to rural training sites that host trainees by expanding funding eligibility, and
- encourage training sites to embrace their role in developing the next generation of health care professionals.
- Due to its close alignment with the current MERC program eligibility, for the pilot year, eligibility was determined using the Medical Education and Research Costs (MERC) application pool for Fiscal Year 2022 clinical training.
- Funding for this cycle includes \$5,000,000 for rural sites (applicants) and \$654,000 for oral health sites (applicants.)
- The objectives for this grant are to increase the number of trainees in rural training sites and learn more about the challenges of providing clinical training through a grantee feedback tool, as well as to develop and implement a process to identify the high need areas and professions in collaboration with members of stakeholder groups.
- For this year, priorities were determined to be 1) rural primary care and 2) oral health, whether the training occurred in rural or urban sites.
 - Rural was defined as counties outside the seven (7) metropolitan counties.
 - Primary care status was determined by utilizing teaching institutions' program designation through the MERC application.

Office of Rural Health and Primary Care (ORHPC) Grants and Funding information can be found at: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/facilities/ruralhealth/funding/grants/index.html>.

Medical Education & Research Costs (MERC) Funds FY2022 Training – Diane Reger, MDH

Diane Reger reported on the three funding pools, each with different eligibility criteria: Tobacco Funds (\$7,575,500), General Fund & Health Care Access Fund (\$2M), and a Medical Education Component in Medicaid FFS Hospital Rates (\$49,552,000/training year).

MDH received initial applications from 489 training sites. Of those meeting the qualifications, 311 qualified for funding.

Funding from tobacco/match and the general fund and health care access fund were released to sponsoring institutions on April 29, 2024. The total consisted of \$9,575,500. The sponsors are required to forward this funding to their clinical training sites between May and June. The sponsor's grant verification report (GVR) to verify the release of these funds is due to MDH by June 30, 2024. In addition, training sites that are selected for training site grant verification reporting will be notified through email. The verification process must be closed by July 15, 2024.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services will administer the Medical Education Component in the Medicaid FFS Hospital Rates between July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2027. Susan Hammersten from the Minnesota Department of Human Services noted that there will be a reconciliation process that will take place after the rate period.

MERC reports can be located on the program's [website](#) under [Publications](#). Applicants were encouraged to view detailed reports within their application portal.

With no further business, Troy Taubenheim, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 2:36 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next meeting was originally scheduled for August. The meeting date was changed after the committee met. **The new date is September 18, 2024**, from 1 – 3 pm, via Teams.

- Agenda and call-in information will be posted on the [committee website](#) a week before the meeting. Submit possible agenda items to the Committee Chair and/or MERC staff at health.merc@state.mn.us.