Performance of Health Care Workforce Programs

POLICY OPTIONS IN BRIEF

There are 2 policy options in the report for consideration.

Option: Direct a review of health care workforce programs' eligibility, screening criteria, and service requirements via letter to state agencies. The review should identify opportunities to align programs with Virginia's health care workforce needs based on available supply and demand data.
(Option 1, page 10)

Option: Direct the Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority, in collaboration with Virginia Works, to develop a plan to increase capacity for reporting and monitoring of health care workforce programs while balancing the administrative burden to state agencies.
(Option 2, page 15)

September 2024

FINDINGS IN BRIEF

Virginia's General Assembly appropriated $683 million in state funds for 34 health care workforce programs in Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024
The Virginia General Assembly appropriated $318 million for 24 programs exclusively focused on health care workforce, and $365 million for 10 programs partially focused on health care workforce, among other occupational sectors. Ninety percent of state funding supports programs intended to expand the pipeline of health care professionals in secondary, post-secondary, and post-graduate settings. The remaining programs aim to retain health care professionals in Virginia with financial incentives or salary adjustments, or by improving workforce well-being.

State-funded programs are reaching their intended target audience but lack focus on areas of most need
Nearly 80 percent of programs provide services to individuals for whom the program was designed, but programs rarely focus on the health care professional specialties, settings, or geographical areas of highest need in Virginia. Five programs require or prioritize applicants who fulfill service requirements in shortage areas. However, expanding shortage areas in Virginia are diluting the identification of areas of extreme need.

Sparse, inconsistent data collection makes reporting on program quality and impact difficult
Most programs use passive strategies to measure implementation, and track program completion as the main outcome. Nineteen programs have no reporting requirements and only five programs report a positive impact on measured program outcomes, including increased wages and retention and reduced vacancy rates. With program monitoring responsibilities spread across two entities, programs' barriers to data collection and reporting are not consistently reviewed or addressed.

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