

Dept. of Health Services: New grants to rural hospitals address health care workforce shortages

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The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) announced today the recipients of new grants totaling close to \$300,000 over two years to assist rural hospitals in filling “high need, high demand” positions – those where the demand for specific professionals exceeds the supply of available workers. The grants support education and training for an array of allied health professionals, including surgical technologists, substance abuse counselors-in-training, central service technicians, sonographers, and phlebotomists.

“We know that quality care requires a skilled workforce,” said DHS Secretary Linda Seemeyer. “Governor Scott Walker and the legislature are committed to addressing this need by investing in quality training with a special focus on meeting the workforce needs of our rural hospitals.”

Hospitals were required to form partnerships with educational organizations and health systems. Successful partnerships receiving funding through this initial round of awards are:

- Ascension St. Mary’s, Rhinelander; Nicolet Area and North Central Technical Colleges—\$112,480
- Columbus Community Hospital, Columbus; Madison Area and Moraine Park Technical Colleges—\$42,401
- Hospital Sisters Health System St. Clare Hospital, Oconto Falls; and Northeastern Technical College—\$55,762

- Marshfield Medical Center and Hospital, Marshfield; and Mid-State Technical College—\$88,218

DHS continues to work with the Wisconsin Hospital Association and the Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative to provide technical assistance to interested organizations prior to a second request for applications, tentatively scheduled to be issued in the spring of 2019.

The Allied Health Professionals Education and Training Grants and the Advanced Practice Clinician Training Grants are part of Governor Scott Walker's initiative to improve the state's health care workforce and ensure that all Wisconsinites have access to quality care.