

# Dept. of Health Services: Continues investment in quality health care for rural areas

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Grants totaling more than \$550,000 to increase access and enhance health care quality in rural Wisconsin were announced today by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS). The grants support education and training to assist rural hospitals and clinics in filling “high need, high demand” positions.

“Access to high quality health care is critical for all Wisconsin residents, and all parts of our state need an adequate supply of well-trained professionals to deliver that care,” said DHS Secretary-designee Karen Timberlake. “We are pleased this funding will support the training of health professionals in rural and underserved areas of our state.”

The Advanced Practice Clinician (APC) Grants, totaling nearly \$250,000, help rural health care providers increase the number of physician assistants and advanced practice registered nurses by supporting the development of clinical training sites. Hospitals and clinics receiving APC grants are:

- Aspirus – Central Wisconsin
- Cumberland Memorial Hospital – Cumberland, Wisconsin
- Essentia – Northwest Wisconsin
- Marshfield Clinic Health System – Northern, central and western Wisconsin
- Prairie Ridge Health – Columbus, Wisconsin

Allied Health Professionals (AHP) Education and Training Grants, totaling more than \$325,000 over two years, will support education and training opportunities for professionals, including medical assistants, mental health professionals, and nursing

assistants. Grants were awarded to:

- Gundersen – Friendship & Whitehall, Wisconsin
- Marshfield Clinic Health System – Marshfield, Wisconsin
- Marshfield Clinic Health System – Northern, central and western Wisconsin
- Upland Hills Health – Dodgeville, Wisconsin

“Access to quality health care is critical for Wisconsin residents and requires qualified health professionals,” said DHS Secretary-designee Karen Timberlake. “We are pleased this funding will support the training of health professionals in rural and underserved areas of our state.”

Both grant programs were first authorized in the 2017-2019 biennial budget through legislation aimed at improving rural health care. Up to \$500,000 in new funding is authorized for each program per year. This is the fourth year that both the APC and AHP grants have been awarded.