



**House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness Committee**  
**Rural Medical Training Facilities Work Group**  
**Budget Note to Agency Budget in HB 5006**  
**Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs Testimony | February 26, 2019**

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### **Background**

The Rural Medical Training Facilities Workgroup was established in a budget note to the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs budget (HB 5006) in 2017.

The budget note directed Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA), in collaboration with the Oregon Health Authority and the Oregon State Board of Nursing, to convene a workgroup that will investigate issues related to alleviating a shortage of skilled and experienced nurses and medical technicians in the City of Roseburg and in Douglas County. ODVA was directed to report the results of the workgroup and recommendations to the Legislature by September 15, 2018.

### **Legislative Reports**

ODVA prepared an extensive, 233-page Legislative Report and a two-page Executive Summary of the Legislative Report. Both reports, dated September 15, 2018, were delivered to Oregon legislators and are on the ODVA website:

<https://www.oregon.gov/odva/Connect/Pages/Reports.aspx>

### **Executive Summary**

The Workgroup approached the legislative directive by first determining whether and to what extent healthcare workforce shortages exist and then consider alternative solutions to alleviating the shortages. After careful examination and consideration of significant data available, the Workgroup came to consensus that significant current and projected workforce shortages exist in multiple allied health and behavioral health fields in Roseburg/Douglas County, throughout rural Oregon, and statewide.

The Workgroup then considered alternative solutions and came to consensus that they would not recommend or endorse any particular solution; instead, they would simply present all alternatives in the report to the legislature.

### **Participants in the Workgroup and Meetings**

A diverse group of individuals participated in the Workgroup, including state Legislators and local elected officials. Participants included representatives from Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs, Oregon Health Authority, Oregon State Board of Nursing, Umpqua Community College, the Governor's Office, and local participants including local Oregon tribes, the City of Roseburg, Douglas County, local hospital or medical facilities, including the Roseburg VA Medical Center (Roseburg VAMC), and Mercy Medical Center. Local medical practitioners with experience in training nursing and medical technician students also participated. ODVA provided staffing and coordination.

The Workgroup met six times from September 2017 to August 2018. There were 15-20 regular participants of the Workgroup, and 8-15 additional individuals attended each meeting.

### **Two-Stage Approach**

The Workgroup used a two-stage approach to investigate the issues. First, the Workgroup collected and reviewed the data and statistics on the actual shortage of allied and behavioral health professionals, including but not limited to nurses and medical technicians. Second, the Workgroup considered potential solutions to determine how to alleviate the shortage of medical professionals and fill the needs of the community and the region, including examining the capacity of existing medical training institutions in Oregon and establishing a medical training facility.

### **Part I: The Need for Skilled and Trained Medical Workforce**

The Workgroup determined that significant current and projected workforce shortages exist in multiple allied health and behavioral health fields in Roseburg/Douglas County, throughout rural Oregon, and statewide. Additionally, the Workgroup found that existing educational program capacity for those fields/occupations in the state is insufficient to resolve workforce shortages, particularly in Roseburg/Douglas County and other rural areas.

### **Part II: Solutions for Alleviating Skilled and Trained Medical Workforce Shortage, Including a Medical Training Facility**

The Workgroup considered a number of alternative solutions to resolve allied and behavioral health workforce shortages. However, it was important to the participants to state that they did not come to consensus on one or more of these solution; instead, they wanted to simply present all the information they had considered to the Legislature.

The Workgroup determined that there is no single solution, and a better approach would be to have a multi-pronged approach and use a variety of solutions. Among the potential solutions considered are: the expansion and creation of incentive programs; recruitment bonuses for health care and behavioral health care providers; competitive salaries and incentives for health care professors and teachers; and the promotion of health careers at secondary schools.

The most comprehensive approach considered was to build educational capacity through a regional medical college in Roseburg that offers advanced (Bachelors, Masters and PhD) degrees in multiple high-demand allied and mental health fields.

Medical Training Facility Business Plan. The full Legislative Report provides key findings on allied and mental health workforce shortages, limitations of current educational program capacity in Oregon, and potential solutions, including the creation of a regional non-physician medical college. The main components of a preliminary 74-page business plan developed by Oregonians for Rural Health and its supporting partners that outlines an initial framework for degree offerings and programs is included in the full Legislative Report.

### **Attachments to the Full Report**

The 16 attachments to the full legislative Report include a significant amount of data on the current status and workforce needs for medical, nursing and allied health professionals and are listed here:

- A. HB 5006 Budget Note
- B. Rural Medical Training Facilities Workgroup Participants
- C. Oregon Health Authority (OHA) 2017 Oregon Health Insurance Survey  
Link: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/HPA/ANALYTICS/InsuranceData/2017-OHIS-Early-Release-Results.pdf>
- D. U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Jackson County, Oregon; Josephine County, Oregon; Curry County, Oregon; Coos County, Oregon; Douglas County, Oregon; Oregon  
Link: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/jacksoncountyoregon,josephinecountyoregon,currycountyoregon,cooscountyoregon,douglascountyoregon,or/PST045217> )
- E. CHI Mercy Allied Health Job Openings (July 23, 2018)
- F. Department of Veterans Affairs Roseburg Healthcare System Job Opening (July 2018)
- G. Oregon Employment Department: Oregon's Future Workforce Needs: Job Growth to 2027 by Industry  
Link: [Oregon's Future Workforce Needs: Job Growth to 2027 by Industry](#)
- H. Oregon State Board of Nursing Licensing Report, July 2018

- I. Oregon Health Authority Office of Health Analytics: Oregon's Medical Workforce  
Link: [Oregon's Medical Workforce](#)
- J. Oregon Health Authority Office of Health Analytics: Oregon's Nursing Workforce  
Link: [Oregon's Nursing Workforce](#)
- K. Oregon Health Authority Office of Health Analytics: Oregon's Physical Therapy Workforce  
Link: [Oregon's Physical Therapy Workforce](#)
- L. Oregon Health Authority Office of Health Analytics:  
Link: [Examining the Health Care Workforce Needs for Communities and Patients in Oregon 2018](#)
- M. Oregon Health Sciences University: Oregon Areas of Unmet Health Care Need Report August 2017.  
Link: [Oregon Health Sciences University: Oregon Areas of Unmet Health Care Need Report August 2017](#)
- N. Oregon State Board of Nursing Approved Nursing Education Program List
- O. Oregon Center for Nursing Healthcare Workforce and Educational Program Report
- P. Southern Oregon Allied & Mental Health College Business Plan