**Wayne State University Center for Healthcare Workforce**

*Wayne State is seeking* ***$10 million*** *to address healthcare workforce and service inequities and disparities by leading a unique partnership of state and local healthcare organizations, community-based organizations, and health systems.*

Identifying the Problem

Michigan, like many other states, has a healthcare workforce shortage that has put additional strain on the entire system and increased health inequities and disparities. Michigan’s most significant struggle is nursing – our state has an overall nursing shortage, which is only made worse by the bottleneck in nursing education and a nursing faculty shortage. While the state has made significant, one-time investments to ameliorate the nursing shortage, to address the underlying issues long-term, the state needs academic and health system buy-in.

These partnerships are especially important as the state continues to invest in programs to address disparities in health care. The Racial Disparities Task Force has done an excellent job of identifying areas of improvement and programmatic opportunities. More specifically, the Task Force identified that many urban and rural communities are disproportionately affected by a shortage in the healthcare workforce – physicians, physician’s assistants, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, and community health workers – and as such, have recommended short- and long-term efforts to connect those in vulnerable communities to healthcare workers and help them navigate the health care system.

Addressing the Problem

The state can build on the work it has already done by systematizing its approach to healthcare workforce needs, as well as the delivery of services from local, state, university, and private entities. Put another way, Michigan can leverage its internal and external assets and partners to create a holistic, unified healthcare network that is proactive to meeting the needs of its citizens rather than reactionary.

Wayne State’s Healthcare Workforce Initiative seeks to do just that by conducting research and implementing programs that tackle the issues of supply and demand for healthcare workforce retention, recruitment, educational capacity, and distribution of healthcare workforce resources, with a focus on communities with a critical need to increase their healthcare workforce. For example, one way to address the nursing workforce shortage is by addressing the clinical teaching shortage. This could be accomplished through a healthcare system and university partnership that would help nurses transition from the floor to the classroom to train the upcoming class of nurses.

Wayne State: Positioned to Lead

Wayne State has the technical and academic expertise to assess, evaluate, recommend, and coordinate efforts to address the healthcare workforce shortage. WSU’s students, faculty, and other practitioners are especially responsive to the needs of Michiganders who are low income and who experience severe or persistent health issues through various programs.

Existing work that highlights WSU’s infrastructure and ability to lead on healthcare workforce and service needs:

* More than 50,000 patients are seen annually for mental health services at Lycaki-Young.
* Nearly 100,000 patient encounters for community-based health screenings with our Mobile Health Units.
* The College of Nursing manages the Taylor Street Primary Care Clinic, which provides health care services to many individuals without public or private insurance.
* The School of Medicine and College of Nursing provide roughly half of all healthcare professionals in the state.
* We are partnered with and surrounded by healthcare systems such as Henry Ford, Ascension, Detroit Medical Center, and McLaren, among others.