

Health and Long-Term Care Access Advisory Council
Top health workforce issues/questions to be addressed by this council
As identified by council members via e-mail response
January 23, 2009

1. The economic impact of this recession ... the impact it's going to have on access to workforce in rural Iowa and its impact on access to quality health and long term care services in the local communities.
2. I really want to see pharmacy and pharmacists included in the discussion.
3. Payment system - the Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement levels in Iowa make it very challenging to recruit and retain physicians and other health care professionals. While Iowa provides high quality health care at a low cost, we are near last in Medicare reimbursement. Worse, Medicaid does not reimburse providers at the Medicare level – so payment from Medicaid is worse. Closely related to workforce is the fact that successful tele-health programs designed to ease the physician shortage like eICU, do not offer a mechanism for reimbursement.
4. Workforce
5. Mental health
6. Iowa loses health professionals to other states --- What are the reasons health professionals leave Iowa and what interventions would help reverse this pattern?
7. Most of Iowa's graduating health professionals are burdened with considerable debt – How can state and private interests work together to fund loan repayment at a much larger scale than is presently available?
8. What state-level health system reform initiatives could influence health professions career choices so career choice matches public policy objectives?
9. Mental health workforce issues and especially psychiatry.
10. Better integration of mental health and health services.
11. The impact of substance abuse and better screening in the health arena.
12. Who will be the clientele for rural health services (what are the demographics)?
13. What will be their needs (how will medical technology evolve to affect what is available)?
14. Who will be there to deliver rural health services?
15. How does the state of Iowa get more federal funding for health care?
16. How to maximize the labor of part-time health care workers in Iowa?
17. How do we gather the needed data to analyze and make recommendations on the Iowa workforce issue?
18. The need to develop the data that identifies what the current and emerging health care workforce shortages are and to develop and recommend strategies to address those shortages. There are several organizations that can provide significant information on the Iowa physician workforce and hospital workforce. Without sufficient physicians and other health professionals, access to health care services will decrease.
19. Rates for community-based providers of disability services do not keep up with competition in other health care industries.
20. Increased accountability, audits require a higher level of staff competence, training with no ability to pay for training, career ladder, even retention.
21. Disability services are part of long term care but often not included in the conversation. Decisions made that impact this industry, that conflict with rules, regulations, and service models of care.