

REPORT TO THE TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE
STATE OF HAWAII
2009

PURSUANT TO
SECTION 321-1.5(6)
HAWAII REVISED STATUTES
PRIMARY CARE INCENTIVE PROGRAM

PREPARED BY:
STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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Hawaii State Department of Health
PRIMARY CARE OFFICE

The Hawaii Primary Care Office (PCO) is a Federal grant program funded by the Bureau of Health Professions in the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and authorized under the Public Health Service Act, as amended, Title 3, Sections 330 and 333. The purpose of the funding is to support the coordination of local, State and Federal resources to improve primary care service delivery and workforce availability to meet the needs of underserved populations.

The mission of the Hawaii PCO is to improve access to primary care for medically underserved populations.

The Hawaii PCO is one of fifty-three PCOs (one per State, plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands) receiving funding by HRSA and charged with HRSA's goal to improve access to healthcare.¹

All PCOs are tasked with the following program expectations:

- Organizational Effectiveness/Fostering Collaboration
- Assessment of Needs/Sharing Data
- Workforce Development for the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) and Safety Net/Health Center Network
- Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) Applications and Updates
- Technical Assistance to Organizations/Communities Wishing to Expand Access to Primary Care for Underserved Populations

¹ U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services. Health Resources and Services Administration Strategic Plan, www.hrsa.gov.

In 2008, the Hawaii PCO met Federal program expectations by:

- ❖ Attending the annual meeting of all PCOs in Washington, D.C., convened by HRSA, which included a one-day training on the Automatic Submission and Application Processing System (ASAPS) for HPSA designations, now required for HPSA application submission. PCO's also participated in work to further refine proposed outcome measures for PCO program funding and were also introduced to the new staff and structure of the Bureau of Clinician and Recruitment Services, responsible for the NHSC program.
- ❖ Participating with HRSA's Office of Performance Review in pre-site and on-site analysis of factors impacting PCO grant performance. Strategies to improve program performance were discussed, with the Hawaii PCO creating an Action Plan identifying key actions to improve performance. This performance review process also provided an opportunity for the Hawaii PCO to offer direct feedback to the HRSA about the impact of HRSA policies on program implementation and performance within the State. As they effect Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) designations, these policies include:
 - The definition of "Frontier" used by HRSA, which takes geographic barriers to care such as mountains, deserts or lakes into consideration, but not the ocean. We have suggested that alternate density calculations for classification as rural or frontier be used. We are especially interested in HRSA's Office of Rural Health Policy's current effort to analyze how to define isolated and frontier areas of the country and how to define islands as a separate geographic unit from the mainland areas in terms of access to health care services.²
 - The use of Poverty Thresholds in evaluating low-income populations, which does not take into account the higher cost of living in Hawaii. We are requesting that Hawaii be able to use Poverty Guidelines instead, which take into account the increased costs of goods and services in our State.
- ❖ Participating in HRSA's State Strategic Partnership Program with other HRSA grantees in Hawaii to explore the collective effectiveness of HRSA funded programs and promote collaboration in addressing priority health needs. Grantee participants include the Hawaii State Primary Care Association, Papa Ola Lokahi, and several programs within the State Department of Health.³ Activities undertaken have included individual program assessments, a Kick-Off Meeting, Partnership Sessions and a Summit Meeting, with participants selecting development of strategies to maximize utilization of oral health services among children as their priority issue for collaboration. Additional members added since the selections of oral health as the focus of collaborative efforts include

² Utilize the Rural Urban Commuting Area Codes, a new Census tract based classification that utilizes standard Bureau of Census Urbanized Area and Urban Cluster definitions in combination with work commuting information to characterize all of the nation's census tracts regarding their rural and urban status; Utilize the Center for Rural Health's Expert Panel (2006) definition of Frontier

³ Family Health Services Division, Maternal and Child Health Branch, Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Part B, Primary Care Office, and the State Office of Rural Health.

representatives from the Med-QUEST division of the Department of Human Services, the Dental Health Division of the Department of Health, the Hawaii Dental Association and the Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Clinic.

- ❖ Participating in a PCO/Hawaii Primary Care Association (PCA) statewide teleconference of community health centers, the Pacific Islands Primary Care Association, and others in April 2008 to discuss HRSA's Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) with regard to changes in criteria and processes for designation of Medically Underserved Areas and HPSAs. The PCO provided a briefing on the NPRM, highlighting areas of collaborative work necessary to prepare for the proposed changes including review and re-designation, as necessary, of statewide primary care service areas, an inventory of all providers at community health centers (CHCs) and prioritization of communities for HPSA designation work.
- ❖ Participating in the Hawaii Health Corps Program Working Group, established by Act 242, to develop recommendations and generate a report to the 2009 State Legislature on the provision of loan repayment and stipends for healthcare providers agreeing to practice in underserved areas. Information and materials were provided on the number and location of current NHSC providers practicing in the State, a HRSA grant opportunity that provides a 1 to 1 match to States implementing a State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP), a list of current states with SLRPs, and information about Health Professional Shortage Areas and the federal program that use the designation to allocate resources and/provide benefits.
- ❖ Membership in the Hawaii Health Workforce Collaborative, formerly known as the Workforce Hui whose purpose was to develop strategies to address health care workforce shortages. Due in part to the Workforce Hui's work, the 2007 State Legislature appropriated \$500,000 to the State Health Planning and Development Agency to develop and maintain a statewide health care workforce map and database. Work to inventory providers on the island of Hawaii has begun.
- ❖ Providing individual Community Health Centers with economic, health and demographic statistics by census tract for the population residing in their service areas.
- ❖ Analyzing gathered economic, health, demographic and provider data to ascertain the status of HPSAs in Hawaii under HRSA's proposed changes to HPSA criteria and sharing that information with CHCs.
- ❖ Compiling and publishing the 2007 Primary Care Needs Assessment Data Book, a source of comparative health statistics on 28 primary care service areas across the State. Approximately 500 copies of the book are being distributed to public and non-profit entities and interested individuals. A copy of the Data Book is also available on-line at <http://hawaii.gov/health/doc/pcna2007databook.pdf>. While a feedback form is included in the Data Book, the PCO does plan to hold 'focus group' type meetings with users of this resource to evaluate its contents and gather input on the need for different or additional information.

- ❖ Assisting eighteen practitioners interested, or already participating, in the NHSC in Hawaii by providing information about eligible practice sites, HPSA scores and NHSC requirements and resolving individual's practice issues.
- ❖ Assisting thirty existing or potential practice sites for NHSC loan repayors and/or scholars by providing information about site eligibility, the HPSA designation process, NHSC recruitment tools and recruitment and transfers of NHSC practitioners, and facilitating approval of three sites for placement of NHSC practitioners⁴. A fourth site was disapproved because it was not located in a current HPSA.⁵
- ❖ Facilitating the placement of seven health care professionals participating in the NHSC loan repayment or scholarship programs at five CHCs across the State; one mental health professional, two dentists and four primary care providers on the Big Island, Maui and Oahu.⁶ There are currently twenty-four NHSC providers serving at eleven CHCs across the state: five mental health professionals, four dentists and fifteen primary care providers on the Big Island, Maui, Molokai Kauai and Oahu.⁷ Twenty providers participate in the NHSC loan repayment program and four providers are NHSC scholars.⁸
- ❖ Collecting and analyzing provider survey data and health, demographic and economic data for new and updated HPSA applications. In 2008, the following communities were targeted for primary care, dental, and/or mental health HPSA designations:
 - Kalihi Palama - mental health and primary care
 - North Shore of Oahu - mental health
 - Molokai - primary care
 - Maui (expect Hana and Haiku) - primary care and dental health
 - Kauai - primary care and dental health
- ❖ Working with the Bureau of Health Professions to increase the automatic facility HPSA scores for primary care for Bay Clinic, Inc. in Hilo, primary care and mental health for W. Hawaii Community Health Center and primary, dental and mental health for Waimanalo Health Center.

⁴ Hamakua Health Center's Honokaa and Kapaau locations; Kau Rural Health Clinic.

⁵ West Kauai Medical Center (Hawaii Health System Corp.)

⁶ One clinical psychologist, two dentists, one nurse midwife and three family practice physicians practicing at Keeau and Kau Family Health Centers on the Big Island, Hana Community Health Center on Maui and Koolauloa Health and Wellness Center and Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center on Oahu.

⁷ Four clinical psychologists and one social worker, four dentists and one nurse midwife, two nurse practitioners, five physician's assistants and seven family practice physicians practicing at Keeau and Kau Family Health Centers on the Big Island, Hana CHC on Maui, Molokai Ohana CHC, Ho'ola Lahui Hawaii and Kauai CH Center on Kauai, and Waianae Comprehensive Health Center, Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services, Koolauloa Community Health and Wellness Center, Waikiki Health Center and Ho'ola Like Haleiwa on Oahu .

⁸ Scholars include one nurse midwife, 1 nurse practitioner, and 2 family practice doctors.

- ❖ Providing technical assistance to entities expanding and/or improving primary care services and service delivery including:
 - West Hawaii Community Health Center in Kona for development and implementation of a dental electronic practice management system and dental electronic health record.
 - Bay Clinic, Inc. in Hilo for dental services and electronic health records.
 - Lanai Women’s Center for assessing needs and improvements in clinical, administrative and fiscal systems to achieve Federal standards for Federally Qualified Health Centers.
 - Waimanalo Health Center on Oahu for establishment of a new dental health practice and implementation for a dental electronic practice management system and electronic health record system.
 - APUSYS for design of a database to allow those community health centers (CHC) with Purchase of Service contracts with the Department of Health to upload and submit required information electronically to the Department, through web access.⁹
 - The Hawaii Primary Care Association for collaboration with APUSYS on the database project described above, to facilitate assessment, development and training with the member community health centers that have purchase of service contracts with the Department of Health. The PCA also received assistance to facilitate a meeting between PCA members and the PCO to discuss statewide health care safety net systems issues related to the health care workforce.

⁹ Bay Clinic, Inc., Hamakua Health Center, West Hawaii CHC, Community Clinic of Maui, Molokai Ohana CHC, Ho’ola Lahui Hawaii, Kalihi Palama Health Center, Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services, Koolauloa CHC, Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center, Wakiki Health Center and Waimanalo Health Center, Queen Emma Clinic, Wahiawa Hospital, The Country Doctor Outreach.