The National Health Service Corps (NHSC)

NHSC Programs

Institute of Medicine
Workshop
HIV HRS ISSUES Overseas
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Health Resources and Services Administration
Bureau of Health Professions
National Health Service Corps
The National Health Service Corps (NHSC)

The NHSC is committed to improving the health of the Nation’s underserved:

- Uniting communities in need with caring health professionals
- Supporting communities’ efforts to build better systems of care
NHSC Is Composed of

Clinicians and communities dedicated to serving the underserved.
30 Years of Making a Difference

- Over 24,500 dedicated primary health care clinicians placed in Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs).
- Currently, over 3,600 NHSC clinicians serve in rural and urban communities nationwide, serving 5 million people.
NHSC - Today

• 53 million people still lack access to quality health care in the United States.

• President Bush has declared the NHSC a “Presidential initiative” recognizing our importance to expand direct access to healthcare for those who need it most.

• Now couldn’t be a better time to join the NHSC and make a difference in a community that needs you!
Clinicians in the NHSC

- Dedicated to service
- Culturally competent
- Community responsive
- Serve on interdisciplinary teams with clinicians who share a commitment to improving the health of the underserved
- Receive support and assistance from the NHSC throughout their education, training and career
Clinicians in the NHSC

Represent a variety of disciplines:

• Primary Care Physicians
• Primary Care Nurse Practitioners
• Physician Assistants
• Certified Nurse Midwives
• Dentists
• Dental Hygienists
• Mental and Behavioral Health Professionals
Sites in the NHSC

- Located in federally designated HPSAs
- Frontier, rural and “inner city” urban settings
- Treat everyone regardless of their ability to pay
- Community Based Practices - including community health centers, migrant health centers, private practices, rural health clinics, Indian Health Service sites, and prisons
How to Get Involved in Service

The NHSC has a variety of exciting opportunities for dedicated students and practicing clinicians to serve the underserved:

– Scholarship Program
– Loan Repayment Programs (federal and state)
– On-Line Job Postings (“NHSC Opportunities List”)  
– On campus NHSC Ambassadors/Mentors
– Student/Resident Experiences and Rotations in Community Health Program (SEARCH)
– Ready Responders
NHSC Scholarship Program

- Scholarships to students who commit to practicing primary care in HPSAs of greatest need upon completion of education or training.
- Period of service is 1 year for each year of scholarship support, with a 2-year minimum service commitment.
- Students choose their practice site from a list of approved sites located in areas of greatest need across the country.
NHSC Scholarship Program

• The Scholarship support includes:
  • Payment of tuition and fees for up to 4 years of education
  • Monthly stipend for living expenses
  • Payment of other reasonable educational expenses

• Students are supported throughout their education, training and service through NHSC staff in Washington, DC and on campus NHSC Ambassadors.
Scholarship - Who is Eligible?

U.S. citizens enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a U.S., fully accredited:

- Allopathic or Osteopathic Medical School
- Dental School
- Family Nurse Practitioner Program (master’s degree in nursing, post-master’s or post-baccalaureate certificate)
- Nurse-Midwifery Program (master’s degree in nursing, postmaster’s or post-baccalaureate certificate)
- Physician Assistant Program (certificate, associate, baccalaureate, or master’s program)
NHSC Federal Loan Repayment Program

- Repayment of educational loans for clinicians who commit to provide full-time clinical service in a HPSA of greatest need.
- Minimum 2-year service commitment.
- Clinicians secure employment at an NHSC site: Higher scoring HPSA sites are given priority for awards.
- Maximum repayment during the required initial 2-year contract is $50,000. Opportunities to continue in the program may be available for 1 year intervals beyond the 2-year commitment.
Loan Repayment Program -- Who is eligible?

U.S. citizens in the following disciplines/specialties:

• Primary Care Allopathic or Osteopathic Physicians
• Primary Care Nurse Practitioners
• Primary Care Physician Assistants
• Certified-Nurse midwives
• Dentists
• Dental Hygienists
• Clinical Psychologists, Clinical Social Workers, Licensed Professional Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists, and Psychiatric Nurse Specialists
• **Scholarship:** Applications become available in January, and are due to the NHSC the last Friday in March. Awards are announced in late summer.

• **Loan Repayment:** Applications are accepted from winter to spring, with all awards finalized by late summer.
NHSC State Loan Repayment Program

- NHSC grants funds directly to States to operate their own loan repayment programs.
- Primary care health professionals who are providing full-time clinical services in a facility located in a HPSA are eligible.
- Eligibility requirements and benefits vary from state to state.
On-line Job Postings: “NHSC Opportunities List”

- The “NHSC Opportunities List” is a valuable resource to health professionals seeking jobs in underserved communities nationwide.
- “Profiles” of employment sites will be forthcoming which will assist candidates in their search for the “right fit.”
On Campus Ambassador Program

- The On Campus NHSC Ambassador Program assists the NHSC in developing the next generation of primary care clinicians dedicated to serving the underserved.

- NHSC Ambassadors identify and prepare students and NHSC Scholars for service to underserved populations.
Student/Resident Experiences and Rotations in Community Health Program (SEARCH)

Student opportunities to work with underserved communities by:

- Establishing preventative health programs
- Assisting clinicians in their practices
- Working with local health departments
NHSC Ready Responders

- Commissioned Officers in the U.S. Public Health Service
- Serve in the most medically underserved communities in America
- Tour of duty - up to 3 years
- Respond to regional and national medical emergencies
NHSC Assistance to Communities

In addition to the programs the NHSC offers to students and clinicians, the NHSC works with communities to recruit and retain primary care clinicians by:

• Providing technical assistance to become an NHSC Site.
• Identifying resources and strategies to flourish.
• Developing academic and community partnerships for student experiences and rotations in underserved areas.
The NHSC and the Community Health Centers program are the foundation of President Bush’s strategy to expand direct access to healthcare to those who need it the most.

Since 2001, the NHSC budget has increased by about 37% and the field strength has expanded by about 53%.
• To demonstrate his continuing commitment, President Bush’s FY 2005 budget proposal includes an increase of almost $35 million.

• Budget increases mean more opportunities for clinicians to practice in underserved areas!
Expanded Opportunities

“The NHSC has served millions of people, and expanding this program will help even more uninsured individuals and those in underserved areas to get the health care they need.”
Tommy Thompson
Secretary,
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
If you are interested in making a commitment to serving the underserved, join us.

*Become one of America’s Health Care Heroes!*
To Learn More

For more information on NHSC and its programs:

• Call our toll-free helpline at 1-800-221-9393
• Visit our Web site at http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov