



National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine

Building the Workforce We Need to Care for People with Serious Illness **November 7, 2019**

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Current U.S. Health Care Policy Priorities

- Opioid Crisis
- Value-Based Care
- Health Insurance Reform
- Drug Pricing

Additionally, specific to the health workforce:

- Health Equity
- Social Determinants of Health



U.S. Health Care and Health Support Workforce Issues

1. **Sufficiency**: Is there equilibrium in the supply of and demand for health workers, or are there occupations with shortages or oversupplies?
2. **Distribution**: Are occupations distributed evenly in all geographic areas, so as to ensure access to health care for the entire U.S. population?
3. **Quality**: Is the health workforce well trained in evidence-based practices that result in better care? Which occupations provide what services, and who else can provide that kind of care?
4. **Data**: U.S. health workforce data is good, but not great



Recent Health Workforce Research & Data Trends

- Increased public funding for expanding U.S. health workforce research
 - Increased research specific to the behavioral health workforce due to public health crises
- Shift towards measuring outcomes
- Workforce Projections in several occupations:
 - Primary care
 - Nursing
 - Internal medicine subspecialties
 - Surgical specialties
 - Women's health
 - Long Term Services and Supports
 - Oral Health
 - Behavioral Health
- New data products and online tools sponsored by the U.S. Government
 - WHO National Health Workforce Accounts reporting for the U.S.
 - 2018 National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses release



Key Messages

- Trends for health care and health support workforce in the United States are similar to those seen globally (e.g. **sufficiency in occupations, maldistribution across geographies**). Aging of the population is a huge driver.
- **Research** on the health care and health support workforces in the context of a **complex changing health care system** is continuing to expand. Because of this, large **data improvements** are still needed, to inform about specific occupations, to **measure outcomes**, to be able to learn more about the workforce at more granular levels.

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