

Ohio Physician Loan Repayment Program 2015 Annual Report

January 1 - December 31, 2015

Background

Increasing access to primary care for underserved communities and populations is the goal of the Primary Care Office at the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). To assist in this endeavor, the Primary Care Office administers the Ohio Physician Loan Repayment Program (OPLRP), designed to recruit or retain primary care physicians for underserved areas. In exchange for loan repayment assistance, the physicians commit to a minimum of two years of practice at an eligible site in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) or Health Resource Shortage Area, accept Medicare and Medicaid, and otherwise see patients regardless of ability to pay.

For the first two-year contract, selected applicants may receive up to \$25,000 annually for repayment of outstanding medical school debt. Those who remain at their practice sites and otherwise maintain eligibility may be eligible to receive up to \$35,000 annually for the third and fourth years.

The following primary care specialties are eligible:

- Family Practice
- General Internal Medicine
- Internal Medicine/Pediatrics
- General Pediatrics
- Adolescent Medicine
- Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Geriatrics
- Psychiatry (General, Child and Adolescent, Geriatric)

1. a. The number of requests received for designation of *primary care* Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA):

Four requests were received for designation of new primary care HPSAs in 2015. No existing HPSAs were identified for re-designation as the federal Health Resources and Services Administration did not require HPSA updates while transitioning to a new electronic shortage designation management system.

1. b. The *primary care* HPSAs that have been designated and the priorities assigned to them:

In 2015, Ohio received four new primary care HPSA designations (excluding automatic HPSA designations for Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics) from the Health Resources and Services Administration. Priorities have been assigned to these HPSAs based on scores.

Ohio Primary Care HPSAs Designated in 2015

County	HPSA	Score	Ratio	Priority
Belmont	Belmont County Medicaid Eligible	10	3598:1	2
Hocking	Hocking County	8	3960:1	3
Paulding	Paulding County	11	5006:1	1
Pickaway	Pickaway County	5	3036:1	4

2. a. The number of requests received for designation of *mental health* Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA):

Four requests were received for designation of a new mental health HPSAs in 2015. No existing HPSAs were identified for re-designation as the federal Health Resources and Services Administration did not require HPSA updates while transitioning to a new electronic shortage designation management system.

2. b. The *mental health* HPSAs that have been designated and the priorities assigned to them:

In 2015, Ohio received three new mental health HPSA designation (excluding automatic HPSA designations for Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics) from the Health Resources and Services Administration. Priorities have been assigned to these HPSAs based on scores and population-to-psychiatrist ratios.

Ohio Mental Health HPSAs Designated in 2015

County	HPSA	Score	Ratio	Priority
Allen	Allen Oakwood Correctional Institution	12	1232:0	1
Montgomery	Dayton Correctional Institution	12	611:0	2
Warren	Warren Correctional Institution	6	3617:1	3

3. The number of applications received for the Ohio Physician Loan Repayment Program for 2015:

Twenty-seven physicians applied for the Ohio Physician Loan Repayment Program in 2015. Twenty-one physicians were approved and contracted.

4. The Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA) that have not been matched with an adequate number of physicians:

All Ohio HPSAs need at least one additional primary care physician or psychiatrist to meet minimum federal population to physician ratios (a range of 3500:1 to 3000:1 for primary care and set at 20,000:1 for mental health).

Fifty (57%) of Ohio's 88 counties have some level of underservice for primary care; 65 (74%) of Ohio's counties have some level of underservice for mental health. The primary care designations indicate that 142 primary care physicians are needed to alleviate the shortage. A minimum of 55 psychiatrists are needed to alleviate the shortage in mental health HPSAs.

5. The number of physicians failing to complete their service obligations, the amount of damages owed, and the amount of damages collected:

During 2015, no physicians in the loan repayment program were placed into default.

6. The number of new awards and physician specialty approved for OPLRP between 1994 and 2015.

	1994–2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009 ⁴	2010	2011-2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Family Practice	46	5	5	6	6	10	7	0	6	0	11	102
OB/GYN	9	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	1	17
Internal Med.	11	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	16
IM/Peds	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	5
Pediatrics	7	1	0	1	0	0	3	0	4	0	4	20
Psychiatrists ¹		0	0	0	3	1	0	0	1	0	2	7
Total New Awards	74	9	6	9	11	12	11	0	14	0	21	167
Dollars Allocated ²	\$4,314,083	\$220,000	\$160,000	\$216,000	\$320,000	\$373,550	\$445,800	\$0	\$485,000	\$0	\$492,500	\$7,026,933
Award Detail ^{3, 5}	30 matched with SLRP	5 matched with SLRP; of those, 2 received matching funds through M/ALRI	4 matched with SLRP	7 matched with SLRP	6 matched with SLRP	10 matched with SLRP	4 matched with SLRP		8 matched with SLRP		16 matched with SLRP 9 part-time providers	90 matched with SLRP

¹Psychiatrists were not eligible for OPLRP until July, 2005.

²**Dollars Allocated:** This figure represents the total amount of OPLRP funds allocated for all physicians in the given year if each received the maximum amount of loan repayment for which they were eligible. From 1994 to 2003, allocation amounts were based on the potential 4-year award. Beginning in 2004, allocation amounts are based on the initial 2-year award.

³**Award Detail:** Noted here are: summary of new awards prior to 2004; new awards that match with the State Loan Repayment Program grant (SLRP); or new awards initially funded through the Minority/Appalachian Loan Repayment Initiative (M/ALRI) matched with SLRP which converted to OPLRP funding. Renewal contractual obligations are not reflected.

⁴In 2009, the maximum loan repayment awards changed from \$80,000 for four (4) years of service at \$20,000 per year to a maximum of \$120,000 for four years (\$25,000 in years one and two; \$35,000 in years three and four). These changes coincided with the maximum amounts of the National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program. The minimum commitment remains at two years of service.

⁵In 2015, physicians practicing part-time (between 20 and 39 hours per week) became eligible for OPLRP. Part-time participants may receive half the amount of full-time participants.

Since 1998, ODH has received funding from the Health Resources Services Administration through the State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) grant. Funded through the National Health Service Corps, the grant provides matching funds for health professions loan repayment on a dollar for dollar match. OPLRP funds, other state funds, e.g. Minority/Appalachian Loan Repayment Initiative, or community funds can be used as sources of match funds. The table above provides detail on the number of participants funded using the SLRP grant.