

**Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program (MLARP) for Nursing  
and Nursing Support Staff Workgroup**

Virtual Meeting  
May 22, 2023 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 pm

**Meeting Minutes - Approved**

**Stakeholder Workgroup Attendees Membership Seat Representative**

Representative of 1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East - Loraine Arikat  
Representative of the Maryland Hospital Association –Jane Krienke  
Representative of AFSCME Maryland - Denise Gilmore  
Representative of the Nurse Practitioner Association of Maryland - Nicole Lollo  
Representative of the Maryland Association of County Health Officers - Jennifer Knapp  
Representative of Maryland Board of Nursing - Rhonda Scott  
Representative of Secretary of Health - David Davis  
Representative of the Maryland Association of County Health Officials - Holly Trice

**Maryland Department of Health (MDH) Staff**

Sara Seitz  
Kimberly Hiner

**Also in Attendance**

Amberly Holcomb (Department of Legislative Services), Diana Hsu (Maryland Hospital Association), and Iman Farid (Maryland Board of Nursing), Cindy Smalls (

**Notes**

**I. Opening Business and Remarks**

- Meeting minutes from the 4/24/2023 meeting were presented. There were no corrections or edits and the minutes were approved as distributed.
- The workgroup webpage is being updated regularly and the Google folder with workgroup documents should be accessible to all workgroup members.
- An update was provided on the 2023 MLARP application cycle. The application cycle has closed and received applications are under review. Statistics on the types of applicants will be available at the next meeting .
- A review of the Workgroup’s mandated activities took place.

**II. Discussion**

**a. Research Group Report-Outs**

- i. Evidence to support potential funding priorities: Gather/assign data to support the potential funding priorities (Lead: Jane Krienke)**

1. **Research group discussion:** Group has not met yet but will be meeting following Workgroup meeting. There have been conversations with hospitals and looking into what other states currently have in place for funding priorities. Vermont references healthcare workforce data to assist in determination of priorities and shifts their priorities based on the data trends -- as healthcare workforce shifts, the priorities can shift. Having access to the workforce data could make Maryland more agile and able to pivot priorities based on need. Hospitals continue to see shortages in bedside nursing, Emergency Department, among others. There are also shortages in clinical educators and preceptors that create barriers to the pipeline. Long term care and behavioral health are also areas of need. Some states prioritize based on applicant's bilingual status and/or prioritize on a first come first served basis.
  2. **Next steps:** Talk to other states for more detail and information. Potentially look at the data that Vermont has access to. Explore a Workforce Commission Data subgroup exercise to look at the data.
  3. **Suggested recommendation:** In Maryland, workforce data exists, however it is scattered and by the time it is accessed, can be outdated. A centralized repository that could gather and present the data in real time, and in an informed fashion for all disciplines is needed.
    - a. An incentive for data custodians to participate would be necessary. Repository would be a better way to fill vacancies; see shortages at the facility and state level; and support the need for MLARP and other incentive programs.
    - b. Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center is engaged in some of this type of work and has recently begun looking at some health professions data.
    - c. Some other sources of workforce data trends include the Maryland Nurse Workforce projects that predict what areas would be needed based on population. Additionally, the Bureau of Labor Statistics includes APN, Nurse Anesthetist, Nurse Midwives, and Nurse Practitioners and shows overall employment will be growing.
- ii. **Nursing support staff and LPN educational loan debt/ Maryland specific: Gather data to provide further information about educational loan debt**

**of nursing support staff and LPNs nationally; and all nurses and nursing support staff in Maryland (Lead: Holly Trice)**

1. **Research group discussion:** The Nursing support staff disciplines not as readily available in the literature. When looking at the amount of educational debt for these professions, there also is not much data. NP and Nurses have more data as their educational debt is higher. Community Colleges can have scholarships available for nursing support staff professions that can lead to less or no debt for those students upon graduation. For example, certified medical technicians can complete the training upon hire and the employer covers the cost. It would be helpful to know how often employers offer educational stipends.
2. **Next steps:** This group has enough research to frame the conversation in the upcoming report.

iii. **Funding/resources regarding nursing loan repayment program in other states: Utilize the Program Inventory, adding data regarding funding/resources utilized in other states' loan repayment programming (Lead: Denise Gilmore)**

1. **Research group discussion:** Thirty-six state loan repayment programs were reviewed and 24 states funding sources were identified with most being a mix of state and federal funding. Some states only had on state funding however didn't cover wide range of health professionals and the funding amounts tended to be lower. Some states relied on licensing renewal fees and others funded had philanthropic partners as a funding source.
2. **Next steps:** Vermont, New Mexico, California, and Florida would be beneficial to look for into or have a presentation at an upcoming meeting. Alaska also has a well-developed program that includes an employer match.

**b. Incentivizing Students to Practice in Underserved Areas**

- i. A discussion took place about ways to incentivize students to practice in underserved areas before entering an education program or upon graduation. Some ideas discussed include:
  1. Utilize the MLARP application to include questions about what, if any, program the applicant had participated in as a student (e.g., AHEC Scholars program)
  2. Federally required questions are included in the application to identify if the student came from an economically or other disadvantaged areas. This information could be taken into account

during the technical scoring process for MLARP.

3. How much debt that a person already has when entering school could make a difference as to where they practice.
  4. Exploring ways to better disseminate job availability. Most people who live in the community will know about the jobs.
  5. Marketing in high schools about what jobs and positions are available. For example, Sinai partnered with a High School in Baltimore. Practitioners go into the school to talk about medical professions. UMD does mini med school with high schools.
  6. The Department of Labor is executing a new program to support training and tuition assistance and includes salary support, child care, materials, etc.
  7. Look at what types of incentives Teach for America or AmeriCorps provide to incentivize participants to stay in underserved areas upon program completion. This information could inform similar health care programs.
- ii. **Next step:** Prior to the next meeting, workgroup members should think about this question, talk to others to identify what could incentivize them to work in underserved areas, and be prepared to share.

III. **Next Steps/Necessary Research**

- a. June 26 is the next workgroup meeting and that will be the time to begin putting thoughts on paper and wordsmithing by workgroup member.
- b. Please inform Sara if the workgroup would like any speakers at the next couple of meetings.

IV. **Next Meeting**

- a. Next Meeting: June 26, 2023, 3:00 p.m.
- b. Invite any others to next meeting for input.

- V. **Open Discussion with Public Comment:** No guests provided comments during the time dedicated for this purpose.

VI. **Adjournment:** (4:23 p.m.)

Presentation posted to and accessible on the MLARP Stakeholder Workgroup for Nurses and Nursing Support Staff webpage: <https://health.maryland.gov/pophealth/Pages/MLARP-Stakeholder-Workgroup-for-Nurses-and-Nursing-Support-Staff.aspx>