MISSION

- Provide the healthcare industry with a well-trained, flexible workforce.
- Create ongoing capacity to transform health science education and delivery.
- Position Minnesota as a global leader in healthcare education, practice, research and innovation.

CORE GOALS

- Convene educators and healthcare industry stakeholders to positively impact health sciences education and practice.
- Enhance economic development through increased quality and sustainability of healthcare education, practice and innovation.

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Now in its tenth year, HealthForce Minnesota (HFM) is a collaborative partnership of education, industry and community that was created to increase the number and expand the diversity of healthcare workers; to integrate health science education practice and research; and to build capacity for education and industry to collaborate to enhance patient care. This summary report exemplifies HFM’s level of involvement and commitment, of not just reporting the successes of partner programs, but also sharing in their design and execution. I am proud of the organization’s innovative accomplishments over the past two years.

The foundational success of HFM can be contributed to the relationships it has with its provider partners. The Clinical Coordination Partnership (TCCP), for example, is expanding with the development of online placements within healthcare fields beyond nursing. Software for tracking clinical experiences of Physician Assistants and Nurse Practitioners is underway while a program for paramedics and Medical Assistants is in the developmental stages. The same holds true with the phenomenal success of Scrubs Camps. After seven years of primarily Winona and metropolitan-based offerings, the program is expanding in the summer of 2015 to include three additional outstate locations. Additional sites are already being discussed for 2016.

In the spring of 2013, legislation required Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) to hold a mental health summit and to write a state workforce plan. HealthForce Minnesota was honored to lead this effort and The Gearing Up for Action: Mental Health Workforce Plan addresses the present and future needs of Minnesota’s mental health workforce. The plan, based on a culmination of numerous “Talking Sessions”, extensive research and dialogue with key healthcare-related partners, and the outcomes of the Summit, were presented as a comprehensive plan to the Legislature in January 2015.

Education and training are vital to a student’s success and HFM is actively assisting MnSCU nursing programs attain accreditation as we near the January 1, 2018 deadline. They have also worked with high schools and colleges to develop a college credit course in the Health Care Core Curriculum (HCCC). The first pilot program will start later this year.

When one reflects on the undertakings and accomplishments of HFM over the past two years, it is clear that they take seriously their mission of transforming education and advancing practice. Partnerships and collaboration are what makes HealthForce Minnesota a success. As HFM’s programming evolves and expands, aiming always to make an impact on the communities it serves, I invite you to share with us your ideas and concepts. It is through your engagement that we can continue this collaborative journey.

Scott Olson, President, Winona State University
In the spring of 2013, at the urging of a number of mental health stakeholders, legislation was enacted requiring Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) to hold a mental health summit and to write a state workforce plan.

Legislation read: The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) will convene a summit involving the Department of Human Services, MnSCU, U of M, private colleges, mental health professionals, special education representatives, child and adult mental health advocates and providers, and community mental health centers. The purpose will be:

• to develop a comprehensive plan to increase the number of qualified people working at all levels of our mental health system,
• ensure appropriate coursework and training,
• create a more culturally diverse mental health workforce.

The plan must be submitted to the legislature by January 15, 2015.

HealthForce Minnesota (HFM) has been leading this initiative on behalf of MnSCU and in the summer of 2013 met with key constituents and began creating a vision for how to approach this important work. Considering the legislation’s broad scope, a Steering Committee was then formed with representatives from all constituents named in the legislation, in addition to individuals from other state agencies, licensing boards, and mental health organizations. The Steering Committee met monthly to advise and assist HFM staff with the approach to, and implementation of, the legislation, the necessary data analysis, and the determination of recommendations.

An early outcome of the initiative was an analysis of mental health workforce data. The report confirmed there is a significant shortage of mental health professionals across Minnesota. The shortage of psychiatrists and professionals able to prescribe medications is critically low, especially in greater Minnesota. The number of providers of mental health services to children is even lower. Diversity among mental health professionals is not representative of the state’s non-white population. While the supply of some professions appears adequate, there are concerns about how the supply is distributed around the state.
Recognizing that a data analysis alone would not provide a clear understanding of mental health workforce needs, 19 community forums and outreach meetings were held in communities across the state to gather information and recommendations. Community forum attendees included mental health providers, individuals with mental illnesses, general healthcare professionals, educators, and family members.

*HealthForce has provided invaluable leadership to the Minnesota effort to create a comprehensive, effective workforce development plan for mental health. In the process, they collected and distilled a remarkable number and diversity of perspectives on how to improve the numbers, training and cultural competency of those serving Minnesota’s most vulnerable citizens.*

Glenace Edwall, Director, Children’s Mental Health and Adult Mental Health Divisions and Acting Assistant Commissioner, Chemical and Mental Health Services Administration

The opportunity for input was broadened and an online survey was developed and completed by more than 500 Minnesotans. Survey respondents described it taking more than one year to fill psychiatrist and psychiatric nurse practitioner positions; wait times for appointments could stretch to three+ months. Many respondents included recommendations for the state plan.

In compliance with the legislation, a Mental Health Summit was held in May 2014. The Summit brought together 150 participants from around the state representing state agencies, hospitals, health plans, elected officials, providers, advocacy groups, private and public colleges and universities, school districts, people living with a mental illness, and their family members. More than 100 recommendations aimed at increasing both the number and diversity of the mental health workforce, as well as ensuring the availability and accessibility of education and training of those professionals, were generated.

A highlight for many of the attendees was having educators and providers at the same table, crafting solutions to the challenges they face daily. Participants also heard from individuals with a variety of mental illnesses and their family members, further validating the importance of creating a state mental health plan.

*I am very pleased with the results of the workforce summit and plan. This is a complex area involving many stakeholders. Thanks to the dedication and commitment of the HealthForce staff, solutions are within reach.*

Sue Abderhelden, MPH
Executive Director, NAMI Minnesota

Following the Summit, the attention of HFM and the Mental Health Steering Committee turned toward developing a state workforce development plan. The plan includes recommendations related to recruitment, education and training, cultural competency and diversity, and improving the geographic distribution of the mental health workforce. The plan is available for download from the HealthForce Minnesota website at: healthforceminnesota.org/mental-health.
The Health Care Core Curriculum (HCCC) is a series of seven course modules originally developed in 1999. A multidisciplinary advisory committee and work group developed the original HCCC in the early 2000’s. Several high schools and colleges adopted the curriculum at that time.

The National Standards on which the curriculum was based were updated and between 2013-2014. HealthForce Minnesota (HFM) convened an advisory group to revise its program and to promote the HCCC as a pathway to entry-level career options for students in high school and college. Updates to the curriculum specifically included information on mental health and an awareness of the needs of the elderly.

Outcomes of the HFM advisory group include:
- Curriculum that is updated with multiple learning activities.
- A website with access to numerous resources for teaching the curriculum.
- The development of an “Educate the Educator Course” to instruct faculty adopting the curriculum.
- Developing crosswalks to assist faculty in the use of the curriculum in Health Occupations for Students of America and Skills USA Competitive Events, in addition to the Common Career Technical Pathways.
- Providing an alternate didactic curriculum for Nursing Assistants approved by the Minnesota Department of Health.

The curriculum and resources are currently being promoted to Minnesota high schools and MnSCU institutions. Several school districts within the state have partnered with MnSCU to offer seamless pathways to health care careers with the HCCC acting as a foundational course. HCCC continues to be a good resource for high schools and higher education institutions to introduce students to healthcare concepts and career options.
The Clinical Coordination Partnership (TCCP) began as a pilot initiative in 2008 involving 12 hospitals and 9 nursing programs, representing MnSCU, the University of Minnesota, and private and proprietary colleges. It was launched to identify barriers to clinical coordination and to develop solutions for pre-licensure nursing.

Over the past 6 years, TCCP has evolved into an innovative partnership implementing a clear and collaborative approach to scheduling and providing clinical experiences. MnSCU provided initiative funding to develop a stand-alone, customized database/technology solution that today schedules over 14,000 nursing student experiences annually. (Initially a database/scheduling system from the Oregon Center for Nursing was utilized.)

The partnership’s proven success for pre-licensure nursing has provided the groundwork to begin creating a similar system for Advanced Practice Nursing and Physician Assistant programs. Partners are also developing services that increase efficiencies in other areas of clinical experiences and affiliations, including connecting individual programs with student and faculty orientation materials.

The TCCP Advisory Committee, comprised of representation from 12 clinical sites and 11 education programs, has also worked to develop and implement a sustainability strategy for TCCP partnership and scheduling services.

In Academic Year Fall 2014 through Spring/Summer 2015 TCCP accomplishments include:

- Coordinating clinical activity planning and scheduling between 58 education programs and 64 clinical sites, representing 14,000 student experiences.
- Developing and maintaining clinical activity for five regions throughout Minnesota and Western Wisconsin.
- Maintaining the pre-licensure nursing clinical activity database – StudentLink.
- Developing, testing and piloting the clinical activity database for Advanced Practice Professionals, a site created specifically for TCCP partners.
- Created an online clearinghouse for clinical site orientation materials.
- Launched TCCP as a membership-funded and led entity with a 98% member sign-on rate.

The success of this authentic and vibrant partnership is because of the dedication of its committed partners, sustained communication and transparency, and the Clinical Activity Data & Process Standardization Technology.
HealthForce Minnesota has worked collaboratively since 2008 with educational and employer partners to offer students a fun, hands-on experience as a way to learn about careers in healthcare. Since its inception in 2008 with the first camp at Winona State University, Scrubs Camp has now expanded to include three high school camps, and four middle school camps.

The 2013 Scrubs Camp theme was “Technology” and featured presenters from Boston Scientific. Scrubs Camp also expanded to include a high school day camp at Saint Paul College. Summer 2014’s camp theme was “Body, Mind, Spirit,” with emphasis on exposing students to careers related to mental health. Each high school camp closed with a keynote address by Pete Feigal, a national inspirational and motivational speaker who shared his personal journey in overcoming mental illness.

Scrubs Camps continue to be a true collaboration with partners providing presenters, scholarships, and other in-kind support. 2014 brought new partners to the table and significant grant dollars to ensure students with financial need were able to attend. From the Girl Scouts of River Valley reserving 10 spots at the Rochester Camp and 5 spots at the WSU Scrubs Camp, to the Children’s Hospitals and Clinics donating the use of their Simulation Bus, to the $10,000 grant from the Otto Bremer Foundation, the support of new and ongoing partners was critical to the success of all camps. In total, 242 high school students attended Scrubs Camp of which 147 received scholarships.

HealthForce Minnesota supported four middle school camps in 2014. Whether it’s providing scrubs and supplies to the Mankato/St. Peter and Marshall camps, or actively leading the planning and implementation of the Winona camp at Southeast Technical College and the Rochester Scrubs Camp, the collaborative efforts showed great results. A total of 113 middle school students experienced Scrubs Camp this summer, and started their journey into exploring careers in health care.

As we look forward, camp expansion and programming to enhance students’ experiences in healthcare careers continues to be a priority.

“This camp is definitely one of the best camps I have ever attended. The staff, the organization, and the overall curriculum were all educational, informational, and fun!” - Urban Scrubs Camper

### Scrubs Camp Historical Perspective

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HealthForce Minnesota continued to partner with Skills@Work in 2014. The goals of developing strategies to adapt to emerging care-delivery models in long-term care, to increase the number of people employed in the field, and to lessen attrition were addressed through multi-pronged strategies.

It is estimated an additional 54,000 direct-care workers will be needed in Minnesota by 2020. Creating a pipeline of people interested in working with older adults is critical and exposing high school and college students to a variety of geriatric-related jobs is necessary. A Health Care Core Curriculum (HCCC), which presents the basic tenets of working in health care, including ethics, privacy, medical terminology, care for the elderly, and cultural awareness, was developed and aligned with national standards. This curriculum can be accessed by Minnesota high schools and colleges and promises to expand the flow of students interested in pursuing a career in long-term care. The Urban Scrubs Camp, held at Augsburg College, included sessions at two metro nursing homes and as a result several students asked how to volunteer.

The ability to go back to school to move up the career ladder has been shown to increase workforce retention. The Department of Human Services Skilled Nursing Facility Scholarship provides current healthcare employees this opportunity. In 2014, through a partnership with the Greater Twin Cities United Way and MSPWIN (a philanthropic collaborative formed to strengthen the workforce in the seven-county metro region), HealthForce Minnesota received an additional $75,000 in funding to assist metro area students of color defray the cost of returning to school.

Long-term care providers are offering career advancement opportunities to its workers through the Health Support Specialist apprenticeship program. (HealthForce Minnesota provided the initial grant to write the curriculum for this program.) HealthForce Minnesota interviewed several health support specialists who had recently completed this 9 credit, 2,500-hour apprenticeship program. Under this approved apprenticeship model, employees receive wage increases after completing various steps of the program.

“A Health Support Specialist is a better career fit for me than nursing, I am able to keep working with the residents, but it’s at more of a leadership level. The program really teaches you how all the systems inter-relate, so you see the whole picture.”

Employee of Avera Morningside Heights Care Center, Marshall, MN
The Board of Nursing has enacted a requirement that all nursing programs must be in candidacy for accreditation no later than January 1, 2018. This ruling has spurred a flurry of accreditation consultation and work for HealthForce Minnesota (HFM). Currently only 13 of 22 Associate Degree Nursing Programs and 5 of 22 Practical Nursing Programs within the MnSCU system are nationally accredited. Over the past two years, HFM has provided consultation to 95% of nursing programs seeking accreditation.

In 2013 HFM also led a statewide Practical Nursing Curriculum Collaboration Project. The goal of the project was to develop a framework and repository of curriculum resources for Practical Nursing (PN) programs in Minnesota. Serving as the project’s coordinator, HFM worked with faculty representatives from each PN program to create a strong, yet flexible framework for practical nursing education, that includes access to curriculum resources and tools.

A faculty task force was convened during the summer of 2014 to update the practical nursing framework to meet the standards of the revised Minnesota LPN Scope of Practice. Accreditation resources and the practical nursing framework and resources are now available on the new HealthForce Minnesota website: healthforceminnesota.org

“The consultant’s knowledge of the curricular process and NLNAC standards for both PN and AD programs was very helpful to our faculty.” “Loved that you focused on getting the work DONE, not just thinking more about it.” “Excellent resources!”

Through the power of collaboration, HealthForce Minnesota (HFM) and Winona State University (WSU) are helping to meet the growing demand for competent and innovative leaders in the field of allied health. Beginning in 2010 with funding support from HFM and MN Online, WSU successfully launched a new Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree in Healthcare Leadership and Administration (HLA). The HLA program was approved in May 2013 and the first cohort of 20 students started in August 2013. Bemidji State University has also been a key collaborator in this initiative.

The HLA program is a trailblazer program in several ways. It is a baccalaureate completion program – a fully online program at the upper division level – that is designed to effectively serve the needs of busy adult learners. It is designed for allied health workers who have already earned associate degrees and are looking for career advancement. It is an interdisciplinary and inter-institutional program that focuses on developing competencies in several key areas: communication and relationship management, leadership and critical thinking, business acumen, professionalism, and knowledge of the healthcare field.

Today, there are 39 students enrolled in the HLA program from southeastern Minnesota, the Twin Cities and western Wisconsin; 5 of the students in the first HLA cohort are expected to graduate in August 2015. Students represent a wide range of specialties in allied health and are working at a number of healthcare organizations such as Mayo Clinic, Olmsted Medical Center, and Gundersen Lutheran. Thanks to the power of collaboration, the HLA curriculum is meeting the workforce needs of healthcare employers and creating a career pathway for allied health professionals that did not exist before.

For more information about the HLA program, visit: winona.edu/hla
I have had the great pleasure of working alongside, with, and for HealthForce Minnesota (HFM) since its beginning in 2005. For the past 16 months, I have proudly served as Interim Executive Director, leading HFM into its second decade. Along the way, there have been many peaks and only a few valleys. As any hiker knows, sometimes you have to traverse the valley to scale the next, higher, more magnificent peak. It is only from climbing to that next peak that you get a new vista.

The mental health workforce development initiative, led by HFM on behalf of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, has required some traversing of valleys and scaling of peaks. It has been humbling work in one of the most fragmented and fragile segments of the healthcare system. The most visible part of this work was the Summit held on May 28, 2014, at Hennepin Technical College. From the input gathered and synthesized at the Summit and incorporated into the mental health workforce development plan submitted to the Legislature in January of 2015, we look around and see more mountains to climb. But we will be energized by the many partners who support and assist in the work.

The future of healthcare continues to challenge all of us. Whether the challenges are in building a strong pipeline, creating career ladders, or responding to employer needs, HealthForce Minnesota looks forward to stronger partnerships and collaborations to continue this very important work.