

Summer 2022

Healthcare Workforce Update

ADDRESSING THE HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE NEEDS IN SOUTH DAKOTA THROUGH A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION, LABOR & REGULATION, HEALTH AND THE BOARD OF REGENTS



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Healthcare Workforce Collaborative

Greetings from the South Dakota Office of Rural Health. This office along with our many partners continues to work at addressing South Dakota's healthcare workforce needs. Read on to see what's noteworthy over the past few months as well as upcoming! As always, we welcome your feedback regarding these and other workforce development issues.

Great Time to be a Respiratory Therapist

Contributed by South Dakota State University

South Dakota's health care industry is projected to be among the largest growth industries through 2028, according to the Labor Market Information Center. In respiratory therapy, the national median pay with an associate degree is \$62,810, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. For respiratory therapists, the growth rate is 28%, ranking third of all occupations.

SDSU respiratory care student Sam Evans graduated from the program in May. Since December, he has been working as a respiratory intern at Monument Health in Rapid City. Paid internships are available at both the Sioux Falls and Rapid City clinical sites for students in the program. "It's a good field to get in... You can get your foot in the door without going to school for four to six years and it's good pay," said Evans.

After working as a phlebotomist for three years, he began the three-semester professional program in May 2021 and will complete it in 12 months. Classes and clinicals are at Monument in Rapid City and Avera and Sanford in Sioux Falls. "If someone is thinking about becoming a respiratory therapist, I 100% recommend going to any local hospital and shadowing," says Evans. "The demand has never been higher."

Currently, there are 40 students working toward an associate degree and 20 working toward a bachelor's degree. According to Abby Wortman, a Rapid City instructor, SDSU's program celebrates a 100% job placement rate and board exam pass rates above the national average.



**SOUTH DAKOTA
STATE UNIVERSITY**

Job Opportunities Abound for MLS Graduates

Contributed by South Dakota State University

The Modern Language Sciences program at SDSU has seen a 100% graduation rate, a 100% job placement rate, and a 96% board exam pass rate in three of the last four years. Program director Stacie Lansink said these numbers are possible because of a historically strong program that emphasizes basic sciences, medical laboratory sciences, critical thinking skills and communication skills, including structured learning in the laboratories of clinical affiliated hospitals.

The program has multiple offerings: a four-year on-campus bachelor's program, as well as accelerated and upward mobility options. Lansink said students usually know where they are going before they graduate. That was the case for Reese Simons, a 2021 graduate.

She was hired in May 2021. "Starting in January... we were being recruited. I was getting two emails a week about job opportunities that Stacie (Lansink) was forwarding. I jumped on LinkedIn and there were job pitches there, too. They were coming from everywhere," Simons said.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts an 11% growth in clinical laboratory technologists and technicians between 2020 and 2030 with another 36,500 positions being created nationwide. "They are hiring everywhere, and the need is growing. One graduate had 12 job opportunities. Job security is very good in the MLS field," Simons said.

In addition to high demand for MLS graduates, pay is certainly part of the attraction for the job, but so is "knowing that I am an integral part of the patient care process," Simons said.



Palliative Care ECHO®

Moving knowledge, not patients

Move Knowledge, Not Patients!

What?

USD Nursing and the statewide coalition *From Advance Care Planning Towards Palliative Care* will launch a series of sessions called “Project ECHO: Palliative Care ECHO Moving Knowledge, Not Patients.” The sessions will be conducted using the Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) video-conferencing platform to provide interprofessional, case-based learning designed to connect palliative care specialists to rural healthcare settings throughout South Dakota.

Why?

The sessions provide information about a variety of palliative care topics such as interprofessional teamwork and palliative care systems, managing physical, psychological, and psychiatric aspects of care, and care for patients and families nearing the end-of-life. Project Palliative Care ECHO is funded through a grant from the Bush Foundation so there is no cost to attend.

Who?

The sessions will address palliative care from a team-based approach. Therefore, providers, nurses, social workers, and all other direct patient care team members from your organization should attend. We encourage interprofessional team participation from each site.

When and Where?

The program consists of eight monthly 1-hour education sessions starting April 28th, 2022. All sessions are from 12:30 to 1:30 pm C.T. Join each session via Zoom.

How?

Register [HERE](#). At each session, the first 48 people in attendance will receive a \$20 gift card from Walmart. To be eligible for the gift card, you must attend the entire session and complete all surveys. Gift cards can be earned multiple times for attending multiple sessions.

Free Continuing Education Credits Available!

Once approval of continuing education program has been granted, continuing education (CE) credits will be awarded through the ECHO Institute. ECHO will grant joint accreditation through the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC).

Call for Cases!

ECHO is a unique learning environment that answers your questions. We are looking for case studies (See topics below) that are relevant to each session’s topic. If you or a colleague has a case they want to be discussed, please send the ECHO team your case with all PHI removed. The cases selected will be chosen based on relevance to the topic and quality. Cases will be reviewed in the order they are submitted, so submit ASAP!

Session Dates and Topics

- July 28th: Social Needs in Palliative Care
- August 25th: The Impact of Cultural/Spiritual Needs in Palliative Care
- September 22nd: Cultural Beliefs: The Comfort They Provide
- October 27th: Promoting Comfort and Dignity for Patients and Families at End of Life
- November 17th: End of Life Decisions: Ethical and Legal Aspects of Palliative Care

Supporters



SD Palliative Care Network Continuing Education Sessions

Contributed by SD Palliative Care Network

The South Dakota Palliative Care Network has FREE Continuing Education session on Palliative Care for ALL!

The [CE Portal](#) has a tab and landing page dedicated to our [Palliative Care Education Series](#). The CE sessions are available for free and on demand for healthcare professionals throughout the region. Click for [Instructions](#) to creating an account. An introductory session on “What is Palliative Care” was dropped on September 15, 2021.

An additional five sessions were recently added to the portal: Basic Ethical Principles into the Provision of Primary Palliative Care, Physical Aspects of Palliative Care, Advanced Care Planning, Social Aspects of Palliative Care, the Importance of a Psychosocial Assessment, and Goals of Care Conversations. Plus three more sessions are in the works.



Are You Ready to Connect with South Dakota Students?

Contributed by SD Department of Labor and Regulation

If you have not yet registered your business in the Future Workforce Finder, now is the time. Go to weekofwork.sd.gov and click on the **Future Workforce Finder** button to create a profile. The Future Workforce Finder, an online matching system launched recently by the Department of Education (DOE) and the Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR), will help connect educators with businesses to facilitate work-based learning for students and attract future employees.



Businesses can help align classroom learning with on-the-job learning by:

- Providing a range of experiences that include career awareness and exploration to career preparedness
- Encouraging students to develop professional relationships with industry and community leaders
- Ensuring students receive monitored experiences with evaluated feedback
- Offering career guidance and coaching, general academic and educational guidance, and professional growth support to students
- Offering career immersive experiences for students that mimic, as closely as possible, real-world workplace experiences.

Later this year, educators will be able to begin using the system to make connections between students and employers.

[Future Workforce Finder](#)

Long Hours, Total Immersion? Interns Say, Yes, Please!

Contributed by Avera Health

When South Dakota State University biochemistry student Caitlynn McGregor showed up for her first day of her Avera internship, her introduction was brief – and then she was in surgical scrubs a few minutes later.

“It was a true immersion, seeing surgery and all that goes with it, on my first day,” said the 20-year-old Salem native. That front-row seat is what she wanted, and while it was a long first day, it was worth every second.



Dr. Sujit Vijay Sakpal, an Avera Medical Group transplantation physician, explains national donor programs to Eliza Peters and Caitlynn McGregor, interns in the Avera Abdominal Transplant Undergraduate Internship program.

“When you’re thinking of being a doctor, you really don’t know what the daily life of a doctor is like. That’s why this internship was perfect – it taught me so many details about what physicians do and when,” she said. “The way the team functioned so smoothly, from conference room to the ICU to surgery, it really solidified my thinking about medical school.”

McGregor worked in long-term care and as a patient care technician before the internship, so she was familiar with aspects of health care. The program gave her a front-row seat to a medical specialty.

“We’d spend time with patients and families, and see patients who were sick, jaundiced and struggling,” McGregor said. “Then, we’d see them after surgery or during the post-op care appointments, and they would be so much healthier – and happier. It was like, this is what I want to do.”

Most importantly, it cemented her thinking on what comes next in her life.



“The future can be scary or uncertain for anyone, but the time I spent with the team at Avera Transplant gave me what I needed,” she said. “For anyone considering a career in health care, this is an amazing learning experience.”

She now serves as an advanced intern since the Avera Abdominal Transplant Undergraduate Internship program welcomed 15 students in July.

Avera internship puts students face-to-face with health care

The internship program was created specifically to help students get up close and personal with medical realities – from long hours to the extreme pride of seeing patients thrive after successful treatment.

“There are a surprising number of people who complete medical school and then never want to be practicing physicians, and while there are many factors behind this reality, immersive experiences in health care can help one find true interests and pursue a career,” said Dr. Sujit Vijay Sakpal, an

Avera Medical Group specialist physician in transplantation, surgery and critical care. Sakpal also serves as an assistant professor of surgery at the University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine.

The program lets students spend time with surgeons and other transplant physicians, clinical coordinators, pharmacists, dietitians, social workers, advance practice providers and surgical techs, who work as a single, united team.



Students taking part in the Avera Abdominal Transplant Undergraduate Internship program make patient rounds with physicians from the Avera Medical Group Transplant & Liver Surgery team.

The internship program is just one way Avera is helping foster more interest in medical careers in addition to a variety of partnerships with higher education institutions.

“We’re proud to offer students from around the region these chances to plunge into patient care and specialty medicine,” said Pam Hilber, Director of Talent Development for Avera Health.

Cherishing the chaos of a rewarding-but-demanding career

Growing up with a family of athletes and a physician mom, South Dakota State University student Eliza Peters is a native of the “Land of Chaos.”

Because changes can happen anytime, transplant care can seem unpredictable as well.

“I loved that – it was a perfect fit for me,” said Peters, a Sioux Falls native. “On my first day, I came in at 7 p.m. and left at 5 a.m. the next morning, I was still there, absorbing everything I could. The team was like, ‘You need to go home and get some sleep!’ ”

Peters was set to go to Spain and take part in a clinical shadowing program – and then COVID-19 hit. She wanted some sort of clinical opportunity if she was going to continue her plans for medical school and beyond.

“Transplant is like its own health care universe. It was a perfect place to shadow and learn,” said the human biology major, who, like McGregor, is continuing now as an advanced intern in the program. “We were quizzed but in an inclusive way. It was like a taste of medical school – without the overwhelming intensity.”

Since the students were embedded with a specialized medical team, Peters said she could see how the team operated.

Avera transplant physician Dr. Christopher Auvenshin leads a conference discussion at the Avera Medical Group Transplant & Liver Surgery Transplant Institute, which includes interns in the Avera Abdominal Transplant Undergraduate Internship.



“There was an overarching care team approach that we got to see in action, and a lot of times that atmosphere was awe-inspiring,” she said. “Watching surgeries, the many hours of physiology and anatomy lectures and labs came to life.”

Witnessing the work of the team – in person – helped her better realize her plans.

“There was a night-and-day difference between seeing an ill patient in ICU, then seeing them with an entirely new future after transplant,” Peters said. “I really understand what I want to do now. Any student would gain from experiences like these.”

This is just one of many [internship opportunities at Avera](#) for those interested in health care.



Need for Pharmacists Remain Strong

Contributed by South Dakota State University

Job prospects for pharmacists remain strong.

At Mayo Clinic, “positions are consistently opening up,” according to Garrett Schramm, director of pharmacy education and academic affairs at Mayo Clinic College of Medicine & Science. “We’re hiring so many people right now. We’re actively recruiting nationwide. We’re doing a lot of telework. I have pharmacy colleagues that work in pharmacy informatics. They live nowhere near Rochester (Minnesota). As more and more can be done remotely, we’re hiring people that aren’t physically here. That’s a huge satisfier for people who want to stay in a particular location but work for a certain company.”

At Lewis Drug, hiring has been “pretty consistent year over year at eight to 12 pharmacists,” according to Jessica Strobl, vice president of professional services. “Community pharmacy now may not look like it did 10 years ago, and it may look different again 10 years from now, but community pharmacists will remain an imperative point of contact to help patients get healthy and stay healthy so we will continue to need pharmacists who are willing to evolve with the profession,” Strobl said.

Tom Johnson, vice president of hospital pharmacy with Avera Health in Sioux Falls, said Avera is hiring about 20 pharmacists a year. While community pharmacists and hospital-based pharmacists will still be the most common positions, job growth is expected in alternative places like pharmacy manufacturers or insurers or with specialty pharmacies, integrated care teams or in ambulatory care.

SDSU’s PharmD program continues to have 100% job placement.

National Maternal Mental Health Hotline

Contributed by SD Office of Rural Health



The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) officially launched the [National Maternal Mental Health Hotline](#) on Mother's Day, May 8, 2022.

Available 24/7, the National Maternal Mental Health Hotline provides free, confidential support, resources, and referrals from professional counselors to pregnant and postpartum individuals facing mental health challenges. Counselors offer support in English and Spanish and interpreter services are available in 60 additional languages.

In a [press release](#) announcing the hotline, HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra said, "This new Maternal Mental Health Hotline will not only advance our priorities of tackling the nation's mental health crisis, but also support our efforts to ensure healthy pregnancies and support new parents."

HRSA provides [promotional materials](#), including social media graphics, printable wallet cards, and newsletter copy. These materials are also available in Spanish.

If you have any questions about the hotline service please see the online [Frequently Asked Questions](#), also available in [Spanish](#), or contact hotline@postpartum.net. **This email address should not be distributed to help-seekers.** It will *not* connect anyone to the 24/7 hotline service. It is for informational questions only.

Avera Sponsorship Targets SDSU Medical Lab Students

Contributed by South Dakota State University



**SOUTH DAKOTA
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Avera Health announced a new \$40,000 per student sponsorship program for SDSU's medical laboratory science students. For selected applicants, the Avera MLS Sponsorship provides a \$15,000 scholarship paid to SDSU while the student is receiving the four-year degree, a \$15,000 sign-on bonus in exchange for a three-year work commitment and \$2,000 per year in student loan repayments for up to \$10,000.

The Medical Laboratory Sciences program resides within the Department of Allied and Population Health in the College of Pharmacy and Allied Health professions. South Dakota State has the only accredited program in the state and has had a 100% job placement rate since 2017, a 100% graduation rate since 2018 and a 96% board exam pass rate since 2017.

"SDSU and Avera have worked together for many years to match students' interests and abilities with opportunities at Avera," Pam Hilber, director of workforce development at Avera, said. "We are excited to work with SDSU to fill a critical workforce need. Increasing demand and increasing complex lab procedures are fueling a need for more employees," she said.

Hilber explained the sponsorship program is for students committing to work at one of Avera McKennan's facilities in Sioux Falls.

Medical laboratory scientists work with other health care professionals to aid in patient care by performing laboratory tests that can help in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases. They use advanced technology to perform testing on blood and body fluids in the areas of chemistry, microbiology, hematology, immunology, toxicology, blood banking and molecular procedures.

DNP Grad's Outreach Project

Contributed by South Dakota State University

Properly training individuals on the use of naloxone to reverse opioid overdoses was on the mind of Hayley (Schmidt) Rasmussen '16/DNP '22. As a result, she worked on a project to show others how to properly use the medication.



The training program, which was directed to be used at a Sioux Falls homeless shelter, was part of her Doctor of Nursing Practice curriculum, which she completed in May.

"I chose the DNP pathway so that I can continue to directly care for patients as a family nurse practitioner," said Rasmussen, who has been a nurse in the cardiopulmonary unit at Avera McKennan since earning her bachelor's degree in 2016. "However, the DNP has the added benefit of being able to continue career advancement in leadership, ethics and research. I hope to continue implementing clinically effective projects in my area of employment, but also in the community."

That community aspect came into play when she was introduced to the project idea by someone during a DNP leadership clinical.

Naloxone is used for the emergency treatment of a known or suspected opioid overdose. The medication works by blocking the effects of the opioid in the brain. Since treatment with this medication is not long lasting, one must get medical help right away after receiving an initial dose.

Starting the project in January 2020, she used pre-, post- and three-month post-intervention surveys to assess staff's attitudes, knowledge and retention of knowledge.

All of that training came into play when the shelter successfully used naloxone recently to treat someone.

"It's humbling, overwhelming and exciting all at once," Rasmussen said after learning the training was successful and helped someone recover. "It is incredible to watch something that started out as an idea, become a powerful change in the community."

"It was important to start my project early in my schooling and to find something I was passionate about," she continued. "I'm thankful for the support from my family, but also from my professors/project co-chairs in order to see this idea through to completion."



Strengthening the Health Care Workforce

Contributed by SD Office of Rural Health from the American Hospital Association www.aha.org

A talented, qualified, engaged and diverse workforce is at the heart of America's health care system. However, hospitals and health systems now face mounting and critical staffing shortages that could jeopardize access to care in the communities they serve. For example, AHA survey data show that between 2019 and 2020, job vacancies for various types of nursing personnel increased by up to 30%, and for respiratory therapists by 31%. These shortages are expected to persist, with an analysis of EMSI data showing there will be a shortage of up to 3.2 million health care workers by 2026.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a heavy toll on health care teams who have been on the front lines of the pandemic with many suffering from stress, trauma, burnout and increased behavioral health challenges. A 2021 Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation survey found that nearly 30% of health care workers are considering leaving their profession altogether, and nearly 60% reported impacts to their mental health stemming from their work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, the daunting challenge of sustaining the health care workforce predates the COVID-19 pandemic. America will face a shortage of up to 124,000 physicians by 2033 and will need to hire at least 200,000 nurses per year to meet increased demand and to replace retiring nurses. There also are critical shortages of allied health and behavioral health professionals, especially in historically marginalized rural and urban communities. These workforce shortages — combined with an aging population, a rise in chronic diseases and behavioral health conditions, and advancements in the “state-of-the-art” of care delivery — all contribute to the need for supportive policies so that America's health care workforce can ensure access to care and be adequately prepared for the delivery system of the future.

Find additional information:

<https://www.aha.org/guidesreports/2022-06-21-strengthening-health-care-workforce-strategies-now-near-and-far>

DOH Social Media

What's happening at the South Dakota Department of Health and the Office of Rural Health?

Keep informed at these social media accounts.

DOH on Facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/SDHealthDepartment>

DOH on Twitter – <https://twitter.com/SDDOH>

SD Health Careers on Twitter - <https://twitter.com/SDHealthCareers>

HOTT on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/SDHealthCareers?ref=hl>

SIM-SD on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/Simulation-in-Motion-South-Dakota-131973850231573/timeline/>

More Information?

Contact [Josie Petersen](#), Department of Health

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