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New Report Lends Urgency to WI Health Care Workforce Shortages

Ensuring an adequate supply of physicians now and in the future to care for Wisconsin communities is a top priority for the Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA). The latest report from the Wisconsin Council on Medical Education and Workforce (WCMEW) highlights successes in growing Wisconsin's primary care workforce, but also warns that as Wisconsin's population ages, demand for health care is outpacing the number of primary care physicians entering the workforce, particularly in rural areas.

"This is about making sure citizens all across Wisconsin have access to the high-quality care for which our hospitals, health systems, physicians and nurses are nationally recognized," said WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding. "As the report shows, efforts to educate and train more physicians here in Wisconsin are showing positive results, but the report also clearly shows we need to stay diligently focused on this challenge."

Since 2013, WHA has worked closely with Governor Walker's Administration and the Legislature to enact new funding for physician residency training programs. According to the WCMEW report, those bipartisan efforts are delivering results, but not enough.

"The residency grant program is a good blueprint, a good plan that is showing real progress, but the WCMEW report confirms the need still outpaces the gains," Borgerding said. "WHA plans to keep the health care workforce shortage front and center as a priority for the Governor and lawmakers. There is nothing more important than assuring our citizens can receive the care they need. Nothing."

The new WCMEW report also highlights the need for Wisconsin to best utilize the workforce that is available. "A physician's time is a finite resource," said Borgerding. "In addition to growing Wisconsin's physician workforce, legislators and regulators need to prioritize reducing regulatory requirements on physicians that decrease the amount time spent caring for patients."

For additional information, see:

- [WCMEW workforce report](#) (July 2018)
- [WHA Praises Grant Program Addressing Wisconsin Physician Shortage - Estimated 133 additional physicians enrolled in WI-based residency programs by July 2020](#) (May 2018)
- [WHA report: 100 New Physicians a Year - An Imperative for Wisconsin](#) (November 2011)
- [WHA Wisconsin Health Care Workforce 2017 Report](#) (October 2017)