



Pat Quinn, Governor
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MEMORANDUM

To: Illinois Health Care Organizations

From: Illinois Department of Public Health, Center for Rural Health

Date: May 20, 2009

This memo is to inform you of educational loan repayment funds that will be available to health care practitioners in Illinois through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Funds will be awarded from both the federal National Health Service Corps (NHSC) and the State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) through the stimulus program.

Applications for the NHSC program will be available June 2, 2009 through September 30, 2010. At this time, a date for the availability of the SLRP funds has not been announced.

As our partner in workforce issues, we wanted to make you aware of these opportunities. Below are the details of each loan repayment program:

National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program

The NHSC offers an educational loan repayment program to fully trained health professionals who are practicing in health professional shortage areas and have qualifying educational loans. Awardees receive up to \$50,000 for the first two years and may continue to receive additional awards on a yearly basis. To be eligible for the Loan Repayment Program (LRP), you must be a fully trained:

- Allopathic or osteopathic physician specializing in family medicine, general pediatrics, general internal medicine, general psychiatry, or obstetrics/gynecology
- Primary care nurse practitioner
- Primary care physician assistant
- Certified nurse-midwife
- Dentist
- Dental hygienist
- Mental or behavioral health professional (health service psychologist, licensed clinical social worker, licensed professional counselor, marriage and family therapist, and psychiatric nurse specialist)

Other eligibility requirements include:

- Be free of judgment liens arising from Federal debt

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- Have no other existing service commitment
- Serve full time (40 hours a week) in the clinical practice of your profession
- Commit to providing primary care service in a priority health professional shortage area (HPSA) for a minimum of two years at a qualified loan repayment site.
- Be a U.S. citizen with a valid, unrestricted license and/or certificate for the State where you plan to practice

In order to become a qualified NHSC loan repayment site, submit a complete Recruitment and Retention Assistance form to the NHSC. This form and instructions are found online at <http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/applications>. Potential loan repayors must also complete an application for the program to participate.

If you have any questions regarding HPSA designations, please contact Nolan Nosari at the Illinois Department of Public Health, Center for Rural Health by phone at 217-782-1624 or toll-free 800-821-3635 or by e-mail at Nolan.Nosari@illinois.gov.

The maximum repayment during the minimum two-year contract is \$50,000 (if the total outstanding balance of the qualifying educational loans is less than \$50,000, the NHSC will provide funds equal to the outstanding balance). Participants may be eligible to continue their loan repayment beyond two years, one year at a time, to the extent they have unpaid qualifying educational loans and continue to serve at an eligible site. To continue beyond two years, participants must request additional years of support using the Contract Amendment Application for Loan Repayors. Repayment during the third and fourth years is up to \$35,000 for each year.

Complete details are found online at http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/join_us/lrp.asp and the application is found online at <http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/applications/lrp>. The NHSC toll-free phone number is 800-221-9393.

Illinois NHSC State Loan Repayment Program

The Illinois National Health Service Corps State Loan Repayment Program was established to assist communities in recruiting health professionals. Program funds are used to repay educational loans incurred by physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurse midwives, dentists and psychiatrists who agree to serve in federally designated health professional shortage areas (HPSA) in Illinois.

To be eligible for this State loan repayment program, applicants must:

- Be licensed or expect to be licensed in Illinois as one of the following:
- a primary care physician (residency trained or board eligible osteopathic or allopathic physicians trained in
 - family practice
 - general internal medicine
 - general pediatrics
 - internal medicine pediatrics
 - obstetrics and gynecology

- nurse practitioner
 - physician assistant
 - nurse midwife
 - dentist
 - psychiatrist
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- Willing to practice full time at public or nonprofit private entities providing primary health care services in a federally designated HPSA in Illinois
 - Sign a contract with the Illinois Department of Public Health guaranteeing their minimum commitment of two years of service in a HPSA
 - Be indebted to a governmental or commercial lending institution for educational expenses incurred in pursuit of the applicant's degrees or diploma
 - Be a U.S. citizen

Repayment for the minimum two years of service is up to \$25,000 annually. However, if the total amount of the applicant's qualified educational loans is less than \$50,000, one-half of the total qualified educational loan amounts will be received annually. Participants may continue their loan repayment beyond two years, one year at a time. The repayment amount for the third and fourth years is \$35,000 annually.

Complete details are found online at the Illinois Department of Public Health, Center for Rural Health web site and the web address is http://www.idph.state.il.us/about/rural_health/rural_home.htm. For questions, contact Julie Casper at the Center for Rural Health by phone at 217-782-1624 or toll-free 800-821-3635 or by e-mail at Julie.Casper@illinois.gov.
