

# A Message from the WHA Council on Workforce Development Chair

As chief executive officer of a Wisconsin hospital and chair of the Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) Council on Workforce Development, I have been part of the unprecedented experience the COVID-19 pandemic created for health care.



*Debra Rudquist*

COVID-19 magnified the issues our health care workforce has faced through the second decade of the 21st century. The workforce facing another COVID-19 wave in 2021 was depleted; departures from health care jobs rose over 30% in the early months of 2021, and agency staffing rose by over 130%, driven by the wave of retirements and job changes being called “The Great Resignation.” (1)

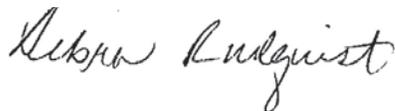
Underlying issues were brought to the forefront as health care providers became not just the last line of defense for an overwhelmed public health and social support system fighting the spread of this virus, but were also forced to fill gaps in the care continuum as lack of post-acute care became a critical issue.

This 2022 Wisconsin Health Care Workforce Report is WHA’s 18th annual report. WHA’s workforce reports utilize national and state data and studies, reports from other experts and the experience and expertise of hospital leaders to provide analysis and offer recommendations for action.

Our Wisconsin health care workforce continues to rise to the challenge of delivering the high-quality, high-value health care that Wisconsin is nationally known for amidst a persistent pandemic straining hospitals and our workforce to their limits. As hospital and health system leaders, we are devoted to protecting, promoting and supporting this workforce so that we can meet the health care needs of the communities we serve.

I am confident my fellow health care leaders, along with Wisconsin’s fine educational institutions, dedicated elected officials and policymakers, remain committed to growing and supporting the health care workforce needed to meet this current crisis and the challenges that lie ahead.

Debra Rudquist



CEO, Amery Hospital & Clinic, Amery  
Chair, WHA Council on Workforce Development (2021)