

HRSA Will Continue “Pausing” Planned HPSA Withdrawals Through All of 2023

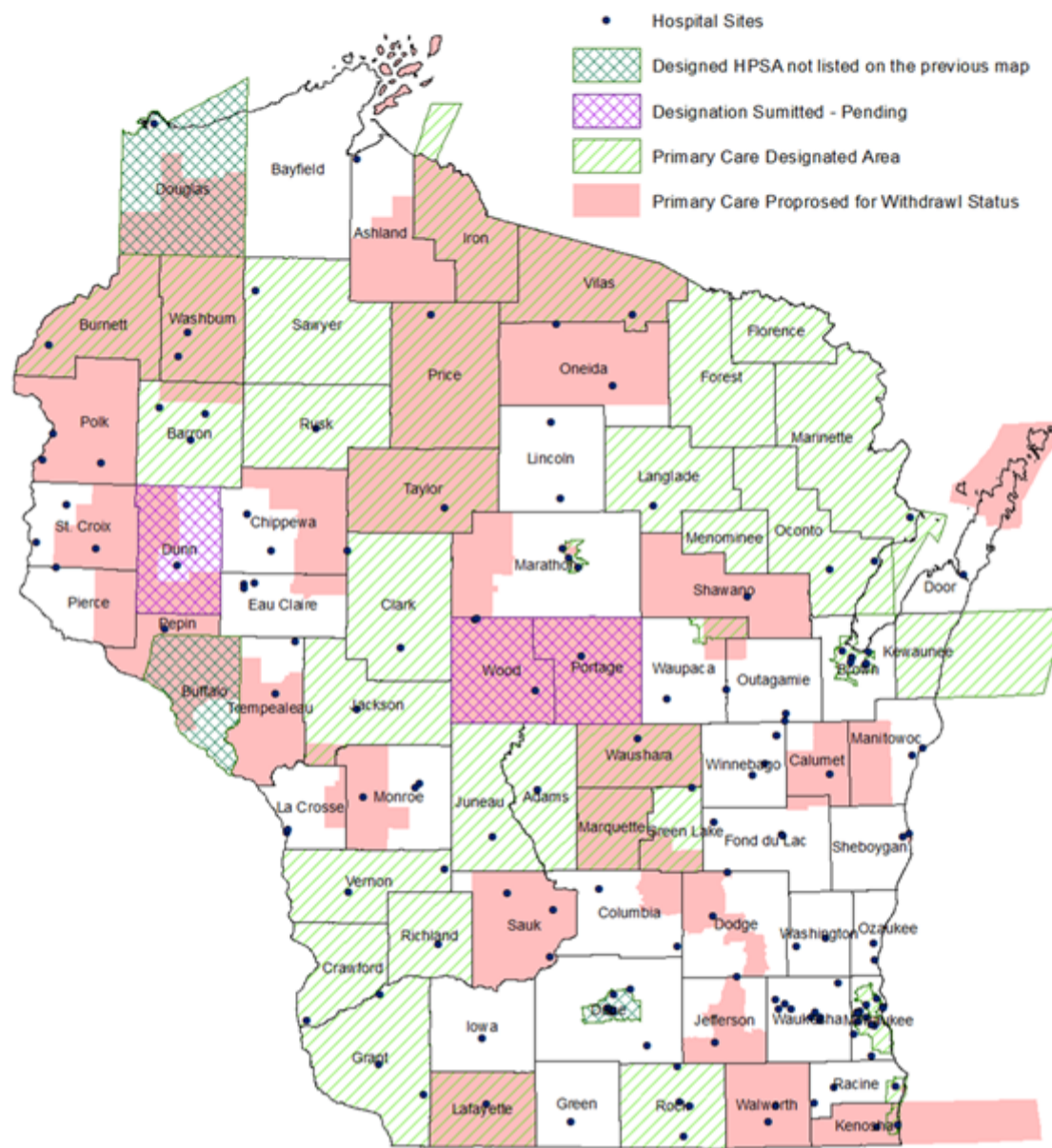
On June 30, the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) [announced](#) it will extend through all of 2023 its “pause” in plans to withdraw a large number of federally designated Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs).

WHA has engaged with the Evers’ administration, the National Rural Health Association, and the American Hospital Association to build support for pausing this process, given the sustained health care workforce shortage. After hearing concerns from WHA and other impacted providers, Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers sent a [letter](#) to the federal Department of Health and Human Services in May of 2022 expressing concern that HRSA’s recent changes to the redetermination process would lead to an inordinately high number of areas in Wisconsin losing their HPSA benefits, and exacerbating Wisconsin’s health care workforce challenges.

[WHA was in Washington, DC](#) in June of 2022 visiting Wisconsin’s Congressional Delegation to [express concern](#) and urging them to contact HRSA prior to HRSA announcing its initial “[pause](#)” of the redetermination process through at least July 2023.

Hospitals in Wisconsin

Primary Care Health Provider Shortage Area Designation



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Based on the [most recent data available](#), more than 30 Wisconsin hospitals continue to be at risk of losing their HPSA designation. This would mean hospitals lose access to several benefits, including:

- Enhanced Medicaid/Medicare provider payments for primary care services
- Access to the Conrad 30 J-1 Visa waiver program which helps hospitals recruit foreign-born physicians
- Loan repayment programs that help attract providers to practice in rural areas
- Extra consideration for federal grants and graduate medical education slots

WHA spoke with HRSA officials in April 2023 and warned them of the potential negative impacts this policy would have and is continuing to advocate for HRSA to modify its proposal. Under HRSA's current announcement, HPSAs that do not meet requirements for designation at the time of its planned Nov. 15, 2023 data pull will be withdrawn with the publication of a second federal register notice planned for Jan. 2, 2024.

Contact WHA Vice President of Federal and State Relations [Jon Hoelter](#) with questions.

Other Articles in this Issue

- [Governor Evers Signs Biennial Budget Bill into Law](#)
- [WHA Comments on Medicaid Proposed Rules on Access, Transparency and Managed Care](#)
- [HRSA Will Continue "Pausing" Planned HPSA Withdrawals Through All of 2023](#)
- [Fast Facts from the WHA Information Center: Summertime Injuries](#)