

Governor's Task Force on the Health Care Workforce Meets for the First Time

WHA Workforce Report and hospital data and insights key to task force efforts

On March 13, 2024, two days after the release of WHA's annual workforce report, the Governor's Task Force on the Health Care Workforce met for the first time, and the state leaders co-chairing and facilitating the effort made good use of the newly available WHA workforce data.

The task force is charged with studying the workforce challenges facing the state's health care system, including recruitment and retention, and creating an action plan with solutions related to workforce development, industry innovation, education and training for consideration in the governor's 2025-2027 biennial budget. The Governor's Task Force on the Health Care Workforce is chaired by Lieutenant Governor Sara Rodriguez and co-chaired by Wisconsin Department of Health Services Secretary-Designee Kirsten Johnson and Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Secretary-Designee Amy Pachacek.

In her opening remarks, Johnson noted, "The Wisconsin Hospital Association just released a workforce report this week and in it you can see clearly that the demand for care is continuing to increase, and we see our workforce just can't keep up." Johnson also pointed to the recent legislative update to the WHA-crafted Grow Our Own GME grant program, noting that DHS supports the program and the updates as a way to help the workforce grow faster. The Grow Our Own GME grant update legislation is expected to be signed into law.

The inclusion of hospital and health system data, expertise and experience in the task force work is ensured by the presence of a strong and diverse group of WHA member leaders. The Governor's Task Force on Health Care Workforce includes six leaders from WHA member hospitals and health systems:

- Kelly Buchholtz, chief nursing officer, Mayo Clinic Health System NW Wisconsin
- Sharon Cox, vice president/chief nursing officer, Beloit Health System;
- Eric Humphrey, chief human resources officer, Froedert ThedaCare Health;
- Shawn Lerch, chief executive officer, Sauk Prairie Healthcare;
- Heather Schimmers, president, Gundarsen Health System; and
- Robyn Woolever, director of Integrated Care Services, Children's Wisconsin.

WHA Senior Vice President of Workforce and Clinical Practice Ann Zenk will provide support and resources to these task force members. Contact [Zenk](#) with questions or feedback about the Governor's Task Force or about any other workforce issue.

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