



## TRAIN

Adapting a State Funding Model to Provide Technical Assistance for the Development of Dental Residencies



### ORGANIZATION

**WISCONSIN COLLABORATIVE  
FOR RURAL GRADUATE  
MEDICAL EDUCATION**

### LOCATION

**WISCONSIN**

### STATE POLICY LEVER

State funding to support technical assistance for health profession education program planning Initiative

### SUCCESS FACTORS

- Strong partnerships with key stakeholders
- Robust evaluation to demonstrate outcomes

### POSITIVE OUTCOMES:

- 53 new physicians graduating per year in rural programs
- A doubling of state funding per trainee, resulting in greater financial sustainability for training efforts

### THE CHALLENGE

Many health care employers (including health centers) are interested in participating in health professions training. This includes the development of graduate medical education programs. However, employers often lack financial resources to support the administrative and operations costs associated with planning for and hosting training programs.

### STATE POLICY/STRATEGY

The Wisconsin Collaborative for Rural Graduate Medical Education (WCRGME) is an organization that receives state funding to provide technical assistance to health care facilities for health professional education planning. WCRGME was established in response to the Wisconsin Hospital Association's 2011 report, "100 New Physicians a Year: An Imperative for Wisconsin" as a part of the State's plan to invest in graduate medical education (GME). The program has been strongly supported by key stakeholders, including the Wisconsin Hospital Association, Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association, and the Wisconsin General Assembly. Initially funded by a Wisconsin Rural Physician Residency Assistance Program (WRPRAP) state grant, WCRGME has broadened funding sources which include funding through other state grants including the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation to support talent attraction and retention. Partnerships with the Wisconsin Northern GME Consortium and the University of North Carolina Cecil G Sheps Center also support the efforts of WCRGME. In total, the technical assistance center receives \$350,000 annually to support community-based recruitment,

faculty development, marketing of GME opportunities, professional development, and technical assistance. Beyond the support of WCRGME, Wisconsin has provided funding that created an additional 100+ GME training positions annually.

## STATE POLICY/STRATEGY IN ACTION

As part of its contract with the University of Wisconsin, WCRGME provides technical assistance to organizations interested in establishing, planning, or currently implementing a rural medical residency program. Technical assistance includes timeline development, scenario planning, identifying partners, basic financing, accreditation support, faculty development, professional development (example: coordinators, coding staff, rural health leaders, etc.), and recruitment of medical students among many other services.



MEDIA RESOURCES DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT RURAL MEDICAL RESIDENT RECRUITMENT | SOURCE: WCRGME

## THE IMPACT

WCRGME works with every program interested in expanding and/or developing GME. As a result of their support, 21 new GME programs have been launched and seven additional programs are in development. The WCRGME team has also worked with 30 rural hospitals and health center partners to assess GME needs/interests.

Due to state investments in rural GME and the technical assistance to support

them, a total of 141 new residents and fellow positions were established as of 2020. These new positions map to an annual graduation of 53 new physicians from rural programs. Due to the success of the program, the Wisconsin legislature recently increased state funds for rural medical residents to support the financial sustainability of GME slot expansion, increasing from \$75,000 to \$150,000 per resident. Acknowledging the success of rural GME efforts thus far, the Wisconsin legislature also recently provided funding of up to \$375,000 per year to support the infrastructure of running a GME consortium that includes at least one partner rural hospital or health system.

Wisconsin health centers have served as clinical rotation sites for rural medical students and medical residents. In a step towards supporting GME programs for other health professionals, the Wisconsin legislature recently expanded state appropriations by \$5 million (\$2.5 million per year for two years) to support of the training of other health professionals including dentists. Also, state funds for technical assistance supporting other residency programs may include dental workforce training.

***“WCRGME has been able to utilize state funding to grow physician training and the number of physicians practicing in rural and underserved communities throughout the state. Key factors in our success include broad partnerships with stakeholders and assessing outcomes so policy makers understand the return on investment. Lessons in the physician workforce strategy can be applied to other health professions including dental training.”***

LORI RODEFELD, DIRECTOR OF RURAL GME DEVELOPMENT AT WCRGME