



NATIONAL  
RURAL HEALTH  
RESOURCE CENTER

# Health Provider Retention Toolkit



Sally Buck and  
Angie LaFlamme

November 9, 2014

# The Center's Purpose

The National Rural Health Resource Center (The Center) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to sustaining and improving health care in rural communities. As the nation's leading technical assistance and knowledge center in rural health, The Center focuses on five core areas:

- Performance Improvement
- Health Information Technology
- Recruitment & Retention
- Community Health Assessments
- Networking



# Midwest Retention Toolkit

## **Created by:**

- National Rural Health Resource Center
- National Rural Recruitment and Retention Network (3RNet)

## **Under Contracts with:**

- Indiana State Department of Health
- Minnesota Department of Health, Office of Rural Health and Primary Care
- Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Primary Care Office

# National Health Service Corps

- In 2011, NHSC expanded scholarships and loan repayment programs to 10,000 providers
- NHSC supports primary care and psychiatric physicians, physician assistants, advanced practice nurses, mental health providers, dentists and dental hygienists
- Funding provided 36 state Primary Care Organizations to support and track retention of NHSC providers



# Health Provider Retention Toolkit

- Retention Issues
- Retention Plan
- Retention Elements
  - Orientation
  - Practice Feedback and Satisfaction Surveys
  - Recognition Activities
  - Mentor Programs
  - Other Retention Tools
- Resources



# Retention Toolkit Samples

- Worksheets
- Surveys
- Timelines
- Checklists
- Presentations
- Interviews



# Retention Challenges

- Lack of individual clinic staff responsibility for retention
- Limited salary and benefit resources
- Retaining providers after completion of their loan repayment obligation
- Limited partner/spouse employment opportunities



# Retention Solutions

- Affiliations with local universities to offer continuing education and professional networking
- Creating retention committees
- Conducting satisfaction surveys
- Developing provider recognition efforts, include a “Provider of the Year” award selected by peers





# Health Care Provider Retention Survey

- 123 health care providers surveyed; 48% response
- 30% mental health, 26% advanced practice nurses, 16% dentists, 12% physicians, 9% physician assistants
- 52% rural and 48% urban
- 55% in practice two-three years and 38% four+ years
- Majority planned to stay in the practice following obligation; 26% not sure they would stay



# Health Care Provider Survey

## Most Important Factors

- Professional relationships with partners and colleagues
- Workload/call schedule
- Compensation/benefits
- Community/lifestyle



# Health Care Provider Survey

## **Non-Financial Retention Factors**

- Recognition activities
- Community integration
- Participation in clinic/hospital decision making
- Less than 30% of the sites offered these activities



# Top 10 Retention Factors

## Literature Review

- Availability of relief coverage
- Quality of schools
- Compatibility with others in health care
- Availability of quality housing
- Availability of practice partners and specialists



# Top 10 Retention Factors

## Literature Review

- Income potential
- Employment for spouse/partner
- Assistance with retiring education loans
- Availability of continuing education
- Opportunity to be a preceptor



# Retention Plan Components

- Goals, timeline and person accountable
- Committee or those part of the plan
- Resources (materials, community and health care contacts and budget)
- Elements of retention
- Evaluation (outcome measures)



# Orientation

- Welcome and orient the new provider and spouse/partner to the health care community and the broader community
- Arrange opportunities for the provider to “check-in”
- Match a mentor or “buddy” to the provider for the first year
- Address concerns or issues
- Recognize the provider for service
- Satisfy compensation, benefits and education needs as appropriate



# Provider Feedback and Satisfaction Surveys

- Build communication
- Assess potential retention issues
  - Understanding of organization mission
  - Benefits and compensation
  - Workload
  - Technology
- Conduct annually by a neutral party
- Confidential
- Address issues identified from the survey





# Recognition Events

- Years of service
- Practice research, presentations and publications
- Community or hospital service
- Teaching and precepting students
- Achieving Meaningful Use
- Specialty certification
- Patient satisfaction survey results



# Mentor Program for New Providers

- Monthly lunch or breakfast with a staff member or colleague
- Discuss retention factors
- Obtain feedback and follow-up on issues
- Use same process with spouse/partner
- Discuss acceptance, quality of work environment, community integration



# Other Retention Tools

- Exit interviews
  - Determine reasons for leaving
  - Gain perspective on the practice and community
- Financial retention samples



# National and State Resources

- Initial recruitment
- Clinical and management support
- Academic linkages
- Professional development and continuing education
- Family ties and support
- Teaching/supervision opportunities



# Montana State Resources

Montana Resources for Provider Recruitment and Retention			
Name	Resource Type	Description	URL
Montana Medical Association	Montana Physician Association	Job search within website	<a href="http://www.mmaoffice.org/">http://www.mmaoffice.org/</a>
Montana Nurses Association	Professional Association for Nurses in Montana	Job search within website	<a href="http://www.mtnurses.org/">http://www.mtnurses.org/</a>
Montana Academy of Family Physicians	Professional Association for Family Physicians in Montana	Job search within website	<a href="http://montanaafp.org/">http://montanaafp.org/</a>
Montana Academy of Physician Assistants	Professional Association for Physicians Assistants in Montana	Job search within website	<a href="http://www.mtapa.com/">http://www.mtapa.com/</a>
Montana Health Jobs	An association of Montana Health Care Providers	Health professional jobs site, MT web recruitment for rural and underserved areas in greater Montana	<a href="http://www.mthealthjobs.com/public/">http://www.mthealthjobs.com/public/</a>
Montana Chamber of Commerce	Local business interest groups	Advocacy, job postings, business directories, etc.	<a href="http://www.montanachamber.com/">http://www.montanachamber.com/</a>
Montana.gov	Website	Focus on logistics of living in Montana	<a href="http://www.montana.gov/">http://www.montana.gov/</a>
Montana City and Town Directories	Website	Municipal directory for Montana	<a href="http://www.fallingrain.com/world/US/MT/">http://www.fallingrain.com/world/US/MT/</a> or <a href="http://www.citytown.info/Montana.htm">http://www.citytown.info/Montana.htm</a>
Montana Primary Care Office	Website	Part of the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services that aims to increase access to primary and preventative health care and to improve the health status of underserved and vulnerable populations	<a href="http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/primarycare/">http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/primarycare/</a>
Montana Health Professional Shortage Area Search	Website	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	<a href="http://hpsafind.hrsa.gov/">http://hpsafind.hrsa.gov/</a>
Montana Health Workforce	Website	The Montana Office of Rural Health & Area Health Education Center website sharing the number of activities and programs that support health workforce development in rural and underserved communities, which may include communities as Health Professional Shortage Areas and Medically Underserved Areas	<a href="http://healthinfo.montana.edu/mthwac.html">http://healthinfo.montana.edu/mthwac.html</a>



# Montana State Resources

Montana Department of Public Health and  
Human Services

Public Health and Safety Division

1400 Broadway B102 (Cogswell Building)

P.O. Box 202951

Helena, Montana 59620

P: 406-444-7374

F: 406-444-6943





NATIONAL  
RURAL HEALTH  
RESOURCE CENTER

## Sally Buck

Chief Executive Officer  
National Rural Health  
Resource Center

218-727-9390, ext. 225  
sbuck@ruralcenter.org

## Angie LaFlamme

Senior Program Coordinator  
National Rural Health  
Resource Center

218-727-9390, ext. 222  
alaflamme@ruralcenter.org

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<http://www.ruralcenter.org>



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