

**Section-by-section summary of H.607, An act relating to increasing the supply of
nurses and primary care providers in Vermont**

As recommended by Senate Health & Welfare Committee

September 16, 2020

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Sec. 1. 18 V.S.A. § 9491 – Health care workforce; strategic plan

- Amends health care workforce development strategic plan requirements and requires the Director of Health Care Reform to maintain the plan in consultation with an advisory group composed of representatives of:
 - Green Mountain Care Board (GMCB) primary care advisory group
 - Vermont State Colleges
 - Area Health Education Centers’ workforce initiative
 - Federally qualified health centers (FQHCs)
 - Vermont hospitals
 - Physicians
 - Naturopathic physicians (*added by Senate Health & Welfare amendment*)
 - Home health agencies (*added by Senate Health & Welfare amendment*)
 - Long-term care facilities

Sec. 2. Health care workforce strategic plan

- Requires Director of Health Care Reform to update the health care workforce strategic plan and submit a draft to the GMCB by December 1, 2020 for review and approval within 30 days following receipt
- By January 15, 2021 the Director must provide the updated plan to legislative committees

Sec. 3. 18 V.S.A. § 33 – Medical students; primary care

- Directs Department of Health, in consultation with Office of Primary Care and Area Health Education Centers Program at UVM College of Medicine, to establish a rural primary care physician scholarship program
- Scholarship would cover medical school tuition for up to five third-year and up to five fourth-year medical students who commit to practicing primary care in a rural, health professional shortage or medically underserved area of Vermont
- For each academic year of tuition covered by the scholarship, recipient incurs obligation of two years of full-time service or four years of half-time service

Sec. 4. Rural primary care physician scholarship program; appropriation

- Appropriates \$811,226 in Global Commitment investment funds (State share is \$370,000) to Department of Health for rural primary care physician scholarships
- Expresses legislative intent to continue to appropriate scholarship funds in future fiscal years

Sec. 5. Educational assistance; nursing students; appropriation

- Appropriates \$1,381,276.00 in Global Commitment investment funds (State share is \$630,000) to Department of Health for additional scholarships for nursing students under existing program administered by Vermont Student Assistance Corporation
- First priority for scholarship funds is for students pursuing a practical nursing certificate
- Second priority for scholarship funds is for students pursuing an associate's degree in nursing to become a registered nurse
- Third priority for scholarship funds is for students pursuing a bachelor of science degree in nursing
- Applicants must demonstrate financial need, carry at least a 2.5 GPA, and agree to work as a nurse in Vermont for at least one year following licensure for each year of scholarship awarded
- First preference is for students attending an accredited postsecondary educational institution in Vermont
- Expresses legislative intent to continue to appropriate scholarship funds in future fiscal years

Sec. 5a. Funding source

- Funds the State match for the scholarships by allocating \$1 million from monies appropriated in 2018 to expand the mental health and substance use disorder treatment professional workforce

Secs. 6 and 7. Technical provisions

- Sec. 6 creates two subchapters in Title 18, chapter 1
- Sec. 7 redesignates two sections in Title 18, chapter 1 to move them into new subchapter 2

Sec. 8. Effective date

- *Senate Health & Welfare Committee amendment* would make the effective date November 1, 2020