

# Act 183 of 2022 Status Update on Health Care Workforce Activities

Testimony for Senate Committee on Health and Welfare

January 24, 2022

Presented by: Wendy Trafton, MPH

Deputy Director of Health Care Reform

Sean Sheehan, MPA

Special Projects Director

# Act 183 of 2022 Status Update on Health Care Activities

Act 183 Initiative	Section	Investment	Deliverable	Responsible	Status as of 1/18/2022
Emergency Grants to Support Nurse Faculty and Staff	20	\$2,000,000.00	Emergency interim grants to Vermont's nursing schools over three years to increase compensation for faculty/staff.	VDH	VDH has indicated SFR dictated requirements to Vermont's nursing schools and is collaboratively assessing whether schools can meet the expectations. Next steps will be identified once assessment is complete.
Nurse Preceptor Incentive Grants	21	\$400,000.00	Incentive grants to nurses employed by critical access hospitals in Vermont for serving as preceptors for nursing students enrolled in VT nursing school programs.	AHS	AHS has defined program parameters based on treasury guidance for SFR that align with the Premium Pay section of the final rule and has contracted with an independent entity to support program administration.

# Act 183 of 2022 Status Update on Health Care Activities

Act 183 Initiative	Section	Investment	Deliverable	Responsible	Status as of 1/18/2022
Preceptor Working Group	21	N/A	The Director of Health Care Reform or designee in AHS shall convene a working group of stakeholders to identify ways to increase clinical placement opportunities, establish sustainable funding models for compensating nurses as preceptors or hiring additional nurses to alleviate pressure on preceptors or both and to develop an action plan for expanding clinical placement opportunities. Due January 15, 2023	AHS	The preceptor working group has initiated meetings and has identified near-term and longer-term potential opportunities for a statewide inventory of clinical placement opportunities. The group will continue to meet to consider sustainable funding models to support the staff necessary to ensure robust clinical placement opportunities for nursing students in Vermont. The working group submitted an <a href="#">action plan</a> to the legislature.

# Act 183 of 2022 Status Update on Health Care Activities

Act 183 Initiative	Section	Investment	Deliverable	Responsible	Status as of 1/18/2022
Health Care Employer Nursing Pipeline and Apprenticeship Program	22	\$2,500,000.00	Providing grants to health care employers, including hospitals, long-term care facilities, designated and specialized service agencies, federally qualified health centers, and other health care providers, to establish or expand partnerships with Vermont nursing schools to create nursing pipeline or apprenticeship programs, or both, that will train members of the health care employers' existing staff, including personal care attendants, licensed nursing assistances, and licensed practical nurses, to become higher-level nursing professionals. Grants shall commence in the fall of 2022. On or before September 15, 2022, the AHS shall provide an update to HROC on status of implementation.	AHS	AHS has defined program parameters based on treasury guidance for SFR and is contracting with an independent entity to support program administration. In this case, program parameters for SFR are inconsistent with the legislative intent for program design and AHS is exploring options available to meet the intent, including through a <a href="#">BAA request</a> .

# Act 183 of 2022 Status Update on Health Care Activities

Act 183 Initiative	Section	Investment	Deliverable	Responsible	Status as of 1/18/2022
Health Care Workforce Data Center	32	\$750,000.00	Funds and full-time FTE appropriation to establish and operate a statewide Health Care Workforce Data Center.	AHS	AHS is in the process of defining the position based on existing job categories and preparing to submit for classification.
Health Care Workforce Coordinator Position	34	Position appropriation \$170,000.00 FY23	One classified, three-year limited-service Health Care workforce Coordinator position is created in the AHS Office of Health Care Reform to support the health care workforce initiatives set forth in Act 183 and in the Health Care Workforce Development Strategic Plan.	AHS	This position is under recruitment.

# Act 183 of 2022 Status Update on Health Care Activities

Act 183 Initiative	Section	Investment	Deliverable	Responsible	Status as of 1/18/2022
Designated and Specialized Service Agencies Workforce Development	29e	\$1,250,000.00	The designated and specialized service agencies shall use these funds for loan repayment and tuition assistance to promote the recruitment and retention of high-quality mental health and substance use disorder treatment professionals available to Vermont residents in need of their services.	AHS	AHS has defined program parameters based on treasury guidance for SFR that align with the “Behavioral Health Care” section of the final rule and is working with VDH and DMH on program design and implementation, including alignment with current grant programming administered by VDH.

# Premium Pay for Workforce Recruitment and Retention Program

- Act 83 of 2022 allocated \$60M for certain health care and social service employers to provide premium pay for workforce recruitment and retention.
  - \$25M HCBS FMAP funds, \$30M SFR funds, \$5M general funds
  - Grant awardees received \$2k/full-time equivalent employee
- 140 first round applicants qualified and were awarded \$33.1M.
  - Over \$23M in HCBS FMAP-funded awards and \$10M in SFR-funded awards
  - Nearly half of all awards were taken under a quarterly disbursement option that allows grantees to issue premium pay through June 2023
  - AHS is collecting data to evaluate the program in January and July
- AHS anticipates accepting Round 2 applications in February.
  - Newly eligible employer types include primary care practices, dental offices or facilities, Therapeutic Community Residences, and High-Tech Independent Home Nursing Providers

# Related FY 2023 Governor's Recommended Budget Adjustment Act

- The FY23 Governor's Recommended BAA would enable AHS to use any remaining Act 83 of 2022, Sec. 72 funds following a second round of Premium Pay for Workforce Recruitment and Retention Grants to expand programs authorized in Act 183, Secs. 21 and 22.
- This includes:
  - Adding funding and additional health care employer types to the Nurse Preceptor Program, and
  - Adding a more flexible funding source (remaining General Fund dollars) that can cover living costs for the Nursing Pipeline and Apprenticeship Program.
- AHS expects to have updates on available funding in April/May 2023.