



Vermont Chapter

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American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



VERMONT ACADEMY OF
FAMILY PHYSICIANS

SFY2027 Primary Care Budget Requests

April 3, 2026

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ASK #1: RESTORE DVHA ALTERNATIVE PAYMENTS TO PRIMARY CARE

-\$2.01 m GF/\$5 Gross:

- \$4.75 per Medicaid beneficiary per month payment to primary care practices
- \$0 in House Budget
- On top of significant other funding losses for primary care in 2027
 - 0.04% decrease to the Medicaid Professional RBRVS fee schedule
 - \$7.7 million loss due to end of OneCare's primary care practice payments from January–June 2027

Effective and immediate way to support primary care practices in FY27



ASK #2: RESTORE AHEC PRIMARY CARE WORKFORCE PROGRAMS

-\$1.27m Gross:

- \$667k Gross/\$281,320 state **PCP Loan Repayment** - \$551 k in House Budget
- \$500k Gross/ \$210,850 state **Early Pipeline Program** - \$0 in House Budget
- \$50k **MD Placement**/ \$21,085 state - \$50k in House Budget

RHTP dollars cannot supplant state funds or be used for loan repayment

VT AHEC is a statewide network of academic and community partners ([UVM Larner College of Medicine AHEC Program](#) in Burlington, [Northern VT AHEC](#) in St. Johnsbury, and [Southern VT AHEC](#) in Springfield) working together to increase the supply, geographic distribution, and education of Vermont's health workforce.

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PCP LOAN REPAYMENT

The median amount of debt for medical student class of 2024: \$205,000. With interest payments, this can mean up to **\$455,000 of total repayment.**

- The median 4-year cost of attendance for the class of 2025: \$286,454 (public school) and \$390,848 (private school).

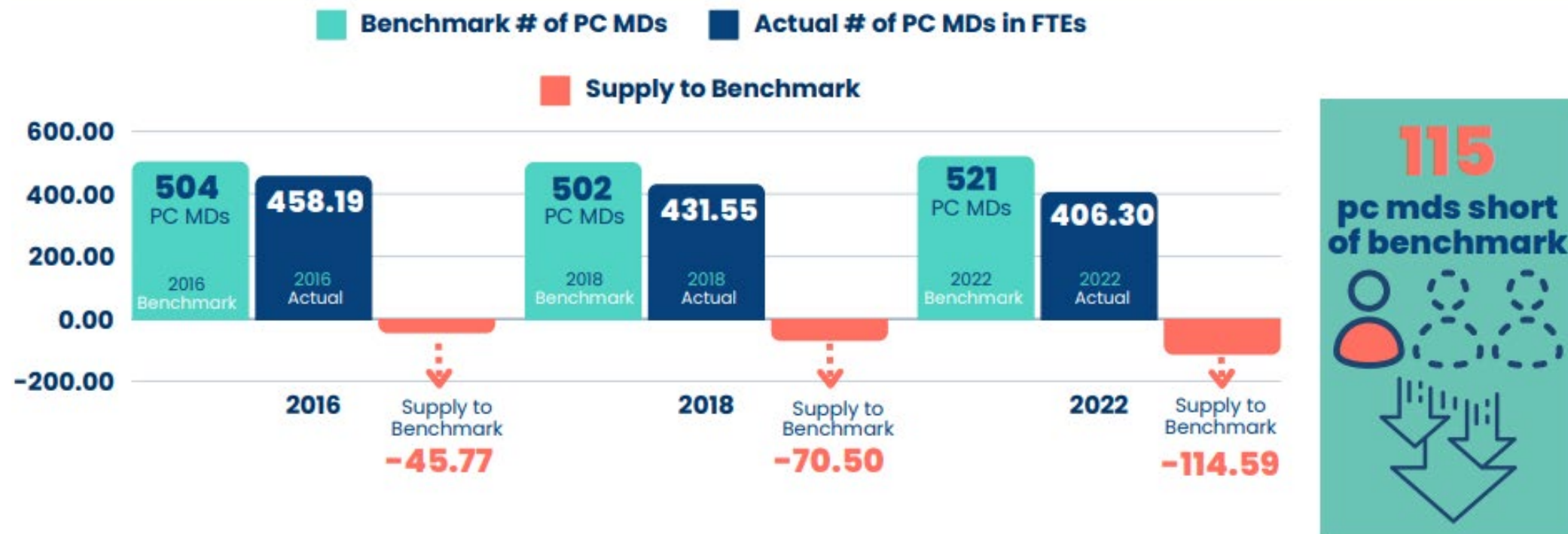
Median amount of student loan debt for **graduate nursing students: \$40,000 - \$54,999**

Median student loan debt for **PAs as of 2019: \$112,500**

Sources: [October 2024](#), Medical Student Education: Debt, Costs, and Loan Repayment Fact Card: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/media/12846/download>
https://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/42/Policy/PDF/Debt_Report.pdf
<https://www.aapa.org/news-central/2024/12/how-physician-associates-can-qualify-for-student-loan-forgiveness/>



Vermont's Primary Care Shortage - State Level 2022



Compared to the 2022 National Benchmarks, Vermont's Primary Care Shortage is **115**, which represents a **22% gap**.

VERMONT'S PROJECTED SHORTAGE OF PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIANS BETWEEN 2022 & 2030



Full data and analysis available at: https://vtmd.org/client_media/files/VMS%20Primary%20Care%20Workforce%20Shortage%2020254.pdf

PCP LOAN REPAYMENT

Vermont Educational Loan Repayment Program

Benefits of the ELR Program:

- Recruit and retain providers to grow the primary care workforce across the state
- Increase access to primary care in rural and underserved communities
- Reduce disparities and improve health care outcomes for Vermont's most vulnerable populations

Primary care includes:

- Family Medicine
- General Internal Medicine/Adult Primary Care
- Pediatrics
- Obstetrics/ Gynecology
- Geriatrics
- Psychiatry (mental health/ substance use disorder)

Primary care providers eligible for ELR include:

- Physicians
- Nurse practitioners
- Physician assistants
- Certified nurse midwives
- Dentists
- Licensed practical nurses
- Registered nurses

ELR by the numbers (1997 - 2025):

4,808

Total number of applications received

3,364

Total number of awards given

\$21.6M

Total received from the State of Vermont

\$7.9M

Total received through worksite contributions

\$29.5M

Total distributed to date



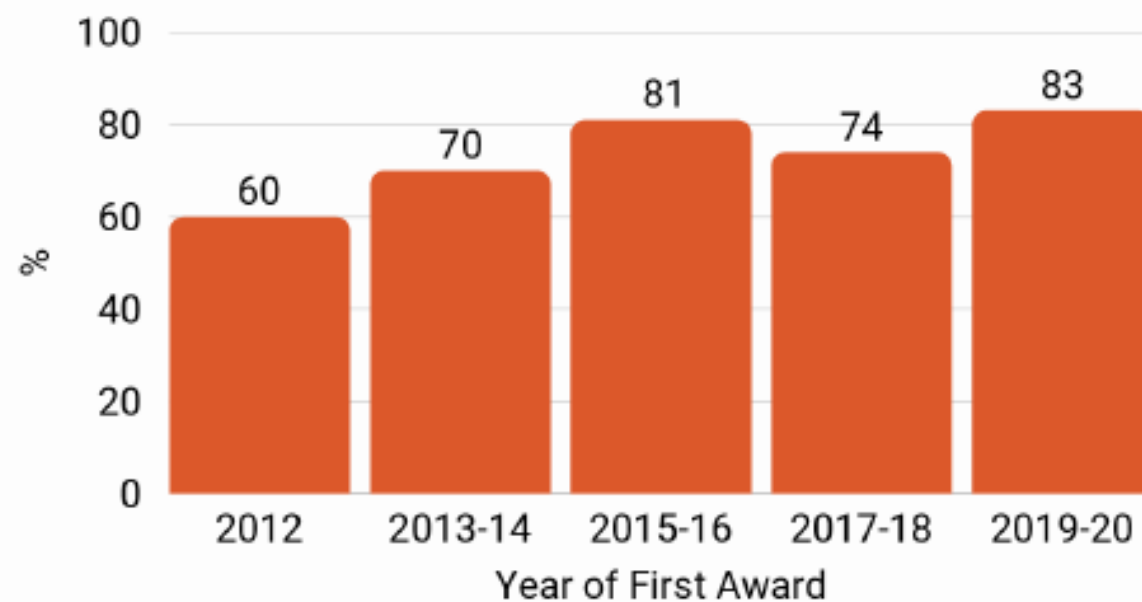
Source: Katherine Schwartz, AHEC Executive Director, katherine.schwartz@med.uvm.edu

PCP LOAN REPAYMENT

Impact of the ELR Program:

- To date, 37% of state dollars have been matched with worksite dollars
- >60% of recipients continue practicing in Vermont post service obligation
- ELR program strengthens partnerships between academia, primary care delivery sites, primary care associations, and the Vermont Department of Health

ELR Recipients Continue Practicing in VT (data as of 2023)



I cannot express how important AHEC grants have been to my family. Without access to these grants, my family could not have afforded to stay in Vermont. Even if we had managed to stay, I could not have afforded to work in a rural setting.

– ELR Recipient



PCP LOAN REPAYMENT



2022 Physician Census Statistical Report

569 physicians (22% of total or **406.3 FTE**) provide mainly primary care including:

- 275 Family Practice
- 131 Internal Medicine
- 64 OB/GYN
- 99 Pediatrics

Between 2012 and 2022 primary care FTEs in Vermont declined by 59.1 (13%)

- Over the same period, specialist FTEs went up by 185.2 (23%)

32% of primary care physicians are over age 60, as compared with 29% in 2014, 19% in 2008, and 9% in 2002

- In 5 of the 14 counties, 45% or more of the primary care physicians are over age 60: Lamoille (53%), Essex (50%), Orange (50%), Rutland (47%), and Windsor (46%)



PCP LOAN REPAYMENT

**Vermont Department of Health
Physician Assistants
2024 Census
Statistical Report**

100 (24% of total or 76.4 FTEs) of PAs work mainly in primary care including:

- 83 Family Practice Medicine
- 10 Primary Care Internal Medicine
- 1 Obstetrics and Gynecology
- 6 Pediatric Primary Care

Between 2014 and 2024, the number of physician assistants in primary care decreased from 103 to 100 (80 FTEs to 76.4FTEs)

- number in specialty care doubled from 161 to 322



Source: <https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/document/HSI-stats-prov-pa24-detail.pdf>

PCP LOAN REPAYMENT

Vermont Department of Health

Advanced Practice

Registered Nurses (APRNs)

2023 Census

Statistical Report

456 (46% of total or 323.5 FTEs) of the APRNs work mainly in primary care, including:

- 90 - Adult Health
- 181 - Family Health
- 34 - Gerontology
- 40 - Pediatric Primary Care
- 23 - School Health
- 88 - Primary Care Women's Health

Between 2015-2023, APRNs in Primary Care grew from 276-456

- Specialty care grew from 259 to 537



Source: <https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/document/HSI-stats-prov-aprn23-detail.pdf>

AHEC EARLY PIPELINE

GOVERNOR'S INSTITUTE OF VT, HEALTH AND MEDICINE INSTITUTE:

44% of 2025 participants will be the first in their families to attend college and 63% were identified as disadvantaged.

MENTORING AND INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS:

Online and in-person/ experiential mentoring to support health career pathways for high school and college students.

PRE-HEALTH ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (PEP):

5 semester mentoring and health exploration program for undergraduate students.

AHEC SCHOLARS:

Nationally recognized program for health professions students- with a focus on primary care and serving underserved communities.

AHEC Early Pipeline Programming:

- 46 schools in VT reached; 76% in rural counties
- Nearly 20,000 student interactions
- Certified 95 VEFR/EMT professionals across Vermont
- Pipeline programming includes:
 - Free and low-cost first aid and CPR training
 - Career exploration workshops in schools and community settings
 - Afterschool career pathway planning
 - Near-peer mentorship of high school and college students by medical students
 - Health career summer experiential programs
 - Residential health science enrichment intensives

79%

of LCOM grads participate in AHEC scholars; 39% complete the program.

LCOM graduates who completed the AHEC Scholars program (2022-25) were nearly

2x more likely

to go into a primary care residency program.

39%

of Family Medicine rotations in 2025 were in rural communities.



AHEC MD PLACEMENT

MD Placement:

Free of charge placement services available to any practice in VT.

If I have to use outside agencies to fill these roles, the cost of using them, which are typically unfamiliar with Vermont and my organization, would put a significant strain on our budget. Sometimes those agencies cost over \$40K per hire. While we are desperately trying to keep budgets in check, we are put in a difficult position. Do we spend the money to bring in a provider to increase access to care and not meet budget guidance, or do we not fill the role and leave our community without the care they need?

- Critical Access Hospital, utilizing MD Placement Program

MD Placement Program (2020-25):

- 62 placements:
 - 50% from VT high schools
 - 71% placed in primary care
 - 76% outside UVMHC system
 - 55% in rural counties
 - **Potential savings of over \$1 million in recruiter fees for Vermont practices**



Questions?

