

Medical Education and Training

Michigan has seven medical schools, and more than half of the students are from the state. However, Michigan remains one of the largest U.S. exporters of medical students to other states. Studies show that physicians return to areas in which they grew up to practice medicine when they have a connection to support from those communities. In addition, medical students who train in rural areas are twice as likely to practice in rural areas.

What Is the Problem?

- Only 42% of graduating medical students will remain in the state to continue their training
- Of the 12,718 residents who completed a residency program in Michigan from 2014 to 2023, 56% are currently practicing in Michigan

What Are Other States Doing?

- **Alabama:** A rural pipeline program showed involvement by a county in supporting prospective medical students were more likely to see an increase of family medicine physicians and other healthcare providers returning to their home counties
- **Illinois:** University of Illinois Chicago offers programs for pre-college students to introduce them to health care professions including the Early Outreach Program (EOP), Prep for Health Careers High School Academy, and Medicina Academy Apprentice Program
- **Pennsylvania:** Jefferson Medical College offers a Physician Shortage Area Program to recruit students from rural areas who have a desire to return to a similar community to practice
- **Georgia:** Mercer University School of Medicine was founded with the goal of increasing the primary care workforce in rural Georgia. More than 60% of graduates currently practice in the state of Georgia

What Can You Do?

Academic Centers:

- Encourage students from communities of need through the **development of pre-medical apprentice programs and early educational pathways to medicine**
 - Developing pre-college academic programs to introduce students to medical and health science professions will increase the number of physicians returning to practice in those communities
- **Develop and fund community-based, primary care-focused special pathways** to encourage graduation residents to return to their communities or remain in similar ones
 - Physicians from rural backgrounds are 2x more likely to practice in small towns, but medical students who trained in rural areas were almost 2x as likely to practice in rural areas
- Increase the proportion of medical school graduates who choose a primary care specialty by **encouraging medical schools to develop focused curricula and/or targeted pathways that provide 65-70% of cognitive and procedural care in a team-based model**, as well as internal policies designed to **change attitudes and negative bias toward primary care**
 - The unofficial culture of medical schools can influence whether some students choose to pursue a career in primary care