



## Strategy 18

### Enhance the ability of nurses to advocate for themselves and their profession

**Strategy 18.3** The Center on the Workforce for Health should engage an advisory council to provide data, guidance, and best practices concerning efforts to address the nursing workforce crisis, provide critical perspectives from key interested parties, and decrease duplication of efforts. Representatives of the council should include nursing educators from community college and university settings, nurses with experience in a variety of health care settings, employers of nurses, and representatives of nursing associations and the Future of Nursing Action Coalition.

#### Desired Result

The perspective of nurses will be engaged and prioritized in state activities to address the nursing workforce crisis.

#### Why does the task force recommend this strategy?

Recommendations from the NCIOM Task Force on the Future of the Nursing Workforce were developed with extensive input and perspective from nurses, employers of nurses, and other health care experts in a variety of roles. These recommendations provide a roadmap to the issues most directly impacting the nursing workforce in North Carolina and present strategies to address them. An advisory council that is focused on the implementation of task force recommendations can provide important perspective and focus to the developing Center on the Workforce for Health's nursing workforce priorities. Furthermore, ongoing guidance allows for the monitoring of progress and effectiveness, as well as timely adjustments to strategies, ensuring that the Center remains responsive to emerging challenges.

#### Context

In early 2021, NC AHEC, NCIOM, and the Sheps Center Program on Health Workforce Research and Policy began developing a concept for a statewide center focused on the collaborative and comprehensive development of North Carolina's workforce for health. The NC Center on the Workforce for Health (Center) will provide a forum for health employers, workers, educators, regulators, policymakers, and others throughout North Carolina to convene, discuss challenges and opportunities, share best practices and lessons learned, identify potential solutions and metrics for success, and monitor progress toward addressing these challenges. The Center on the Workforce for Health, while still under development, has identified nursing workforce as a priority area of study and action.

The first director of the new Center was named in February 2024 and the team for the Center is being put together as of spring 2024. The goals of the Center are to:

- "Provide a mechanism to ensure that efforts to address health workforce issues persist over time which will ultimately better align the supply of health workers with the demand for those workers.
- Convene employers, educators, workers, regulators, and others to develop, deploy, monitor, and assess efforts to address health workforce issues. Convenings will be at the state and local levels with bi-direction information flow.
- Gather and make available relevant data and policy, analyze, and synthesize that information to make it actionable, and provide technical assistance and guidance to interested parties when acting to address health workforce issues.
- Provide a forum for interested parties to share best practices and lessons learned."<sup>9</sup>

The Center is partnering with the NC Chamber Foundation to establish the Health Talent Alliance. This alliance will deploy Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) across the state. TPM works to "align employer demand with the workforce system's efforts to supply workers".<sup>a</sup>

In 2023, the Secretary of Health and Human Services and Secretary of Commerce, Kody Kinsley and Machel Baker Sanders, respectively, convened the Caregiving Workforce Strategic Leadership Council. This council developed a series of recommendations to support the nursing, behavioral health, and direct caregiver workforces. The final report from the Council names the Center on the Workforce for Health as the most viable candidate to govern the implementation of health care workforce recommendations. The Council's report states: "The Center on Workforce for Health will provide the platform where leaders can share coordinated state efforts with the private sector. This structure will not only preserve the continuity of these solutions but also guarantee their effectiveness and impact even as administrations change."<sup>10</sup>

#### KEY RESOURCE NEEDS



The Center on the Workforce for Health will need reliable and ongoing funding to support and sustain the important work it is planning to take on to ensure a strong health care workforce for North Carolina.

<sup>a</sup> Learn more at <https://nciom.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/TPM-Health-Care-One-Pager.pdf>