The Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization (FDRHPO) is a cooperative health partnership of hospitals, clinics, physicians, public health officials and military medical leadership with a common goal to improve healthcare delivery for the residents of Jefferson, Lewis and Southern St. Lawrence Counties. The FDRHPO provides a platform to analyze the existing health care delivery system and seek new opportunities to leverage health care resources. This regional approach meets the needs of the military and civilian populations in the Fort Drum Region and significantly strengthens the North Country healthcare system.

The ability to recruit and retain an adequate supply of healthcare professionals in Jefferson, Lewis and Southern St. Lawrence Counties is a critical health care priority widely recognized among providers and community members. The Long-Term Regional Recruitment Program continues to take concrete steps to address the current and future supply of physician and allied health professionals through a strategic combination of initiatives and programs.

The Recruitment Program’s accomplishments and initiatives could not be possible without the unique blend of support from state and local resources:

**PROGRAM PARTNERS**
- Army Career Alumni Program
- Army Community Service & Employment Readiness
- Jefferson County Board of Legislature
- Northern Area Health Education Center
- Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization
- Hospitals & Health Care Providers in the Fort Drum Region
- Local School Districts and Key Higher Education Institutions

**Program Initiatives**

**Expanded Healthcare Education Opportunities**
Unite post-secondary institutions and community partners to expand healthcare education access, improve student completion rates, reduce overhead costs and decrease regional health profession vacancy rates.

**M*A*S*H Camp**
A unique opportunity for students grades 8-11 to experience healthcare in an interactive way through 3 day sessions at a local hospital. Each day includes thought-provoking exercises and activities that give students a real life experience.

**Job Shadows**
Provide high school and college students the opportunity to engage in clinical observation and career planning experience with healthcare professionals from the community.

**Clinical Training Travel & Lodging**
Assist physician and physician extender students and residents with financial reimbursement for lodging and travel to and from local clinical training sites.

**Pipeline Outreach**
Promote and deliver information on health care careers, local training opportunities and financial assistance to the Region’s high school and college students, educators, parents and community partners.

**Outreach & Recruitment**
Educate current and future health care practitioners on the positive features of the North Country, emphasizing the benefits and opportunities of practicing in the Fort Drum Region.

“This experience was amazing and insightful. I’ve never experienced something as helpful in assisting me in figuring out what I want to do in the future.” - Brooke VanCoughnett
Brooke is a student from South Jefferson in Adams, NY. She completed the Job Shadow Program at CANI Physical Therapy in 2012.
Objectives & Accomplishments

Recruit New Health Care Education Programs:
- Over 15 new education programs, including Certificate, Associate, Bachelors and Masters level
- Over 450 healthcare professionals from our Region are being educated locally in these new health care programs

Connect High School and College Students to Healthcare Opportunities:
- 206 high school and college students have completed job shadows with local health care professionals
- Students have spent over 9,271 hours in the community’s health care facilities
- Over 190 students have completed the healthcare Job Skills Training

Sponsor Clinical Training Placements Locally for Medical and Allied Health Students:
- 219 students have received travel and housing assistance for clinical rotations
- Students come from 13 medical education schools and represent 20 different medical and allied health fields

Address Behavioral Health Needs
- $57,500.00 distributed to 10 transitioning LMSW to LCSW professionals
- $15,000.00 distributed for relocation of 3 LCSW professionals into the Fort Drum region

Promote Health Care Careers:
- Direct outreach to over 30,000 students, counselors and teachers in 19 high schools in our community
- Collaborate monthly with leaders of 20 healthcare facilities and educational institutions in the Region

Reduce Regional Nursing Shortage:
- $2.2M DOL grant led to permanent Weekend Nursing Program at Jefferson Community College
- 54 Bachelor of Nursing and Masters of Nursing candidates received tuition scholarships through grant
- 7 new Nursing Educators in our local community

Engage Healthcare Providers as Part of the Solution:
- 55 shadow sites, including hospitals, physician offices, clinics, pharmacies
- Over 200 health care professionals as program partners
- 65 attendees at first Student and Employer Allied Health Reception
- 14 Physicians and 12 Post-Secondary students at the first annual Medical Networking Event

It is impossible to ignore the challenges that the Fort Drum Region faces in attempting to recruit and retain healthcare professionals. While there have been short-term recruitment efforts to address the current shortage of healthcare professionals, this initiative looks ahead to the development of sustainable, long-term solutions to the issues. As the healthcare delivery system transforms, we will need to strategically prepare the workforce to address an outpatient, patient-centered model of care.

Personnel

Regional Recruitment Program Manager: Tracy Leonard
tleonard@fdrhpo.org
Implements and oversees program initiatives while also collaborating with regional health care providers, key higher education institutions and community partners to establish educational pathways and workforce linkages.

Pipeline Outreach Coordinator: Yvette Pearson
ypearson@fdrhpo.org
Interfaces with regional high school and post-secondary students by delivering healthcare career and educational information to students, their educators, and community members; while facilitating clinical observations and providing one-on-one career counseling to students.

Challenges

It is impossible to ignore the challenges that the Fort Drum Region faces in attempting to recruit and retain healthcare professionals. While there have been short-term recruitment efforts to address the current shortage of healthcare professionals, this initiative looks ahead to the development of sustainable, long-term solutions to the issues. As the healthcare delivery system transforms, we will need to strategically prepare the workforce to address an outpatient, patient-centered model of care.

Administrative Assistant: Elizabeth Bates
ebates@fdrhpo.org
Provides support and performs clerical and organizational services related to program initiatives.