

Health Works Commission Minutes  
 Tuesday, November 2, 2021  
 1:00 p.m.  
 via Virtual Zoom Meeting

Call to Order

Chair Demetrius Porche called the meeting of the Health Works Commission (HWC) to order at 1:01 p.m. on November 2, 2021 via virtual Zoom meeting.

Roll Call

The roll was called by Ms. Cara Landry, Executive Assistant. A quorum was established.

<b>Members Present</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Leann Fowler	LA Association of Nurse Practitioners
Dr. Bronwyn Doyle	Nursing Supply & Demand Council*
Dr. Sandra Brown	Southern University System*
Wes Hataway	Louisiana Nursing Home Association*
Dr. Tina Holland	LAICU*
Rep. Chris Turner	House Committee on Health and Welfare
Dr. Susannah Craig	Louisiana Board of Regents*
Dr. Wendi Palermo	Louisiana Community and Technical College System*
Dr. Demetrius Porche	LSUHSC-New Orleans*
Dr. Sharon Dunn	LSUHSC-Shreveport*
Dr. Karen Lyon	Louisiana State Board of Nursing
Paul Salles	Louisiana Hospital Association*
Dr. Kristi Anderson	Senate Committee on Health and Welfare
Dr. Chaquetta Johnson	Louisiana Department of Health
Christina Costanza	Louisiana State Board of Practical Nurse Examiners (LSBPNE)
Kellie Taylor-White	Louisiana Workforce Commission
Jeffery Williams	Louisiana State Medical Society*
<b>Members Not Present</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Meg Bankston	Governor's Office

Rep. Patricia Haynes-Smith	Occupational Forecasting Conference
Dr. Ram Paragi	Medical Education Commission
Ragan LeBlanc	Family Physicians*
Dr. Jim Henderson	University of Louisiana System*
<b>Ad-Hoc Member Present</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Dr. Lisa Broussard	Simulation Council**

\* Member of the Executive Committee

\*\* Ad-Hoc (Non-Voting)

Approval of the July 28, 2021 Minutes

**Chair Porche asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the July 28, 2021 meeting. On the motion of Dr. Tina Holland, seconded by Dr. Sandra Brown, the Health Works Commission voted to approve the minutes.**

Preliminary Healthcare Workforce Landscape Report

Ms. Mellynn Baker introduced Dr. Alí Bustamante, Impact Econ Research, who presented a preliminary analysis of the healthcare workforce landscape. Ms. Baker gave brief background information on Dr. Bustamante’s work and the importance of this research. Dr. Bustamante provided an overview of the study and what key factors have been analyzed including shortages (identifying occupations and regions), the north star (labor market equilibrium and staffing targets) and a roadmap (identifying bottlenecks, investments and prioritizing equity). Dr. Bustamante then provided data (U.S. Census) on total employment in Louisiana by occupation (pre-pandemic) and focused on healthcare fields including “health diagnosing and treating practitioners”, “health technologists and technicians”, and “healthcare support occupations.” He noted a pre-pandemic shortage in health care fields, especially for “health diagnosing and treating practitioners” such as physicians and nurses. He also outlined the employment targets with the goal ratios of one primary care physician, 15 healthcare support occupations, 11 health technologists and technicians and 22 health diagnosing and treating practitioners for each 1,000 residents of a parish. Dr. Bustamante stated that these ratios are slowly being achieved in more population-concentrated areas in Louisiana.

He presented a line graph illustrating Louisiana Hire and Quit Rates, noting that the impact of COVID-19 has been prominent on Louisiana’s employment and the most current rates show a high demand for workers. In terms of the healthcare sector, the resignation rate was not as large as in overall workforce data but there was a large increase in hires in healthcare, which has led to a larger demand for employees in the profession. Dr. Bustamante provided a heat map of Louisiana to highlight the concentrated sectors of healthcare across the state as well as those areas that are lacking. This map showed the even greater shortage within health diagnosing and treating practitioners across the state and emphasized the profound lack of primary care physicians. Dr. Holland asked whether other primary care providers were included in this “primary care physician” sector. Dr. Bustamante clarified that other primary care providers were not included in the “physician” category but in the overall “health diagnosing and treating practitioners” category. Ms. Kellie Taylor-White asked what occupations were included in “health diagnosing and treating practitioners”, and Dr. Bustamante explained that this

incorporated nurses and other higher level health care occupations. Ms. Taylor-White asked what range of occupations were captured in the “Health Care Practitioners” and “Technical Occupations” buckets. Dr. Bustamante responded that this range started at surgeons and physicians and stretched all the way down to technicians like radiology technicians. He noted that the third bucket, “healthcare support” occupations primarily included aides, such as nursing aides or medical assistants. Dr. Bustamante then presented a heat map showing the distribution of “health technologists and technicians”, which emphasized the decreased demand for these positions in comparison to “health diagnosing and treating practitioners.” He then presented the last heat map of Louisiana, displaying the distribution of “healthcare support” occupations, which showed an even smaller demand in these areas. Though shortages in the areas of technologists/technicians and healthcare support roles are smaller, specific areas of Louisiana are still in need of these healthcare workers.

Dr. Bustamante then presented a chart with the top ten in-demand health sector occupations in Louisiana compared to the United States. These numbers are based on 2020 employment and wage levels and 2030 projected employment growth. He reiterates the importance of growth in those “health diagnosing and treating practitioners” occupations and highlighted the growth of “home health and personal care aides”, concluding that the growth in “home health and personal care aides” may be due to high turnover rates in these occupations. Dr. Tina Holland added that the dynamic of increased turnover in these positions may be due to lower median wages within Louisiana and at the national level. Dr. Bustamante agreed and added that these positions may be relatively more demanding, which could prompt individuals to move towards better paying, less demanding fields. Ms. Taylor-White asked where pharmacy technicians fit within the health occupation categories and Dr. Bustamante responded that they would fall under “technicians and technologists”. Ms. Taylor-White stated that she is hearing about the need for pharmacy technicians in Louisiana but no large training effort for this profession. Dr. Bustamante responded that another key element to consider is that when a need for pharmacists is evident, for example, there may be a need for supporting technicians within that field as well. Dr. Bustamante then presented a chart of the top 11-17 in-demand health sector occupations in Louisiana with a national comparison, to show more sectors are seeing high growth with relatively high wages. He emphasized that when looking at these in-demand occupations, one should not just look at openings and growth but also examine median wages to balance the demand with the value these jobs brings to workers in the economy. Dr. Bustamante then outlined all of the health occupations that fall into each of the three categories. Dr. Bustamante concluded that it is essential to adopt a goal of resolving this shortage while laying a strong foundation to meet future demand given the dramatic increase in need for these occupations demonstrated by the pandemic.

Dr. Porche thanked Dr. Bustamante and reminded the Commission that the report is preliminary. Dr. Sharon Dunn, LSUHSC-S, asked if the data provided in the preliminary report, show the greatest need of each health provider at the parish level. Dr. Bustamante responded that the first stage is to document occupational and regional shortages, while the second stage will consider what these solutions might look like and the most effective ways to address shortages. He added that different strategies, such as a regional focus, can be more effective in the long term. Mr. Paul Salles, LA Hospital Association, noted that he hopes the Commission will examine the investment needed to address shortages and the associated return on that investment. Dr. Bustamante agreed, noting that while sometimes individuals look at the return on investment as an outcome, it can also be the creation of needed infrastructure along with closing the occupational shortage.

## Nurse Capitation and H.E.R.O Fund Update

Dr. Porche asked Ms. Baker to provide an update on Nurse Capitation and the H.E.R.O. Fund. Ms. Baker outlined the agenda for the update, which included a funding recap, the Nurse Capitation update and the Allied Health Capitation proposal. She began a recap of the Health Works Commission funding, which includes the \$3.6 million allocated through the State General Fund and the \$5 million within the H.E.R.O Fund. She provided a timeline for funding, telling the Commission that State General Fund dollars must be allocated before the fiscal year ends. She then cited the academic year 2021-22 fund allocations for the Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 Nurse Capitation program as well as allocations to nurse aide testing, LACANE grant, and the Simulation Council funding to be taken from this \$3.6 million fund. The remaining funds will be utilized for Summer 2022 Nurse Capitation enrollment.

With no questions about State General Funds, Ms. Baker provided an update of the H.E.R.O. Fund, starting by breaking down the components of this fund. She outlined the fund allocation for academic year 2022-2023, approved by the Board of Regents on September 22, 2021. She highlighted the Nursing and Allied Health Capitation component of the allocation and recognized the value of the data shared by Dr. Bustamante in helping to drive this path. The current plan is to guarantee another \$3.2 million for Nurse Capitation so that this program has a guaranteed four semesters of funding and to dedicate \$867,000 to Allied Health Capitation. Ms. Baker noted that if additional money becomes available, the Allied Health and Nurse Capitation amount may be able to increase. She suggested that this allocation of \$867,000 be split in half to accommodate two semesters of Allied Health Capitation funding and create an Allied Health Subcommittee to help with the structuring of this program and identify the health occupations to prioritize based on the top 17 in-demand sectors outlined by Dr. Bustamante. Mr. Wes Hataway, LA Nursing Home Association, asked for the number of students who will be impacted by the 2021-2022 Nursing Capitation allocation. Ms. Baker provided this information.

Dr. Bronwyn Doyle brought up a previous concern that if H.E.R.O. funding is utilized for Nurse Capitation for another year, the Commission loses the opportunity to secure State General Funds for this as well as the opportunity to use the H.E.R.O. funding in other capacities. Ms. Baker responded that she is open to hearing another plan of action for using the funds but that nursing deans had emphasized the importance of securing two years of funding for capitation. Dr. Porche added that the plan put forth was already approved by the Board of Regents and any additional plans would require a new approval. Dr. Holland discussed the flexibility of the H.E.R.O. Fund and the way in which Allied Health is allocated. Dr. Porche reiterated that a change in allocation was possible but would require Board of Regents approval. Dr. Holland noted that it was discussed in a previous meeting that using the Allied Health funds in the same way as Nurse Capitation may not be effective as the issues stem from lack of resources rather than seat fulfillment. Dr. Porche acknowledged this and stated that the workgroup would be a good avenue to discuss these funding options. Mr. Salles noted the excellent presentation by Dr. Bustamante, stressing that the Commission should strategize on the “ask” from the Legislature in the coming session and discuss this at its February meeting. Ms. Baker took note of the suggestion.

Dr. Porche asked about a timeline for Board of Regents consideration if the Commission wanted to restructure the funding allocation. Ms. Baker responded that the Board of Regents can be flexible but that the Commissioner should keep in mind the cycle of Board meetings for future approval of any changes. Representative Chris Turner added that there is a large surplus at the Legislature in the coming year and a clear return on investment, there is potential for an increase in funding allocations to these programs. Rep. Turner suggested being aggressive in the “ask” for additional funding.

**On motion of Dr. Sandra Brown, seconded by Dr. Sharon Dunn, the Commission moved to create an Allied Health program subcommittee and authorize Regents staff to work with the subcommittee to make determinations related to Allied Health program funding.**

Individuals who volunteered to serve on the Allied Health subcommittee were Dr. Sandra Brown, Dr. Tina Holland, Dr. Kellie Taylor-White, Dr. Wendi Palermo and Dr. Sharon Dunn.

#### Nursing Supply & Demand Council Update

Dr. Bronwyn Doyle, Chair, stated that the Council had not met since the last Health Works Commission meeting but is continuing to work on the Nursing Supply & Demand Annual Report.

#### Simulation Council Update

Dr. Lisa Broussard noted that the Simulation Council met the previous week and that primary discussion was around the use of the funding allocation to the Council. Several proposals were put forth and Dr. Broussard outlined them for the Commission.

#### Louisiana Center for Nursing Report Update

Dr. Karen Lyon discussed some issues present in the workforce with a decrease in endorsement candidates for RNs. Nurses are coming from out of state but do not have to get an endorsement license as they practice under their privileged practice. This decrease in endorsement fees has reduced income levels. Dr. Lyon noted that nurses are starting to renew their licenses, income has started to trickle in with these licensures, and a decline in nurses has not been seen. She mentioned the Newly Licensed Registered Nurse Survey that was recently launched to gather information on nurses who are first starting out.

#### Public Comments

Ms. Baker noted questions submitted by Dr. Cynthia Bienemy, which she will email to Dr. Bustamante for clarification. One specific question was “Do you feel it will also be important to take into consideration health outcomes within certain parishes and/or regions and compare that with the types of numbers of healthcare professionals employed in those areas?” Ms. Baker noted that she did not want to speak to Dr. Bustamante’s research but that health outcomes were not included in the scope of the report. Dr. Bustamante responded that the one physician per 1,000 residents ratio is a benchmark that is informed by having better health outcomes. Dr. Sandra Brown added that, when looking at return on investment, one of the ways to measure cost is through ER visits. Mr. Hataway asked for clarification on the number of students impacted by capitation as stated earlier in the presentation. Ms. Baker clarified that these are students impacted by capitation funded by the State General Fund allocation. Dr. Porche brought to the Commission’s attention the recommendations from the following reports: *Future of Nursing 2030 Report* and *Implementing High Quality Primary Care: Rebuilding the Foundation of Healthcare*. There was agreement from the Commission and a plan was discussed for dissemination of the reports.

### Organizational Announcements & Next Steps

Ms. Baker announced the partnership with Doreen Brasseaux, Principal Consultant at Sequitur Consulting, who will aid in various projects at LA Board of Regents, including health care initiatives.

She also noted that the next Health Works Commission Meeting is scheduled for February 15, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.

### Adjournment

With no further comments or discussion, on the motion of Dr. Lyon, seconded by Dr. Johnson, the meeting was adjourned at 2:42 p.m.