



EXECUTIVE ORDER #220

Relating to the Creation of the Governor's Task Force on the Healthcare Workforce

WHEREAS, healthcare workers make sacrifices every day to keep our families, friends, loved ones, and neighbors safe and healthy, often going above and beyond in difficult conditions and risking their health and well-being on the frontlines of local, national, and global public health crises;

WHEREAS, with historically low unemployment, high workforce participation, and a shrinking labor pool caused by several long-term factors, Wisconsin's employers and industries continue to face significant challenges filling available jobs, and the healthcare sector is not immune to these longstanding workforce challenges;

WHEREAS, the coronavirus pandemic amplified Wisconsin's existing healthcare workforce challenges by placing an unprecedented burden upon the state's medical facilities and employees, and according to the Wisconsin Hospital Association, Wisconsin's overall hospital vacancy rate increased from 5.3 percent to 9.9 percent between 2020 and 2021 and signaled the first nursing shortage in the state since 2007;

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development estimates that if no remedial action is taken, the growing healthcare workforce shortage, coupled with slow population growth and an aging population that is both retiring and requiring additional medical care, will result in a potential deficit of 20,000 nurses by 2040 and nearly 32,000 annual openings across healthcare occupations between 2020 and 2030;

WHEREAS, the proposed 2023-25 Executive Budget, along with September 2023 Special Session Senate Bill 1 as introduced, offered meaningful, comprehensive, long-term investments and solutions to address Wisconsin's longstanding workforce challenges, reduce barriers to employment, and prevent these challenges from becoming an unmitigated crisis, including \$100 million in grants to regional organizations to design and implement plans to address their region's healthcare-related workforce challenges and nearly \$60 million to address other healthcare workforce issues, such as shortages of nurse educators and certified nursing assistants and bottlenecks in obtaining licensure and certification for healthcare professions;

WHEREAS, despite the benefit of a historic surplus, the Wisconsin State Legislature has rejected the vast majority of these proposed investments and solutions, refusing to take action on one of the most pressing issues facing the state and failing to ensure the state's workforce is prepared to meet the needs of a 21st-century economy;

WHEREAS, these healthcare workforce shortages are not only placing a drag on the state economy but also contributing to delays in care and negatively impacting patients' health, and the state must continue working to identify potential solutions that address all occupations and skillsets in the healthcare workforce and focus on achieving greater equity and economic opportunity—regardless of legislative action;

WHEREAS, addressing these longstanding challenges must include efforts to guarantee workers already participating in Wisconsin's workforce can remain in the workforce, targeted investments to remove barriers to employment and bolster key industries and sectors facing significant challenges, and initiatives to attract, recruit, and retain talented workers; and

WHEREAS, establishing a task force on the healthcare workforce is crucial to advancing the growth of Wisconsin's healthcare workforce and ensuring that Wisconsin can continue to provide high-quality, accessible healthcare to communities across the state and remain a welcoming home to individuals seeking sustainable employment in the field of healthcare.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, TONY EVERS, Governor of the State of Wisconsin, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the State, including Section 14.019 of the Wisconsin Statutes, do create the Governor's Task Force on the Healthcare Workforce ("Task Force"), and hereby order the following:

1. The Task Force shall be chaired by the Lieutenant Governor. The Governor shall appoint additional Task Force members as follows to serve at the pleasure of the Governor:
 - a. The Secretary of the Department of Workforce Development or a designee;
 - b. The Secretary of the Department of Health Services or a designee;
 - c. A representative from the University of Wisconsin System;
 - d. A representative from the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities;
 - e. A representative from the Wisconsin Technical College System; and
 - f. Other individuals appointed by the Governor to serve at the pleasure of the Governor, who may include members from state and local government, citizens of Tribal Nations, and individuals representing healthcare professionals, organized labor, patient advocacy groups, and other impacted workforce sectors and industries.
2. The Task Force shall gather and analyze information and produce an advisory action plan for the Governor. The action plan should do the following:
 - a. Present a comprehensive analysis of current and future workforce challenges impacting the healthcare sector, including recruitment, retention, and employee burnout;
 - b. Identify strategies to improve patient care and alleviate the burden on our healthcare workforce, including through innovations in technology and alternative methods of care;
 - c. Explore educational and training pathways to create a more diverse, equitable, and sustainable healthcare workforce; and
 - d. Based on the impacts identified, recommend solutions, including new policies and programs, modifications to existing programs, and necessary changes to state statutes related to workforce development, industry innovation, education, and training.

3. The Task Force shall provide its action plan for 2025-27 biennial budget consideration no later than September 1, 2024, and shall disband after the plan is submitted.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at Fox Valley Technical College in the Town of Grand Chute this twenty-ninth day of January in the year of two thousand twenty-four.

TONY EVERS
Governor

By the Governor:

SARAH GODLEWSKI
Secretary of State