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**NEVADA
CULTURAL
COMPETENCY**
Embrace Change, Practice Inclusivity

May 23, 2024

Attn: Joint Interim Standing Committee on Commerce and Labor

Chair Spearman and members of the Committee,

For the past four decades, the Nevada AHEC Program has been advancing its mission through three dedicated centers across the state. We have centers in Las Vegas, Elko, and we represent High Sierra AHEC, located in Reno. We are addressing Nevada's health care workforce shortages through recruiting, training, and retaining Nevada's future health professionals.

Through our work, we emphasize the crucial role of workforce development within the broader context of promoting health equity and transforming healthcare delivery. AHECs serve as connectors laying the groundwork for collaboration while also forging meaningful pathways between the students we serve and their health career aspirations. We believe workforce development can harness the collective potential within these communities, empowering individuals with the skills and resources needed to drive positive change. With a connected, diverse, and skilled workforce, we can focus on transforming care delivery to better serve Nevada.

One of the central pillars of our mission is promoting equity and inclusivity. We are dedicated to advocating for health equity, compassion, and inclusive healthcare practices. In this spirit, AHEC has proudly supported NRS 449 from the beginning. We have worked closely with Senator Spearman and other legislators to implement cultural competence training in Nevada, ensuring that healthcare providers are better equipped to serve our diverse communities. In 2021, High Sierra AHEC and the Nevada Primary Care Association (NVPCA) launched the Nevada Cultural Competency Training (NVCC) to meet the requirements of NRS 449. This training provides trainees with the basis for developing a practice of cultural humility concerning the needs and experiences of Nevada's diverse population.

In the last two years we have witnessed many successes. Nevada Cultural Competency has received nationwide recognition and has been implemented in 7 Nevada counties and over 20 states, reaching numerous healthcare professionals. In 2022, Nevada Cultural Competency became a nationally recognized program after receiving the Healthcare Leadership Council's Redefining Healthcare award. We have trained over 900 participants, 30 educational facilities, and provided over 200 continuing education and continuing medical education credits in partnership with the University of Nevada, Reno. With these successes we have also adapted to the needs of mandated facilities and practitioners. We recognize the cost and time commitment of the training has been a challenge. To this end we have done everything we can to maintain the integrity of the law by providing



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comprehensive training and attempting to adapt and meet the needs of facilities and practitioners.

To make the training more affordable, we adapted new pay structures to ensure accessibility. We continuously adapted to the needs of practitioners and facilities by diversifying the formats of our training. This includes developing a "Training for Trainers" program, offering a cost-effective alternative to our open enrollment option. Health facilities can license our copyrighted materials annually and receive direct training from our staff, allowing them to complete and maintain the required cultural competency training within their own organization. Additionally, in 2023, we launched our self-paced cultural competency training, providing an asynchronous, self-driven alternative that offers facilities the flexibility they need to implement the training. Looking ahead, we plan to invest in Spanish and Tagalog translations to better support this crucial need and expand our reach to even more diverse communities.

We believe that the work of cultural competence and cultural humility is essential for an effective healthcare workforce and for patient care. Recently, we have been contacted by a number of community based organizations not mandated by NRS 449 who want to take the Nevada Cultural Competency Training. We have adapted the training to the needs of organizations like Liberty Dental, who see the value in having a culturally responsive staff. Moving forward we aim to continue making cultural competency training widely available and accessible.

We invite you to join us in expanding your understanding of health equity to include challenging historic forms of discrimination in daily practices and policies. If you are interested in our work, the NVCC training, and ways we can collectively move forward please contact us info@nvculturalcompetency.com or visit our website <https://www.highsierraahec.org/>.

With appreciation,

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Andrea Gregg, Chief Executive Officer

