

JAMES OSCARSON

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District No. 36



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State of Nevada
Assembly
Seventy-Eighth Session

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Practice Manager
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3100 W Charleston Blvd, Suite 210
Las Vegas, NV 89102-1900

This is an example of the letter sent to 313-licensed primary care, dental, and mental health care providers in Nevada regarding participation in the National Health Service Corps.

Dear Practice Manager:

On behalf of the Legislative Committee on Health Care (*Nevada Revised Statutes* 439B.200), I write to strongly encourage you to apply to and participate in the National Health Service Corps (NHSC), a federal program available to help recruit and retain licensed primary care, dental, and mental health care providers.

The NHSC program allows providers at approved NHSC sites to competitively apply for up to \$50,000 of tax-free loan repayment in return for two years of work at approved sites. This loan repayment is in addition to the salary of the provider and is a great incentive for both recruitment and retention.

As you are probably aware, Nevada continues to face a severe shortage of health care providers. Compared to other states, Nevada has some of the lowest provider-to-population ratios in the nation, ranking 48th in physician-to-population ratio, 51st in nurse-to-population ratio, 47th in psychologist-to-population ratio, and 34th in dentist-to-population ratio, according to the University of Nevada, Reno, School of Medicine. In addition, approximately one in three Nevadans lives in a federally designated primary care health professional shortage area (HPSA); slightly less than one in three Nevadans lives in dental HPSAs, and more than one in two Nevadans live in a mental HPSA—including all residents of rural and frontier Nevada.

Due to this dire shortage of health care providers and because your site serves a substantial Medicaid population, the Committee voted unanimously to strongly encourage you to participate in the NHSC program.

Eligible primary care, dental, and mental health care providers include the following:

- Certified Nurse Midwife
- Doctor of Dental Medicine
- Doctor of Dental Surgery
- Doctor of Osteopathy
- Health Service Psychologist
- Licensed Clinical Social Worker
- Licensed Professional Counselor
- Marriage and Family Therapist
- Medical Doctor
- Nurse Practitioner
- Physician Assistant
- Psychiatric Nurse Specialist
- Registered Dental Hygienist

More information about this program is available at: <http://www.nhsc.hrsa.gov/loanrepayment/loanrepaymentprogram.html>.

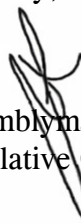
For your site to be approved, you must submit an application during the new site application cycle, which usually is open March through April. You can sign up for notifications at <http://www.nhsc.hrsa.gov/emailsignup.html>. To be eligible to apply a site must:

- Be located in a Health Professional Shortage Area that matches your provider's discipline. Find out if your address is in a HPSA by using the following online tool: <https://datawarehouse.hrsa.gov/tools/analyzers/geo/ShortageArea.aspx>.
- Provide comprehensive primary care medical, dental, or mental and behavioral health services.
- Provide services regardless of a patient's ability to pay and offer a sliding discount fee schedule to those patients who qualify.
- Accept patients covered by Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Program.

If you would like to become an approved site, please carefully review complete details about the site approval process at <http://www.nhsc.hrsa.gov/sites/becomenhscapprovedsite/index.html>. To speak directly with a State of Nevada employee who can answer questions regarding the NHSC, contact Scott Jones of the Nevada Primary Care Office at (775)-684-4047 or scottjones@health.nv.gov.

Thank you for providing much needed health care to the people of Nevada and for considering this opportunity. Please do not hesitate to contact me at James.Oscarson@asm.state.nv.us, or Committee Policy Analyst Megan Comlossy at megan.comlossy@lcb.state.nv.us or (775) 684-6825.

Sincerely,



Assemblyman James Oscarson, Chair
Legislative Committee on Health Care