
Health Care & Wellness Committee

HB 1485

Brief Description: Concerning family medicine residencies in health professional shortage areas.

Sponsors: Representatives Haler, Cody, Schmick, Shea, Zeiger, Tarleton, Tharinger and Riccelli.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands the medical schools that participate in the Family Medicine Residency Network.
- Expands the types of residencies supported by the Family Medicine Residency Network.
- Requires the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee to conduct a performance audit of the Family Medicine Residency Network.
- Re-establishes the Family Practice Education Advisory Board as the Family Medicine Education Advisory Board.

Hearing Date: 2/3/15

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

The Family Medicine Residency Network.

The Family Medicine Residency Network (FMRN) was established in 1975 to help train resident physicians in family medicine. The FMRN provides financial support to residents in programs affiliated with the University of Washington (UW) School of Medicine and establishes positions for appropriate faculty to staff the programs. The dean of the UW School of Medicine is responsible to implement the development and expansion of residency programs in cooperation with the medical profession, hospitals, and clinics located throughout Washington.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The chair of the Department of Family Medicine at the UW School of Medicine determines where affiliated programs exist, giving consideration to communities in the state where the population, hospital facilities, number of physicians, and interest in medical education indicate the potential success of the residency program.

The amount of state funding for a residency program is limited to no more than 50 percent of the total cost of the program. No more than 25 percent of the state funding may be used for faculty and staff at the UW School of Medicine associated with affiliated residency programs. No funds may be used to subsidize the costs of patient care.

The Family Practice Education Advisory Board.

In 1975 the Family Practice Education Advisory Board (FPEAB) was created to advise the UW School of Medicine in the implementation of the FMRN, including the selection of areas where affiliated residency programs will exist, the allocation of state funds, and procedures for review and evaluation of the programs. The FPEAB consisted of the following eight members:

- the dean of the UW School of Medicine (who served as chair);
- the chair of the Department of Family Medicine;
- two public members appointed by the Governor;
- a member appointed by the Washington State Medical Association;
- a member appointed by the Washington State Academy of Family Physicians;
- a hospital administrator appointed by the Governor; and
- a director representing the directors of community based family practice residency programs, appointed by the Governor.

The dean of the UW School of Medicine and the chair of the Department of Family Medicine were permanent members of the FPEAB. The remaining initial members of the FPEAB were appointed to staggered terms. Subsequent members served four-year terms and could serve two consecutive terms.

The FPEAB was eliminated in 2010, but continues to meet informally.

The Health Professional Loan Repayment Program.

The Health Professional Loan Repayment Program provides conditional scholarships and loan repayment to health professionals working in shortage areas. To be eligible, a professional must commit to providing primary care in a shortage area for at least two years.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature states its intent to increase the number of family medicine physicians in shortage areas by providing a fiscal incentive for hospitals and clinics to develop or expand residency programs. The Legislature also states its intent to encourage family medicine residents to work in shortage areas by funding the Health Professional Loan Repayment and Scholarship Program.

The medical schools administering the FMRN are expanded to include the Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences and any other medical school accredited by the Liaison Committee

of Medical Education or the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation that either locates its entire four-year medical program in Washington or is affiliated with the regional medical education program at the UW. The schools of medicine must support the development of high-quality, accredited, affiliated residency programs and must prioritize support for health professional shortage areas. The schools of medicine must also coordinate with the Office of Student Financial Assistance to notify prospective family medicine students and residents of their eligibility for the Health Professional Loan Repayment Program.

The types of residency programs that may be supported through the FMRN are expanded to include internal medicine and related primary care areas. The residency programs must be certified by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education or the American Osteopathic Association.

Funding for the FMRN may not be used for administrative or overhead costs.

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) must conduct a performance audit of the FMRN the results of which must be reported to the Legislature in even-numbered years beginning January 1, 2016. The performance audit must:

- determine the locations of the residency programs, whether the programs are in health professional shortage areas, and how the distribution of the programs changes over time;
- compare the number of residents in family medicine versus specialty areas; and
- determine whether graduates of the residency programs in health professional shortage areas continue to work in shortage areas.

The FPEAB is re-established and re-named the Family Medicine Education Advisory Board (FMEAB). The FMEAB must advise the schools of medicine in the implementation of the FMRN, including the selection of areas where affiliated residency programs will exist, the allocation of state funds, and procedures for review and evaluation of the programs. The FMEAB consists of the following members:

- the deans of the schools of medicine participating in the FMRN (who serve as co-chairs);
- the chairs of the departments of family medicine at the medical schools;
- two public members, one from east of the Cascade Mountains and one from west of the Cascade Mountains, appointed by the Governor;
- a member appointed by the Washington State Medical Association;
- a member appointed by the Washington Osteopathic Medical Association;
- a member appointed by the Washington State Academy of Family Physicians;
- a hospital administrator appointed by the Governor; and
- a director representing the directors of community based family practice residency programs, appointed by the Governor.

The deans of the schools of medicine and the chairs of the departments of family medicine are permanent members of the FPEAB. The remaining initial members of the FPEAB are appointed to staggered terms. Subsequent members will serve four-year terms and may serve two consecutive terms.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.