

Virginia Recruitment and Retention Collaborative Team

Authors: Karen E. Reed, M.A., Healthcare Workforce & Minority Health Manager, Virginia Department of Health, Office of Health Policy & Planning and Paul Munson, Ed. D., Professor, Department of Family Medicine, Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine **Collaborative Partners:** Virginia Department of Health, Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine, University of Virginia School of Medicine, Eastern Virginia Medical School, Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine, Virginia Primary Care Association, Southwest Virginia Graduate Medical Education Consortium, Carillon Family Medicine Residency, Virginia Statewide Area Health Education Center, Rappahannock Area Health Education Center, Virginia Health Care Foundation, and Virginia Rural Health Resource Center.

Description of Project, Development & Outcomes

The Virginia Recruitment & Retention Collaborative Team (R & R Collaborative Team) is a joint effort between Virginia Dept. of Health, (VDH) Virginia's four Medical Academic Institutions, and private, public, corporate, state and non-profit member organizations. The R & R Collaborative Team was created in September 2003 with a mission of "Establishing and enhancing collaborative efforts in partnership with stakeholders to deliver improvements to recruitment processes and retention systems for health care providers with an emphasis on the medically underserved areas in Virginia." R & R Collaborative Team members are from localities throughout Virginia and they meet monthly via teleconference. The VDH, Recruitment and Retention Services coordinates the meetings and members assist with facilitating the call.

During initial meetings the R & R Collaborative Team quickly identified and began to implement tactical goals. A primary goal was to enhance communication. This effort was achieved in part by the linkage of shared information via website links, newsletters, web pages, brochures and various presentations. This effort continues to maximize communication efficiencies. The R & R Collaborative Team provided input regarding content & usability feedback for enhancement of Virginia's free online healthcare recruitment website Primary Practice Opportunities of Virginia www.PPOVA.org This collaborative effort resulted in the www.PPOVA.org website being utilized more and significant positive feedback regarding comprehensive healthcare recruitment information found on the site. All R & R Collaborative member organizations are linked through this website.

Successes, Difficulties & the "Unexpected"

A noted advantage of this collaborative approach is that it allows for diverse participation and financial support of projects in areas addressing healthcare recruitment and retention issues germane to all stakeholders. To maximize efficiencies, the R & R Collaborative Team established sub-committees and involves other people working on specific initiatives. A sub-committee working on the Recruitment Incentives project has developed plans for workshops, presentations, etc. Another significant accomplishment is the development of a Recruitment Action Plan Workbook designed for communities and presenters to utilize when planning recruitment and retention initiatives for health care professionals. (Note: Virginia's Recruitment Action Plan Workbook can be viewed at (www.ppova.org.) In addition to managing their diverse functions, many of the R & R Collaborative Team members act as resources and speak at various conferences, programs and workshops regarding recruiting and retaining healthcare providers.

The R & R Collaborative Team has experienced minimum difficulties with stakeholders remaining committed to supporting ongoing initiatives. Last year, the team held its first face to face meeting and completed some strategic planning. In order to maximize efficiency and minimize meeting time, the members decided to establish standing sub-committees (sub-committee participation could expand outside of the team membership). The sub-committees work out functional details of projects prior to discussion on the monthly call. The R & R Collaborative Team has a standing date/time for its one-hour monthly call. However, the group has learned that it is not always necessary to meet each month; therefore an ongoing assessment is made to determine if the call is needed. This flexibility allows for maximum participation by members.

Benefit & Impact

The R & R Collaborative Team has had a significant impact on recruitment/retention initiatives in Virginia. The nature of the successes is not easily quantifiable. However, team members are more easily able to share resources and information about their respective programs with all of Virginia's medical schools and collaborative partners. The partnership enables prospective healthcare providers to more efficiently access and utilize Virginia's resources. Communities seeking healthcare provides benefit as the R & R Collaborative Team has established concrete community resources that address recruitment & retention needs thereby enhancing and simplifying community recruitment efforts.

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Abstract Submission Contact:
Karen E. Reed, M.A.,
Healthcare Workforce & Minority Health Manager
Virginia Department of Health
Office of Health Policy & Planning
109 Governor Street, 10th Floor
Richmond, Virginia 23219
(804) 864-7427
(804) 864-7440
www.ppova.org
Karen.Reed@vdh.virginia.gov