



Dear Tribal Leader:

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is committed to assisting you in addressing the health workforce needs of your communities. In many of our discussions related to the shortage of Tribal health workforce providers, questions have been raised related to Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA) designation and the scoring process. I write to provide some important information about this process.

All Federal Indian Health Service Clinics, Tribal Health Clinics, Urban Indian Health Clinics, and dually funded Tribal Health Clinics/Community Health Centers, as authorized under Section 332 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254e), are automatically designated as a HPSA given the documented workforce needs. Health care facilities automatically given this type of HPSA designation are known as an "Auto-HPSA." However, Auto-HPSA sites are required to submit certain data to HRSA in order to receive a HPSA score. This score is only calculated or recalculated at the request of the site.

The information necessary for calculating or recalculating a HPSA score includes the population to provider ratio, the travel time or distance to the nearest source of available care, as well as the infant mortality rate or low birth weight and poverty rate for the population served. HRSA's Shortage Designation Branch can provide a template to use when submitting this information. Once all of the relevant data is submitted, review and scoring will be completed within 90 days. HPSA scores range from 0-25 for primary care and mental health and 0-26 for dental. Higher scores indicate greater need. Since National Health Service Corps (NHSC) resources for providers are targeted based on highest need, your HPSA score can substantially assist with the recruitment of providers to Tribal sites.

Also very important to many successful recruiting efforts is taking advantage of the opportunity to create and maintain a profile on the NHSC Job Center website. NHSC-approved sites can use this website to reach thousands of NHSC providers that are looking for placement. The Job Center can be accessed by visiting <http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/sites/index.html> and vacancies can be posted for the 9,200 NHSC clinicians to consider. As of December 24, 2014, 253 of the 647 Federal Indian Health Service Clinics, Tribal Health Clinics, Urban Indian Health Clinics, and dually funded Tribal Health Clinics/Community Health Centers have completed their profiles on the NHSC Job Center website. This means that 394 eligible sites have yet to take advantage of this no-cost recruiting opportunity. Over 14,000 users visit this site every month, making it an extremely important tool to acquaint health care providers with your vacancies. Those job announcements expire every 90 days, but can be renewed easily until the positions are filled.

If you have any questions, would like additional information related to the Auto-HPSA designations and the HPSA scoring process, or would like to work with HRSA to have your Auto-HPSA rescored, please contact Kae Brickerd, Ph.D., Shortage Designation Branch Chief, at KBrickerd@hrsa.gov or (301) 945-0828. If you have any questions, or would like additional information related to the NHSC Job Center website, please contact Beth Dillon, Director of Regional Operations for the Bureau of Health Workforce at BDillon@hrsa.gov or (303) 844-7878. Again, we look forward to working with you on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Mary K. Wakefield, Ph.D., R.N.
Administrator