

Meeting Summaries

August 4, 2010, Meeting — Bethesda Executive Summary — Bethesda, Maryland

The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) National Advisory Council convened on August 4, 2010, in Washington, DC, to provide guidance to the NHSC on current programs and future initiatives. The agenda for the meeting included:

- Rebranding of the Corps
- Site Partnership Initiative

Rebranding of the Corps

The Academy for Educational Development (AED) has a contract with NHSC to support communication and branding efforts. The rebranding initiative is designed to enhance the Corps' national visibility and increase awareness. The process includes developing an updated logo and new tagline; revised mission, vision, and positioning statements; and new messaging. The initiative has four phases:

- Preliminary research
- Development (drafting logos, creating taglines, and developing a draft brand platform)
- Testing the new brand elements with key audiences
- Brand rollout

The Council received an update on current perceptions of the NHSC. There is tremendous goodwill among Corps members and partners and recognition that change is occurring. At the same time, the research showed low brand awareness among target audiences.

The Council discussed the core values the NHSC embodies and what language best captures these. The top brand values identified by Corps members were service, dedication, caring, passion, and commitment. Council members added other possible brand values: collaboration, collegiality, health, equity, access, and community.

There was discussion around the draft mission, vision, and positioning statements. Key issues raised include:

- How to refer to awardees (clinicians, practitioners, or another term)
- How to refer to sites (sites, centers, practices, or some other term)
- Whether the NHSC is a career opportunity or an opportunity to do something more mission-driven
- Whether references to financial incentives belong in the mission statement
- Whether the Corps mission can be positioned vis-à-vis workforce shortages
- The role of community
- The need to define what differentiates the NHSC from other opportunities

Site Partnership Initiative

The Site Partnership Initiative is being led by the Bureau of Clinical Recruitment and Service (BCRS). It is

designed to strengthen communication with sites, establish new sites, and build sustainability. The initiative has five core elements:

- Establish new partnerships to increase the number of NHSC sites
- Provide a customer-service focus to all activities
- Support efforts to build self-sustainable sites
- Forge stronger partnerships and networks
- Establish evaluation mechanisms to ensure success

The Council made several suggestions including:

- Establish mechanisms to provide short-term care to address gaps in coverage
- Define sustainability
- Educate sites on the value of becoming an NHSC site, especially for recruitment assistance

The Council also discussed how the NHSC can engage and strengthen communities.

Other Program Updates

The Council received several program updates:

- HRSA realignment
- NHSC funding
- Status of NAC nominations (14 total, including 4 current members re-upping their commitments)
- Status of the welcome kit for new members
- Participant and partner surveys (being collected between August 5 and September 2, with the full report due October 8)
- Long-term retention study (award due to be issued by the end of September)