

PRIMO



**Primary Care Resource Initiative for Missouri
Annual Report 2018**



Missouri Department of
Health and Senior Services

About This Report

In 1993, Missouri enacted legislation to address several health care issues in the state. A major component of the legislation, Missouri Revised Statutes Section 191.411 charges the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) with developing and implementing a plan to make health care services more assessable to all Missouri residents. In response, DHSS established the Primary Care Resource Initiative for Missouri (PRIMO). The PRIMO program is designed to increase the number of primary care medical, dental and behavioral health professionals and to improve health care delivery systems in areas of need within the state.



What is



The Primary Care Resource Initiative for Missouri (PRIMO) is a comprehensive program designed to improve healthcare delivery in the State of Missouri. There are four components to PRIMO:

- Student Loans
- Health Professional Loan Repayment
- Health Care Delivery System Development
- Recruitment/Placement of Health Professionals

The Student Loan Program is a competitive program that awards forgivable loans to students pursuing training leading to Missouri licensure in specific health care professions (primary care physician, dentist or dental hygienist) and whom intend to practice in a designated medical or dental Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) in Missouri following licensure.

PRIMO State Fiscal Year 2018 Budget

Student Loans*	\$355,000.00
Loan Repayment*	\$500,000.00
Health Care Delivery	\$256,654.00
Recruitment/Placement	\$192,395.00
Rural Residency	\$188,995.00

* PRIMO student loans and the loan repayment were made available in part through funds donated by the Missouri Hospital Association and money repaid to the program.



Student Loans

Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA)

HPSAs are designated by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) as areas having a shortage of providers based on the ratio of providers by type to the patient population. HPSA designations are used to distribute federal and state resources to best increase access to health care. HPSA types include: **primary care, dental and mental health**. Shortages may be geographic-based (a county, defined service area, or census tract), population-based (including specific population groups such as low income or Medicaid eligible), or facility-based (including correctional facilities, state mental hospitals, Federally Qualified Health Centers and Auto-HPSA facilities).

PRIMO Loan Applicant Qualifications

- Full-time enrollment at a Missouri educational institution in a course of study leading to licensure in one of the qualifying health care professions.
- Resident of Missouri (for more than educational purposes) for at least one year prior to applying.
- Express a desire to work in a medical or dental shortage area following graduation/licensure.

PRIMO Qualifying Health Care Professions

- Primary care physician (family medicine, internal medicine, OB/GYN and pediatrics)
- Primary care dentist (general or pediatric dentistry)
- Dental hygienist

**Hospitalists and Specialists are not eligible for PRIMO loans or qualifying employment forgiveness since they do not provide primary care services to the general population.*

PRIMO Loan Amounts

Loan amounts range from \$5,000 - \$20,000 depending on discipline and type of degree. Loans are typically dispersed as follows:

- Qualifying **undergraduate students** may receive \$5,000 annually with a maximum of four loans.
- **Medical and dental students** may receive loans up to \$20,000 annually with a maximum of four loans.
- **Medical students in UMKC's six-year program** may receive \$10,000 annually during the first two years and \$20,000 annually for the remaining four years.
- **Physicians in a Missouri primary care residency** may receive \$10,000 annually for a maximum of three years.

PRIMO Loan Forgiveness

Repayment of loans may be completed either through obtaining qualifying employment to earn forgiveness or through cash repayment.

- **Forgiveness:** Recipients repay their PRIMO loans by working as a primary care provider in a HPSA location upon completion of their training and licensure. The number of years required to obtain loan forgiveness is determined by the number of PRIMO loans a scholar receives. Service commitments are for a minimum of one year and capped at a five-year maximum obligation.
- **Qualifying Employment:** Qualifying employment is defined as full-time, direct patient care at a facility located in a HPSA location. The licensed PRIMO participant must accept Medicaid, Medicare and work at an employment site that operates with a sliding fee schedule. Professional health services must be provided to the general population. Qualifying employment is capped at five years even if a scholar receives more than five loans.
- **Cash Repayment:** Scholars may choose to repay loans by check or money order. There is a 9.5 percent interest rate on each loan that begins accrual on the day loans are dispersed.
- To determine which Missouri counties or Kansas City and St. Louis Census tracts are designated HPSAs, the scholar may consult HRSA's *HPSA Find* website at <https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/shortage-area>, Office of Rural Health and Primary Care (ORHPC) or the Missouri Primary Care Association (MPHA). **These resources will not provide the scholar a job; but will guide them towards identifying employment locations which satisfy loan forgiveness requirements.**
- Applicants should not assume that all rural counties are federally designated HPSAs, or that all urban cities are not. Verifying location designation prior to employment acceptance is extremely important.

PRIMO Student Loans Fiscal Year 2018

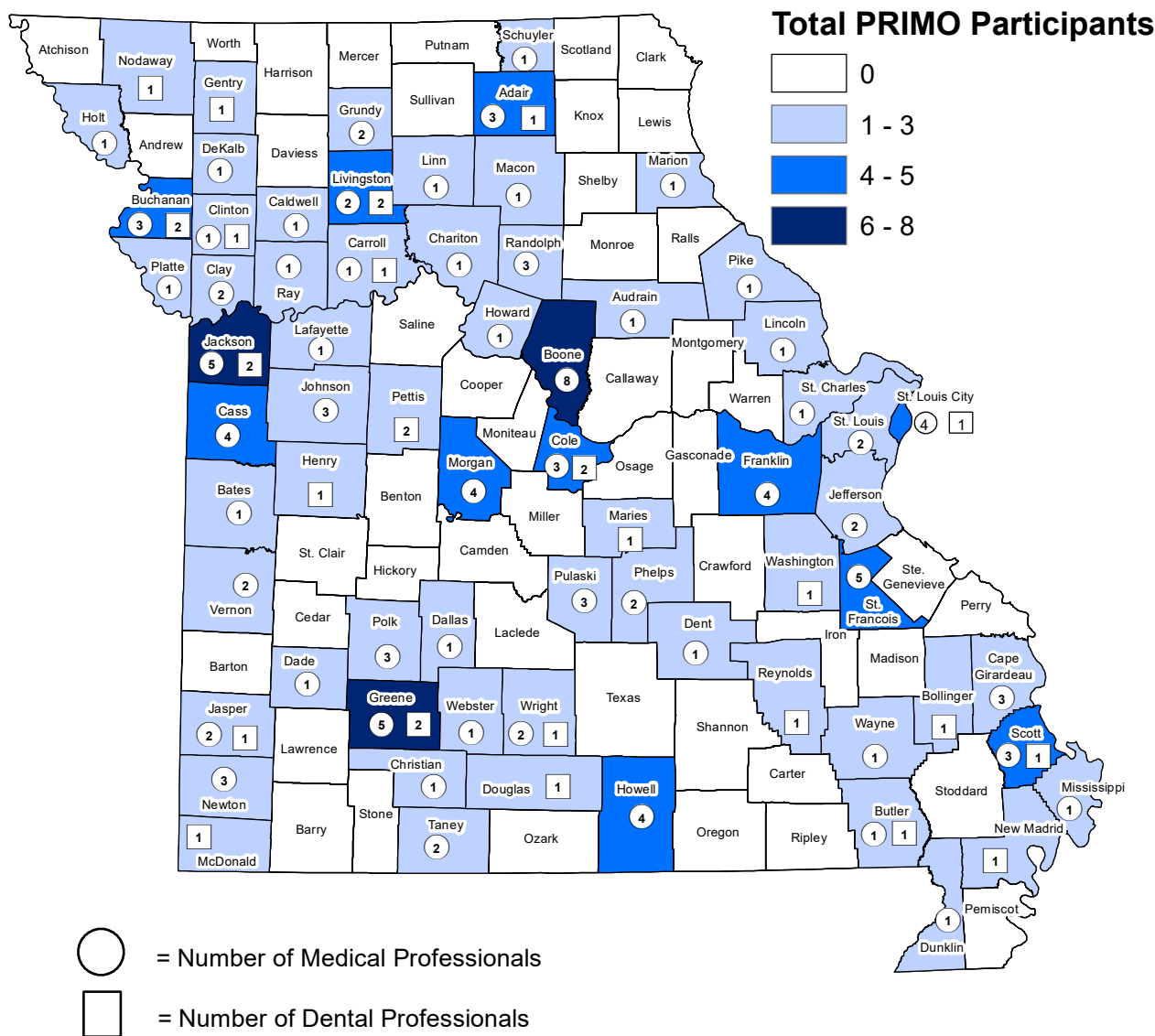
	Undergraduate	Medical/Dental School	Residency	Total
Medical	2	1	1	4
Dental		3	1	4
Behavioral Health				
Dental Hygiene				
Total	2	4	1	8



Primary Care Resource Initiative for Missouri

Medical and Dental Professionals Who Completed or Are Completing Obligation

Total = 151



The map above highlights the locations where PRIMO physicians, dentists and dental hygienists are currently earning, or have fulfilled, their forgiveness requirements. As of March 2018, there were 151 total participants earning or having earned PRIMO loan forgiveness in the state. It takes between seven to 11 years for a physician to complete their education and approximately 8 years for a dentist. The ability to earn up to five years of educational loan forgiveness in return for working in a designated shortage area makes the PRIMO program a successful recruitment and retention tool for placing physicians and dentists in rural and/or underserved areas of Missouri.

Recruitment and Placement

ORHPC works with federal, state and local entities to identify shortage areas for primary care, dental health, and/or mental health. Once designated as a HPSA, these areas are eligible for federal funding and services. ORHPC, MPCA and Missouri Hospital Association (MHA) work collaboratively to identify and address workforce shortage needs. The Missouri Health Professional Placement Services program is a non-profit recruiting service focused on placing more medical, dental and mental health practitioners in rural and underserved areas of Missouri.

The tables below illustrate the number of opportunities available to health professionals, and the number of placed health professionals during the State Fiscal Year 2018.

Practice Sites Opportunity Data State Fiscal Year 2017-2018

Opportunity Specialty	State Fiscal Year 2017	State Fiscal Year 2018	Total
Family Medicine	64	81	145
Internal Medicine	25	20	45
Internal Medicine & Pediatrics	6	10	16
OB/GYN	3	5	8
Pediatrician	12	17	29
Advanced Practice Nurse	18	17	35
Physician Assistant	3	4	7
Dental Hygiene	1	2	3
Dentist	25	52	77
Psychiatry	15	17	32
Other Mental Health Professional	23	32	55
Other Physician	19	27	46
Pharmacist	1	0	1
Totals	215	284	499

Practice Sites Placement Data State Fiscal Year 2017-2018

Opportunity Specialty	State Fiscal Year 2017	State Fiscal Year 2018	Total
Family Medicine	2	2	4
Internal Medicine & Pediatrics	0	0	0
Advanced Practice Nurse	1	2	3
Dentist	9	6	15
Totals	12	10	22

Healthcare Delivery Systems and Development

PRIMO also offers funding opportunities to Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) throughout the state to improve access to health care services. In Missouri, FQHCs are local, non-profit, community based health centers designed to provide health services to low-income, medically underserved communities in either urban or rural areas. RHCs are required to provide outpatient primary care, and basic laboratory services, and must be located in a non-urbanized rural area as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Both types of clinics must also be designated as HPSAs.

During State Fiscal Year 2018, PRIMO provided funding to the following health care delivery sites:

Central Ozark Medical Center

Central Ozark Medical Center used PRIMO funding to purchase equipment including a portable dental chair and to cover the salary of an additional dentist during the 50 days per year when Central Ozark Medical Center dentists provide onsite oral health services in 10 school districts and eight Head Start programs.

Jordan Valley Community Health Center

Jordan Valley Community Health Center used funding to staff personnel in a multi-use medical/dental mobile unit used to provide primary medical and behavioral health services to the community of Rockaway Beach and Branson's population of seasonal workers and transient residents. PRIMO funds provided the means to support a health care provider team (including a nurse practitioner, a licensed practical nurse, and a licensed clinical social worker), during first year of operation of these new access initiatives.

Ozarks Community Health Center

Ozarks Community Health Center utilized PRIMO funds to purchase two eye cameras for their Hermitage and Urbana locations. The cameras are for optical imaging in patients with, or at risk of developing, diabetes. The nearest optometrist is located approximately 30 miles away. This distance and the associated transportation issues present barriers to care for many patients. Having eye cameras onsite allows for initial vision screening while the patient is already at the health center, as well as, the opportunity for follow-up care when an optometrist visits the health center twice per month.

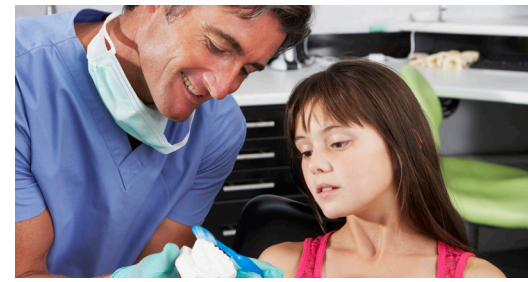
Pike County Memorial Hospital

Pike County Memorial Hospital purchased a radiology machine for a new walk-in clinic in Bowling Green. This RHC clinic provides urgent care services during extended evening hours and weekends which increases access to care while encouraging appropriate utilization of emergency room services.

Funding was also provided to support a Rural Medical Services Grant with the University of Missouri School of Medicine, Rural Track Pipeline Program (MU-RTPP). The MU-RTPP works to increase the placement of primary care physicians in rural areas of Missouri through the recruitment and pre-admission of medical students from rural areas of the state while emphasizing student training at rural clinical sites. This is upstream approach to provider training complements the intent of the PRIMO program to provide incentives to increase the number of primary medical care professions and health care delivery systems in areas of need within Missouri.

Accomplishments of this collaboration during SFY18 included:

- Support of existing and development of new Rural Track clinical training sites available to students from all Missouri medical schools.
- Providing a Rural Medicine Lecture Series for medical students and residents.
- Coordinating an annual week-long community based, interdisciplinary Rural Immersion Program designed to provide students with a firsthand perspective on how health care providers in rural parts of the state balance life and work in a small town.



Health Professional State Loan Repayment Program

The purpose of the State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) is to improve primary care access by assisting rural and underserved communities with the recruitment and retention of primary care providers. SLRP offers eligible health care providers the opportunity to receive repayment assistance for qualifying educational loans in exchange for a two-year minimum commitment to provide health care services at an ambulatory public, nonprofit or private nonprofit primary care practice site located in a federally designated HPSA location.

Awards for this program are financed through funding from HRSA of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, under grant HRSA-14-033, Affordable Care Act - State Loan Repayment Program, CFDA 93.165 and a required 50 percent state match funding commitment made possible by an annual donation from the Missouri Hospital Association. In State Fiscal Year 2018, 15 primary health care professionals were awarded loan repayment assistance to repay qualified educational debt.



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