

Annual Report 2022

Primary Care  
Resource  
Initiative for

Missouri



PR<sup>9</sup>MO

# About This Report

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) established the Primary Care Resource Initiative for Missouri (PRIMO) Program, as a result of the Missouri Revised Statutes Section 191.411. This legislation authorizes DHSS to develop and implement a plan to make health care services more accessible to all Missouri residents.

The PRIMO Program focuses on improving health care delivery systems and increasing the number of primary care, dental health and mental health professionals practicing in Missouri Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs).

The DHSS Office of Rural Health and Primary Care (ORHPC) administers the PRIMO Program. This report reviews the PRIMO budget and activities for State Fiscal Year 2022 (SFY22).



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## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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

- Student Loans
- Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP)
- Health Care Delivery System Development
- Recruitment/Placement of Health Professionals

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

## Funding Sources

- **PRIMO Student Loans:** The Missouri Hospital Association (MHA) provides a generous donation to assist in funding student loans, in addition to payments from loan recipients who have defaulted on their contracts.
- **Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP):** Missouri receives a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Federal SLRP Grant which requires a dollar-to-dollar (1:1) state funds match. DHSS uses default payments and a generous donation from the MHA to meet match requirements.
- **Recruitment/Placement of Health Professionals:** Missouri receives a HRSA Federal Primary Care Office (PCO) Grant and funds from the the state Health Access Incentive Fund (HAIF).
- **Health Care Delivery System Development:** Provided by the HAIF.
- **Rural Residency:** Funded through HAIF.
- **Area Health Education Centers (AHECs):** Funded by General Revenue.



PRIMO awards funding for eligible educational expenses to qualified students pursuing careers as licensed physicians specializing in family practice, general practice, general internal medicine, general pediatrics, obstetric and gynecological care, general dentist or dental hygienist.

**Learn more:**  
[Health.Mo.Gov/PRIMO](https://Health.Mo.Gov/PRIMO)



## PRIMO STUDENT LOANS

The PRIMO Student Loan Program is a competitive program that awards funding to Missouri residents pursuing training leading to Missouri licensure as primary care physicians, dentists and dental hygienists. Upon completion of training, PRIMO student loan recipients practice in a designated primary care or dental health HPSA in Missouri.

### 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 at least one year, prior to applying.
- Express a desire to work in a medical, dental or mental health shortage area upon completion of training.

### PRIMO Qualifying Health Care Professions

- Primary care physicians specializing in:
  - Family Practice
  - General Practice
  - Internal Medicine
  - Pediatric
  - Psychiatry
  - Obstetric and Gynecological Care
- General Dentist
- Dental Hygienist



### PRIMO Loan Amounts

The chart lists the amount of the funding awarded to loan recipients based on the discipline and type of degree.

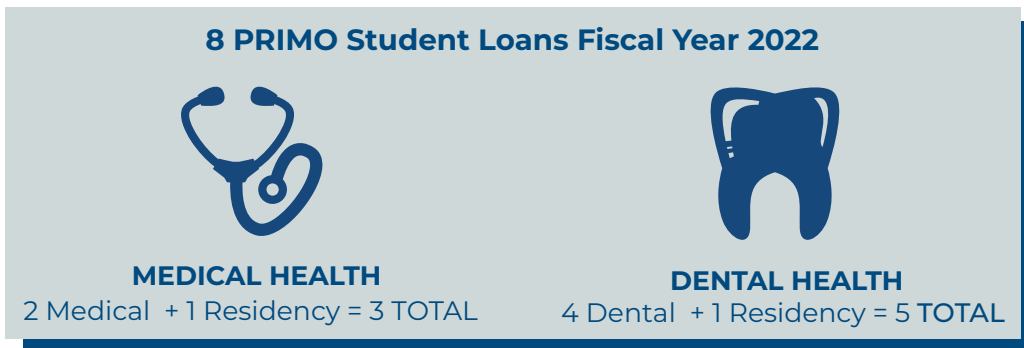
Amount Per Academic Year	Maximum Number of Loans	Student Status	Degree
\$5,000	Maximum 4 loans	Full-Time	Undergraduate or Dental Hygienist Students
\$3,000	Years 1 and 2 of a 6-Year Program	Part-Time	Undergraduate or Dental Hygienist Students
\$10,000	Years 3 through 6 of a 6-Year Program	Full-Time	Allopathic or Osteopathic Medical or Dental Program
\$25,000	Maximum 4 Years of a 4-Year Program	Full-Time	Allopathic or Osteopathic Medical or Dental Program
\$25,000	Maximum 3 Loans	Full-Time	Allopathic or Osteopathic Medical or Dental Program
\$10,000	Maximum 6 loans	Full-Time	Selected Primary Care Resident Physicians



## LOAN FORGIVENESS

Upon completion of training, PRIMO recipients fulfill their loan repayment obligation by earning forgiveness through qualifying employment in a Missouri HPSA experiencing shortages of primary care, mental health and dental health professionals.

- **Qualifying employment** is defined as full-time, direct patient care at a facility located in a Missouri HPSA. Each loan contract requires a one-year service commitment. Service commitments cap at a five-year maximum, regardless of the number of loans awarded. Licensed PRIMO recipients must practice at a site that accepts Medicaid and Medicare and operates with a sliding fee schedule. The loan recipient must provide professional primary health care, dental health or mental health services to the general population.
- **Cash Repayment:** If loan recipients default on their loan obligation or decide to repay the loan, they must pay back the entire amount dispersed plus accrued interest. The loan begins accruing interest at the rate of 9.5% the date the loan is dispersed.



**Rural**

**14**

**Urban**

**4**

**Total**

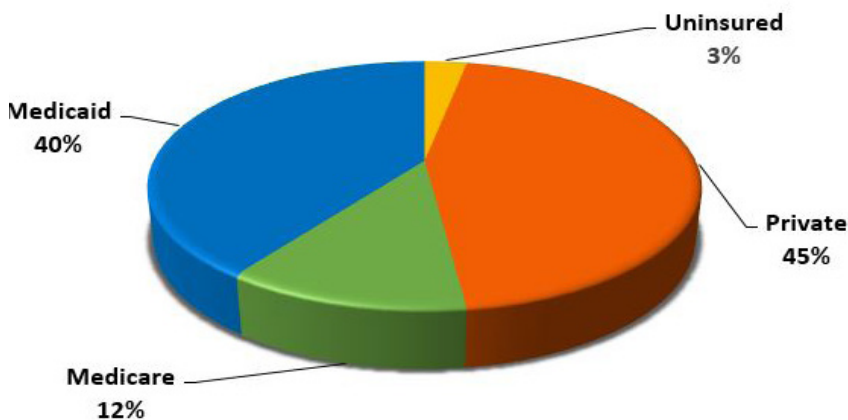
**18**

SFY22 PRIMO Recipients Fulfilling Service Obligations by Rural/Urban

**SFY22 PRIMO Service Obligations by Specialty  
Total 18**



**PRIMO SFY22 PAYER MIX**



PRIMO SFY22 Payer Mix chart shows the percentages of each insurance and payer type, which is indicative of the population served.





## STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

The Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) seeks to improve primary care access by assisting rural and underserved communities with the recruitment and retention of primary care providers. The 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 eligible primary care practice site located in a federally designated Missouri HPSA. Learn more at <https://health.mo.gov/living/families/primarycare/loanrepayment/slrp.php>.

DHSS receives funds through U.S. Department of Health and Human Services HRSA-14-033, Affordable Care Act - State Loan Repayment Program, CFDA 93.165 for SLRP awards. DHSS meets the required 1:1 match requirement through an annual donation from the MHA and repayments from recipients who have defaulted on their loans. In SFY22, DHSS awarded 21 primary health care professionals assistance to repay qualified educational debt.





**Rural**

**42**

**Urban**

**27**

**Total**

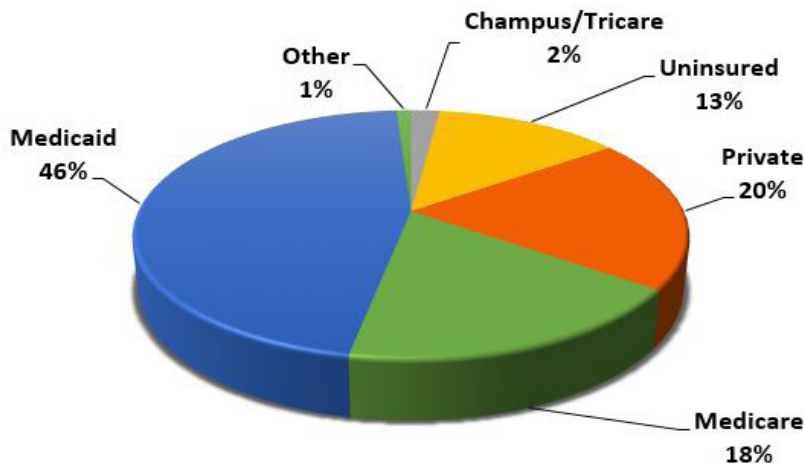
**69**

SFY22 SLRP Recipients Fulfilling Service Obligations by Rural/Urban

**SFY22 SLRP Service Obligations by Specialty  
Total 69**

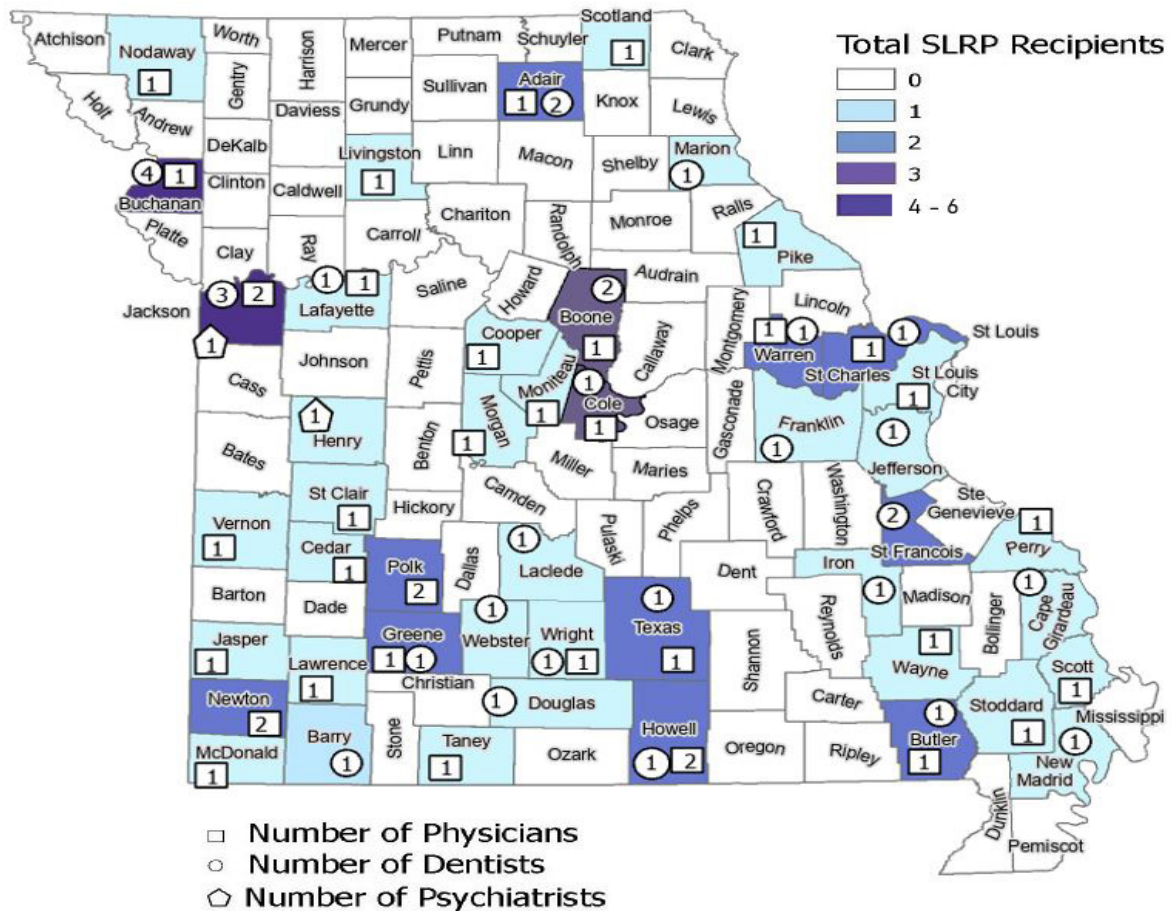


**SLRP SFY22 PAYER MIX**



SLRP SFY22 Payer Mix chart shows the percentages of each insurance and payer type, which is indicative of the population served. Medicaid represents the largest reimbursement type at 46%.

## Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) SLRP Recipients Who Completed or Are Completing Obligation in 2022 Total = 69



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

Office of Rural Health and Primary Care

The map above demonstrates the counties in SFY22 where SLRP physicians, psychiatrists and dentists were earning forgiveness or fulfilled their forgiveness requirements.

### SFY22 Practicing PRIMO and SLRP Recipients' Surveys (N=36)

- 89% of practicing recipients reported feeling that they do important work.
- 83% of practicing recipients reported they fully value the mission of their practice.
- 67% of practicing recipients reported their practice/organization is financially stable.
- 72% of practicing recipients reported their total compensation package, including benefits, is fair.
- In SFY22, PRIMO and SLRP recipients continued efforts to increase access to care. Practicing PRIMO and SLRP recipients, serving their service obligations, reported spending an average of 40 hours on clinical work, with PRIMO recipients seeing an average of 100 patients per week and SLRP recipients seeing an average of 80 patients per week.



## RECRUITMENT AND PLACEMENT

The DHSS ORHPC collaborates with the Missouri Primary Care Association (MPCA) and the MHA to identify and address workforce shortage needs. The Missouri Health Professional Placement Services (MHPPS) Program is a non-profit statewide health care program that specializes in workforce development, recruitment and retention. The MHPPS Program partners with safety-net providers and health care systems to recruit and retain health care professionals in Missouri rural and underserved areas.

The tables illustrate the number of opportunities available to health professionals demonstrating the number of opportunities posted and the number of placed health professionals.

**SFY22 Practice Sites Placement Data  
Health Professionals Placed in  
Missouri Health Care Facilities**

Opportunity Specialty	State Fiscal Year 2022
Family Medicine, Physician	3
Family Medicine, Advanced Practice Nurse	1
Family Medicine, Resident	1
General Dentist	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10</b>

**SFY22 Practice Sites Opportunity Data  
Health Professional Employment  
Opportunities Posted**

Opportunity Specialty	State Fiscal Year 2022
Family Medicine	192
Internal Medicine	44
Internal Medicine & Pediatrics	4
OB-GYN	44
Pediatrician	30
Advanced Practice Nurse	54
Registered Nurse	9
Licensed Practical Nurse	8
Physician Assistant	5
Medical Assistant	6
Medical Technician	5
Dental Hygienist	45
Dentist	137
Dentist - Pediatrics	4
Dental Technician	8
Dental Assistant	1
Psychiatry	42
Other Mental Health Professional	43
Other Physician	91
Pharmacy Technician	6
Administrative	56
<b>Totals</b>	<b>834</b>





## HEALTH CARE DELIVERY SYSTEMS AND DEVELOPMENT

The PRIMO Program seeks to improve the delivery of health care services by collaborating with statewide organizations, communities and academic institutions to support the building of clinics, treatment centers, and other economically sustainable health care delivery sites.

### Missouri School of Medicine, Rural Track Pipeline Program (MU-RTPP)

During SFY22, PRIMO continued funding to support the Rural Medical Services Grant with the MU-RTPP. The MU-RTPP works to increase the placement of primary care physicians in rural areas of Missouri through the recruitment and preadmission of medical students from rural areas of the state, while emphasizing student training at rural clinical sites. This upstream approach to provider training complements the intent of the PRIMO program to provide incentives to increase the number of primary medical care professionals and health care delivery systems in areas of need within Missouri. The MU-RTPP has a successful record of producing physicians for the state of Missouri with 63.5% of participants practicing in Missouri, of which 48.7% of practice in rural Missouri.

### SFY22 Collaboration Accomplishments:

- Provided quarterly inter-professional lectures to medical students, residents, and health professional students from institutions across the state on topics including COVID 19 and its impact on rural communities and telehealth, addressing maternity deserts, and addressing treatment of opioid abuse as a rural provider. Of the surveyed attendees, 51% indicated increased interest in primary care practice, and 69% said they were more interested in practicing rural medicine.
- Continued to unite medical and health care students with rural communities through the Rural Immersion Program. During the non-clinical four-day experience, students travel to a rural location to learn about the community and examine the unique challenges rural communities face. In SFY22, the program took place in West Plains, MO with 20 participants.



## Missouri Area Health Education Centers (MAHEC)

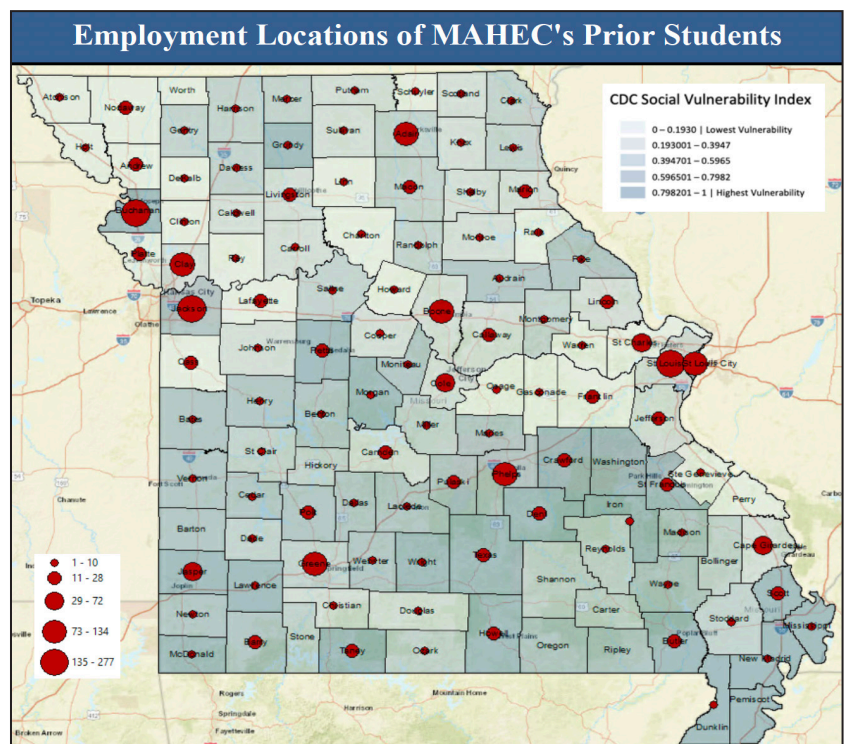
The DHSS ORHPC maintains a partnership and contract with MAHEC, which is comprised of seven regional centers and three medical schools. The MAHEC contract focuses on working with Missouri students to grow Missouri's health care workforce. MAHEC offers students the opportunity to explore and prepare for careers in the health field. Many participants now work as health care providers in communities across Missouri. Students may participate in MAHEC at different levels of the pipeline as high school, undergraduate, or health professions training students. For many, their involvement in MAHEC activities continued from middle school through clinical training.

### SFY22 Collaboration Accomplishments:

- 124 new pipeline students were identified.
- 97 of these students completed at least 25 hours of programming.
- 40 MAHEC participants began primary care residencies in Missouri.
- 49 clinical training students completed 54 clinical rotations: 3 dental students, 4 nurse practitioner students, 2 nursing students, 2 nurse anesthetist students, and 38 medical students.
  - o Rotations took place in 32 training sites: 6 sites were in suburban or urban settings and 26 were in rural settings.
  - o Rotations featured varying disciplines: 41 were in primary care, 3 were in dentistry, 2 in nursing - anesthesiology, 1 in nurse practitioner - mental health, 1 in licensed practical nursing, 1 in emergency medicine, 1 in psychology, and 4 in psychiatry.
- 116 health professions students participated in inter-professional training experiences.
- Held Virtual M\*A\*S\*H (Missouri AHEC Science & Health) Camps to build the capacity of middle and high school teachers/counselors to enhance their knowledge and skills in providing guidance and instruction to students on health career options and preparation.
- 54 MAHEC Scholars enrolled in the fourth cohort of the MAHEC Scholars Program, 34 of whom are active. The MAHEC Scholars program is a 2-year inter-professional education program, designed to supplement students' health professions curricula and better prepare students to provide care to rural and urban underserved populations.
  - o 31 scholars from the third cohort completed Year-2 programming and graduated from their respective health career programs.
- MAHEC Scholars participated in a statewide virtual educational gathering that addressed COVID-19, a simulation activity focused on domestic violence, and breakout meetings to facilitate networking.

The table below illustrates the employment locations of prior MAHEC students, as of June 2022.

At least 2,250 MAHEC participants have pursued health care careers in 103 of Missouri's 115 counties; 98 of which are county level Primary Care Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs).





MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF  
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