

HEALTH WORKFORCE RETENTION PROGRAM

Information Sheet

Purpose and Overview

The purpose of the Health Workforce Retention Program is to support the implementation of creative, best-practice initiatives that will enhance the retention of health providers in the Saskatchewan health system. The program is focused on supporting projects that will make a visible difference in the workplace by providing solutions for issues contributing to retention challenges.

Structure and Available Funding

The total funding proposed for this program is \$6 million dollars. The funding will be broken down into the following streams/categories:

Employee/Health Provider and Employer Innovation Funds - \$4.5 Million

Employee/Health Provider Innovation Fund

- This funding will be available to support employee/health provider groups, units or unions in developing and implementing ideas on improving their workplace environment, workplace practises, community involvement and/or quality of care. Employers and the related union(s) must support projects. Employees/health providers (or group of employee partners) will need to submit a letter of intent regarding their project. Proposal and project development assistance will be available for all eligible projects as needed.

Employer Innovation Fund

- This funding will support employers in developing and implementing creative retention programming for their employees. It will be important for the employers to have the support of the appropriate unions and employees for any proposed project. Employers will need to submit a letter of intent regarding their proposed project.

Provincial Retention Projects Fund - \$1.5 Million

- This funding will support projects that may be developed by other provincially based organizations that are outside the direct workplace but still contribute to health care in this province. These organizations would include but not be limited to: regulatory bodies, educational institutes, and/or other provider associations. (Unions would apply under the Employee/Health Provider Innovation Fund.)

There is also project development and implementation support available – please contact Saskatchewan Health for further information (see contact information on page 3).

Principles of the Program

Projects that will be supported by the program will contribute to the retention of health providers by adhering to the following principles:

- projects will be supported by available research;
- projects will be solution-oriented and will address specific challenges affecting retention in the workplace;
- projects will contribute to the health and well-being of providers in the health care system;
- projects will contribute to the provision of quality care to patients;
- projects will be fair, transparent, and ethical;
- projects will enhance health provider team building in facilities and/or communities;
- projects will enhance collaboration and partnerships;
- projects will recognize and support diversity; and,
- projects will contribute to the quality of the workplace environment.

Retention Themes of the Program

Funding under the Health Workforce Retention Program will be provided for initiatives that address challenges or capitalize on opportunities within the following theme areas*:

THEMES	DESCRIPTION
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The development and implementation of leadership practices, structures, or resources that contribute to healthy outcomes for health providers, patients/clients, organizations and systems.
Appropriate Staffing and Workload	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The development and implementation of effective staffing and workload management practices to maximize the utilization of health providers and ensure an appropriately balanced workload.
Provider Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initiatives that are focused on enhancing the public image of health providers (and the health system) both internal and external to the targeted workplace.
Team Building and Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initiatives that improve team-building, collaboration, and communication mechanisms for health providers in both facilities and in the community.
Flexible Work Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Projects that explore flexible work arrangements and schedules to provide opportunities for new and established team members. These arrangements will help to promote personal and professional development, ensure work and life balance and enhance health and safety for both health providers and patients.
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Projects that increase opportunities for health providers to enhance their professional development and learning.
Safe and Supportive Workplaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initiatives that focus on supportive, quality workplace environments that identify and address issues and opportunities related to intergenerational and diverse work teams.• Initiatives that enhance retention of health providers as identified in the Representative Workforce Agreement documents.• Projects that promote safe workplaces for both patients and providers.
Embracing Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing and/or implementing technological tools to enhance workplace communication, planning, management, safety and professional development.

**The above themes were developed through consultation with stakeholders and current available research.*

Eligibility

Health Provider/Employee Innovation Fund

Any health provider/employee group or union within a health region or affiliate, Indian Band and tribal council, and other eligible organizations/employers are eligible to apply for funding under the Health Provider/Employee Innovation Fund.

Employer Innovation Fund

Most health sector employers are eligible to apply for funding from this program. Funding will be provided based on a proposed project outline and budget for the project.

Provincial Retention Projects Fund

All health sector regulatory bodies, educational institutes, provider associations and other provincially based organizations approved by the Grant Committee can apply for funding to support projects that are provincial in nature and fall within the identified themes.

For further information on eligibility of projects, please contact Saskatchewan Health (contact information below.)

Funding

The maximum funding on a per project basis for all three streams is \$75,000. However, projects demonstrating significant partnership and collaboration between providers, regional health authorities and other partners may be eligible to receive funding over and above the maximum amount. The Grant Review Committee will adjudicate requests for additional funding.

For all three retention funds, potential applicants will be able to apply at any time during the two-year period. However, applications will be reviewed once per quarter beginning in April 2007. Applications will be reviewed for completeness as they come in and if further information is required, applicants will be contacted prior to the next review date.

Assessment of Proposals

As noted previously, project proposals will be assessed on whether they address issues in the established theme areas and whether they reflect the principles of the program. In addition, proposals will be further assessed related to creating a balance of awards within the target employee group(s) (nurses, administration staff, medical technicians, etc.), the location of the project (rural, northern, community-based or urban-focused) and the equity of distribution of projects (i.e. the Grant Review Committee must ensure that a fair distribution of the funds is occurring under this program for categories of employee groups and geographical locations and regional health authorities.)

For further information on this program including start-up support, eligibility, application process, and assessment of applications, please contact:

**Health Workforce Retention Program
(306) 787-7955**