

**Health Workforce Forum
Conference Call Summary
August 14, 2013
9:30 – 1100 pm**

Present

Sally Sutton, USM, Muskie School
Joan Dolan, Maine DOL, Health Sector Grant
Valerie Landry, Forum Chair, Mercy Hospital
Richard Fifield, Goodwill of Northern New
England
Kristin Wheelock, Goodwill of Northern New
England
Theresa Mudgett, Tri County LWIB
Adam Fischer, Maine DOL

Matt Chandler, Maine CDC Rural Health
Program
Mollie Baldwin, Home Care for Maine
Lisa St. Pierre, Eastern Maine Medical Center
Phil Dionne, Older Worker Committee, State
Workforce Board
Martha Vrana-Bossart, Kennebec
Valley Community College

Meeting Purpose

The overall purpose of the meeting was to discuss and provide feedback to ME DOL about overall and specific funding needs of Forum members, and how ME DOL could best work with the Forum on meeting those needs. The discussion focused on two pending US DOL funding opportunities, the H1- B Visa grant and the Workforce Innovations Fund grant both expected to be announced sometime this fall.

Key Actions and Decisions

H-1B Visas - Adam Fischer to gather additional information about types of jobs and particular industries H-1B visas are being used. This information would also be useful for other workforce and Forum proposals. He will be back in touch with Forum members as needed.

Workforce Innovations Fund - Adam Fischer to bring together a workgroup to begin to develop a proposal for this potential Workforce Innovations Fund RFP.

Private Foundations - Adam Fischer and Sally Sutton will pull together a list of potential private foundations, including an outreach plan to targeted groups around potential funding opportunities with possible follow-up at a September Forum meeting.

General Discussion

Adam Fischer from Me DOL was introduced and there was discussion about his role within ME DOL, which would include helping to provide an intersection with other state agencies. Regarding specific needs, previous analysis and feedback from Forum members should provide direction regarding need, including:

- Nurse educators
- Changing health care delivery
- Health care needs in rural areas, including mid-level practitioners as well as physicians, dentists and psychiatrists
- Long term care workforce
- Using data to determine priority needs
- Changing rules related to the Competitive Skills Scholarship Program and leveraging apprenticeship dollars, for initiatives like nurse residency programs and Expanded Function Dental Assistants (EFDAs)

Me CDC will soon be putting out its RFP and concerns were raised about the need to leverage funds from private foundations and others against these limited state dollars.

Adam Fischer pointed out that there is a workgroup that meets monthly including DHHS, DOE and DOL and grants of mutual interest is always a topic of discussion. For example, DOL will be partnering with DHHS regarding TANF participants and the lifetime limit on benefits.

Mollie Baldwin discussed the Balancing Long Term Care Grant which will move more people into the community, requiring a change in the long term care workforce. Mollie will circulate information about this grant.

Specific Grant Discussions

There are two US DOL potential RFPs anticipated this fall:

H-1B Visa – The purpose of this grant is to provide education, training and job placement assistance to occupations and industries for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers. Data for Maine shows that those workers hired include IT related positions and health care, typically various types of physicians or other highly trained health workers. Questions were raised about what type of IT, and for which industries. Concerns were raised about whether or not Maine could demonstrate the level of need required by the grant to be competitive proposal.

Action Step – Adam Fischer to gather additional information about types of jobs and particular industries H-1B visas are being used. This information would also be useful for other workforce and Forum proposals. He will be back in touch with Forum members as needed.

Workforce Innovation Fund – The purpose of this grant is to support innovative approaches to the design and delivery of employment and training services that generate long term improvement in the workforce system. Work done for this proposal could also help to inform applications for private foundations or other funding opportunities.

Action Step – Adam Fischer to bring together a workgroup to begin to develop a proposal for this potential Workforce Innovations Fund RFP.

Private Foundations – The pursuit of private foundations was discussed.

Action Step – Adam and Sally will pull together a list of potential private foundations, including an outreach plan to targeted groups around potential funding opportunities with possible follow-up at a September Forum meeting.