



OHN & COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Health Care Workforce Education

Moving Mountains: 101

Research to administration, obstetrics to end-of-life care, the science and business of health has never been more complex. Preparing future health care professionals and feeding the right talent into the system is arguably one of the most important challenges of this generation.

The AMA and IOM are predicting unprecedented shortfalls in both general nursing capacity and geriatrics specialists. In an attempt to improve the reach of existing staff, advanced-practice nurses are the focus of a new wave of scope-of-practice bills being presented in 20 states. When this legislation reaches Oregon, LPNs and RNs across the state will be looking to our community colleges to provide the additional training they'll need. The first Baby Boomers will reach age 65 in 2011. By 2030, there will be an estimated 8,000 geriatricians, but the nation will need 36,000 to provide sufficient care for our elderly. These are only two of the many real-world tests to be faced by your students.

It's clear that we'll need more health care clinicians in the coming years. While we work to bring recruitment levels up, we must also be improving the capabilities of those in the field. Advanced communications technology and telemedicine will play a significant role in the next evolution of health care delivery. Fortunately, much of the groundwork is already in place. The Community College Healthcare Initiative is contributing much-needed resources to the creation of new

distance learning curricula. CNA, LPN, Mental Health Technician, Addictions Counseling, Pharmacy Technician, Health Informatics, Anatomy & Physiology 100 & 200 are just a handful of successful distance programs available, and more are being actively developed. It's coming down to a matter of delivery.

THE OREGON HEALTH NETWORK

Bringing high-speed broadband to all health care providers and community colleges in the state, the Oregon Health Network (OHN) is committed to making quality care available to every patient regardless of their location. Being a participant in this groundbreaking development will provide multiple benefits to community colleges statewide:

GOOD FOR YOUR STUDENTS – The future is quite literally in your hands. The people you're training now are likely to face a health care landscape that is decidedly different from what we know today. So part of what you're fostering in them is the ability to think in dynamic terms: to quickly assess and diagnose a situation, understand the many treatment options available, and choose the best course of action. Clearly, these skills are imperative in treating patients. But they're also valuable skills in terms of watching health care trends and making career choices. Having ready access to telemedicine – and through it, some of the finest medical minds in the state – will give your students learning opportunities only dreamed of until now. It will also put them in touch with a wider array of health care professionals and mentors who can guide them along their career path.



Oregon Health Network: The Benefits of Participation

GOOD FOR YOUR SCHOOL – The availability of high-speed broadband connectivity and the telemedicine potential it represents can essentially level the playing field for community colleges. Rural and underserved campuses can offer the same curriculum being taught in the larger population centers. Small town students interested in a medical career will no longer need to leave home, reducing ‘brain drain’ and improving the long-range quality of care being offered to local residents. Larger colleges improve their reach into these smaller communities, growing enrollment and providing a more diverse educational experience for their own students and faculty. There’s also the potential for substantially lower connectivity costs (depending upon your current provider), and the ability to develop alternative revenue streams with little or no impact on existing resources. And every college connected to OHN will have better access to the vast, practical knowledge available within our health care system. For example, signing onto the Oregon Health Network has allowed Blue Mountain Community College to share programming with the Wallowa Memorial Hospital in Enterprise. According to OHN Board representative for community colleges, Dr. Patrick O’Connor, “This type of high-impact collaboration is invaluable for any community college, and now it can be available to even the smallest and most distant from urban centers.”

GOOD FOR YOUR COMMUNITY – In addition to keeping medical talent close to home, improved health care workforce education via broadband technology provides a platform for a more robust economy. Increased usage will attract ancillary telecom service providers, and potentially lower connectivity costs for other educational institutions, businesses, and individuals. Access to adequate health care and

education will no longer factor into relocation questions. And your college has the potential to become a regional health information hub through a variety of outreach programs, raising awareness of health education issues for your entire region.

CONNECTING TO THE FUTURE

For qualifying participants, the FCC’s Rural Health Care Pilot Program (RHCPP) subsidy and contributions from OHN donors will offset most if not all of the initial setup costs. Monthly service fees are then subsidized at 85% for the duration of the program, leaving OHN and its participants responsible for only the remaining 15% in matching funds. Best of all, you’ll be collaborating with technology specialists, health care professionals, and elected officials who are actively engaged in the health care community. From technical support to public policy, the Oregon Health Network is driven by the prospect of long-term stability and growth for our health care system. And it all begins with education.



Contact us today to learn more about providing the best possible health care work force education experience thanks to state-wide broadband connectivity through the Oregon Health Network.

Contact us: (503) 479-6029

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