

# HPSA REFORM

## THE SOLUTION

Modify the methodology of the primary care HPSA score to ensure hospitals can access federal resources to recruit the providers they need.

### SUMMARY

Health Professional Shortage Area scores are an important mechanism for federal and state programs to gauge areas that are in need of health care providers. HPSA scores help federal and state programs determine where they should direct resources.



HPSA scores are factored into eligibility for a variety of taxpayer funded loan repayment programs, distribution of new Graduate Medical Education slots and other programs that steer resources into areas that are perceived to have workforce needs.

### THE PROBLEM

The current HPSA formula that calculates scores is flawed and does not appropriately account for provider need in communities, particularly in rural areas. The existing components that factor into a HPSA score are

not reflective of rurality or unique access problems that many areas of Kansas face. For example, HPSA scores partially rely on metrics related to newborns such as low birthweight rate and infant mortality rate. While these are important metrics to consider, various areas in Kansas have a much higher proportion of older adults as opposed to newborns and infants.



The older adult populations in Kansas result in higher utilization of health services, and their respective risk factors are not well accounted for in the existing HPSA formula.

Unless the HPSA methodology is updated to reflect these concerns, Kansas hospitals and health care professionals are at a disadvantage from accessing various federal programs and resources including receiving new GME funding, benefiting from federal health care loan repayment programs, and receiving designations that improve financial sustainability.

# FEDERAL: HPSA REFORM CONTINUED ...

## THE SOLUTION:

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## THE CONGRESSIONAL SOLUTION

Congress should remedy this situation by modifying the methodology of the primary care HPSA score by removing the Infant Health Index metric and replace it with Elderly Ratio (percent of people over age 65) and with Youth Ratio (percent of people under age 18) metrics.



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