

SB 244-FN-A - AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

03/13/2025 0776s

2025 SESSION

25-0971

05/09

SENATE BILL

244-FN-A

AN ACT

relative to expanding access to primary health care services, increasing the size of the health care workforce, and making appropriations therefor.

SPONSORS:

Sen. Rosenwald, Dist 13; Sen. Watters, Dist 4; Sen. Reardon, Dist 15; Sen. Long, Dist 20; Sen. Perkins Kwoka, Dist 21; Sen. Fenton, Dist 10; Sen. Prentiss, Dist 5; Sen. Altschiller, Dist 24; Rep. Wallner, Merr. 19; Rep. Telerski, Hills. 11; Rep. Weber, Ches. 5

COMMITTEE:

Health and Human Services

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill expands access to primary health care services by directing the department of health and human services to amend its contract with the Bi-State Primary Care Association's Recruitment Center in order to expand health care workforce recruitment and retention efforts and increases funding for such programs. The bill also makes an appropriation to the department of health and human services to increase Medicaid reimbursement rates for opioid treatment providers.

Explanation:

Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.

Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough]~~.

Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Five

AN ACT relative to expanding access to primary health care services, increasing the size of the health care workforce, and making appropriations therefor.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Short Title. This act shall be known as The New Hampshire Needs Caregivers Act.

2 2 Statement of Purpose.

3 I. New Hampshire's health care workforce is the foundation of our health care safety net,
4 and the foundation is in crisis due to a lack of consistent investments. As a result, residents of New
5 Hampshire will go without care. Recently, the state worked to stabilize the system using federal
6 funds, including direct aid to hospitals, community providers, and long-term care facilities, and
7 investments in our Medicaid program; however, there remains a strong need to invest in programs to
8 foster a future health care workforce within the Granite State.

9 II. The state of New Hampshire shall address the health care workforce shortage by
10 leveraging state funding through public and private partnerships, investing in programs designed to
11 incentivize students to seek employment in health care and remain in New Hampshire upon
12 graduation; and equipping health care organizations with the tools necessary to secure skilled
13 clinicians.

14 3 Department of Health and Human Services; Division of Public Health Services; Public-Private
15 Health Care Workforce Recruitment and Retention Hub; Infrastructure Contracts.

16 I. The department of health and human services, division of public health services, rural
17 health and primary care section shall amend its current contract with Bi-State Primary Care
18 Association's Recruitment Center to require the Recruitment Center to strengthen the infrastructure
19 needed to sustain and transform community-based primary care services through the creation of a
20 Public-Private Health Care Workforce Recruitment and Retention Hub that promotes collaboration
21 across the continuum of care. Bi-State Primary Care Association shall administer the Public-Private
22 Health Care Workforce Recruitment and Retention Hub and manage the sub-recipient contracts,
23 and leverage federal, state, and private funding, and seek new funding opportunities when
24 appropriate.

25 II. Bi-State Primary Care Association shall design the sub-recipient contracts to facilitate
26 health care workforce development, recruitment, retention, support nursing preceptor and
27 mentoring programs, provide training and technical assistance, and loan repayment opportunities.
28 Bi-State Primary Care Association shall:

29 (a) Expand and implement its national outreach and marketing campaign designed to
30 recruit qualified clinicians to New Hampshire;

(b) Collaborate with an area health education center for the purpose of creating and expanding graduate level nursing mentoring and precepting programs. The area health education center shall provide the necessary support to graduate level nursing preceptors and the health care organizations that act as training sites;

(c) Collaborate with an area health education center for the purpose of supporting the New Hampshire Needs Caregivers Program. This program shall promote, recruit, and fund training of up to 500 individuals interested in a career in health care as a licensed nursing assistant. The New Hampshire Needs Caregivers Program shall create scholarship opportunities to cover the cost of tuition for licensed nursing assistant training up to \$2,600; supportive services; and assist individuals in finding courses and employment;

(d) Expand student loan repayment opportunities for clinicians with bachelors' degrees employed by non-profit health care organizations in exchange for the agreement to work for the non-profit health care organization for 24 months for part-time employees to 36 months for full-time employees; and

(e) Collaborate with a family medicine residency program in rural New Hampshire at a teaching health center program to support the training of family medicine residents in the north country. The teaching health center program shall be accredited or eligible for accreditation by a nationally recognized accreditation agency.

4 Department of Health and Human Services; Rural Health and Primary Care Section; Appropriations.

I. Appropriation; Public-Private Health Care Workforce Recruitment and Retention Hub. The sum of \$580,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026 and the sum of \$580,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027 are hereby appropriated to the department of health and human services, division of public health services, rural health and primary care section for the purpose set forth in paragraph I of section 3 of this act. The governor is authorized to draw a warrant for said sums out of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated.

II. Appropriation; Workforce Recruitment, Advertising, and Marketing. The sum of \$250,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026 and \$250,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027 are hereby appropriated to the department of health and human services, division of public health services, rural health and primary care section for the purpose described in paragraph II(a) of section 3 of this act. The governor is authorized to draw a warrant for said sums out of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated.

III. Appropriation; Bi-State Primary Care Association Sub-Recipient Contract with an Area Health Education Center; Graduate Nursing Student Preceptors and Financial Support for Host Organizations. The sum of \$300,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026 and the sum of \$300,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027 are hereby appropriated to the department of health and human services, division of public health services, rural health and primary care section

1 for the purpose set forth in paragraph II(b) of section 3 of this act. The governor is authorized to
2 draw a warrant for said sums out of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated.

3 IV. Appropriation; Bi-State Primary Care Association sub-recipient contract with an area
4 health education center; New Hampshire Needs Caregivers. The sum of \$500,000 for the fiscal year
5 ending June 30, 2026 and the sum of \$750,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027 are hereby
6 appropriated to the department of health and human services, division of public health services,
7 rural health and primary care section for the purpose set forth in paragraph II(c) of section 3 of this
8 act. The governor is authorized to draw a warrant for said sums out of any money in the treasury
9 not otherwise appropriated.

10 V. Appropriation; Bi-State Primary Care Association sub-recipient contracts; Public-Private
11 Health Care Workforce Recruitment and Retention Hub Loan Repayment Programs. The sum of
12 \$300,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026 and the sum of \$300,000 for the fiscal year ending
13 June 30, 2027 are hereby appropriated to the department of health and human services, division of
14 public health services, rural health and primary care section for the purpose set forth in paragraph
15 II(d) of section 3 of this act. The governor is authorized to draw a warrant for said sums out of any
16 money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated.

17 VI. Appropriation; Bi-State Primary Care Association sub-recipient contract with a rural
18 residency training at a teaching health center program. The sum of \$500,000 for the fiscal year
19 ending June 30, 2026 and the sum of \$500,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027 are hereby
20 appropriated to the department of health and human services, division of public health services,
21 rural health and primary care section for the purposes set forth in paragraph II(e) of section 3 of this
22 act. The governor is authorized to draw a warrant for said sum out of any money in the treasury not
23 otherwise appropriated.

24 VII. Appropriation; Early Childhood and Family Mental Health Credential. The sum of
25 \$203,500 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026 and the sum of \$203,500 for the fiscal year ending
26 June 30, 2027 are hereby appropriated to the department of health and human services, bureau of
27 children's behavioral health for the purpose set forth in RSA 167:3-1, IV(a)(2). The bureau shall use
28 the funding to support the training of up to 60 clinicians per year of the biennium. The governor is
29 authorized to draw a warrant for said sums out of any money in the treasury not otherwise
30 appropriated.

31 VIII. Appropriation; Primary Care Workforce Program. The sum of \$115,000 for the fiscal
32 year ending June 30, 2026 and the sum of \$115,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027 are
33 hereby appropriated to the department of health and human services, division of public health
34 services, rural health and primary care section, for an administrator I position for the purpose of
35 administering paragraph I of section 3 of this act. The governor is authorized to draw a warrant for
36 said sums out of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated.

1 5 Department of Health and Human Services; Medicaid Rates Paid to Opioid Treatment
2 Providers; Appropriation.

3 There is hereby appropriated to the department of health and human services the sum of
4 \$2,000,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026 and the sum of \$2,000,000 for the fiscal year
5 ending June 30, 2027, for the purpose of increasing rates paid to providers of opioid treatment
6 programs. Said amounts are intended to cover the cost of rate increases for both the traditional
7 Medicaid population and granite advantage program population. The department may accept and
8 expend any federal funds available for the purposes of this section without the prior approval of the
9 fiscal committee of the general court. The governor is authorized to draw a warrant for said sums
10 out of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated.

11 6 Effective Date. This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.

SB 244-FN-A- FISCAL NOTE
AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE (AMENDMENT #2025-0776s)

AN ACT relative to expanding access to primary health care services, increasing the size of the health care workforce, and making appropriations therefor.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Estimated State Impact				
	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Revenue Fund(s)</i>	None			
Expenditures*	\$0	\$4,748,500	\$4,998,500	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	General Fund			
Appropriations*	\$0	\$4,748,500	\$4,998,500	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	General Fund			

***Expenditure = Cost of bill**

***Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill**

METHODOLOGY:

This bill directs the Department of Health and Human Services to amend its current contract with the Bi-State Primary Care Association's Recruitment Center for establishment of a "Public-Private Health Care Workforce Recruitment and Retention Hub." The sum of \$580,000 for FY 2026 and the sum of \$580,000 for FY 2027 are appropriated from the general fund to the Department for this purpose. The Department anticipates these funds would directly pass through to the Bi-State Primary Care Association (BSPCA) to implement the terms and deliverables of the proposed contract amendment, and assumes a contract limit would be included to ensure that the terms of the contract would not exceed the funding appropriated for those activities.

The bill further directs the BSPCA recruitment center to enter into sub recipient contracts to facilitate a number of different workforce initiatives to strengthen the infrastructure needed to sustain and transform community-based primary healthcare services. The bill lists the activities that the sub recipients shall engage in and makes appropriations to fund them. The activities and appropriations include:

- Expand and implement BSPCA recruitment center's national outreach and marketing campaign designed to recruit qualified clinicians to New Hampshire. The sums of

\$250,000 for FY 2026 and \$250,000 for FY 2027 are appropriated from the general fund to the Department for this purpose.

- Collaborate with an area health education center for the purpose of creating and expanding graduate level nursing mentoring and precepting programs and financial support for host organizations. The sums of \$300,000 for FY 2026 and \$300,000 for FY 2027 are appropriated from the general fund to the Department for this purpose.
- Collaborate with an area health education center to support the New Hampshire Needs Caregivers Program to promote, recruit, and fund training of up to 500 individuals interested in a career in health care as a licensed nursing assistant. The sums of \$500,000 for FY 2026 and \$750,000 for FY 2027 are appropriated from the general fund to the Department for this purpose.
- Expand student loan repayment opportunities for clinicians with bachelors' degrees employed by non-profit health care organizations in exchange for the agreement to work for the nonprofit health care organization for 24 months for part-time employees to 36 months for full-time employees. The sums of \$300,000 for FY 2026 and \$300,000 for FY 2027 are appropriated from the general fund to the Department for this purpose.
- Collaborate with a family medicine residency program in rural New Hampshire at a teaching health center program to support the training of family medicine residents in the north country. The sums of \$500,000 for FY 2026 and \$500,000 for FY 2027 are appropriated from the general fund to the Department for this purpose.

The bill includes general fund appropriations of \$115,000 in each year of the FY 2026-27 biennium for an Administrator I position to administer the activities listed above. The position will oversee the expanded Recruitment Center contracts and ensure effective coordination, compliance with funding requirements, monitoring of sub-recipient performance, and strategic alignment with workforce development goals. The Department does not anticipate needing additional funds to implement the sub recipient contracts.

The bill includes general fund appropriations of \$203,500 for FY 2026 and \$203,500 FY 2027 for the Bureau of Children's Behavioral Health for training of up to 60 clinicians in each year.

General Fund appropriations of \$2,000,000 in FY 2026 and \$2,000,000 in FY 2027 are included in the bill to increase the rates paid to providers of opioid treatment programs. These amount

are to provide rate increases for both the traditional Medicaid population and the Granite Advantage Program population and will be matched with available federal Medicaid funds.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Department of Health and Human Services