

Draft Health Care Workforce Strategic Plan: Board Review and Feedback

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Act 155 of 2020

- Directed the Director of Health Care Reform to maintain a current health care workforce development strategic plan that continues efforts to ensure that Vermont has the health care workforce necessary to provide care to all Vermont residents. In maintaining the plan, the Director or designee shall consult with an advisory group composed of the following 11 members, at least one of whom shall be a nurse, to develop and maintain the strategic plan:
 - (A) one representative of the GMCB's primary care advisory group;
 - (B) one representative of the Vermont State Colleges;
 - (C) one representative of the Area Health Education Centers' workforce initiative;
 - (D) one representative of federally qualified health centers;
 - (E) one representative of Vermont hospitals;
 - (F) one representative of physicians;
 - (G) one representative of mental health professionals;
 - (H) one representative of dentists;
 - (I) one representative of naturopathic physicians;
 - (J) one representative of home health agencies; and
 - (K) one representative of long-term care facilities.
- The Director or designee shall serve as the chair of the advisory group.

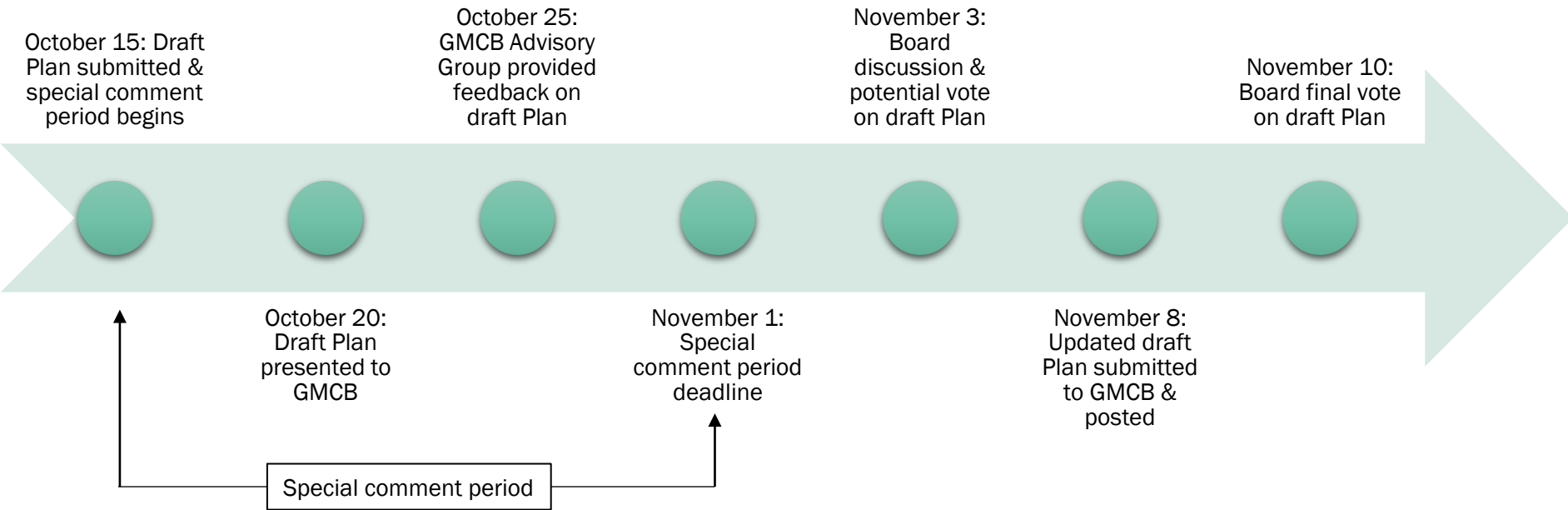
Act 155 of 2020

- The Director of Health Care Reform shall ensure that the strategic plan includes recommendations on how to develop Vermont's health care workforce, including:
 - (1) the current capacity and capacity issues of the health care workforce and delivery system in Vermont, including the shortages of health care professionals, specialty practice areas that regularly face shortages of qualified health care professionals, issues with geographic access to services, and unmet health care needs of Vermonters;
 - (2) how State government, universities and colleges, the State's educational system, entities providing education and training programs related to the health care workforce, and others may develop the resources in the health care workforce and delivery system to educate, recruit, and retain health care professionals to achieve Vermont's health care reform principles and purposes; and
 - (3) assessing the availability of State and federal funds for health care workforce development.

Act 74 of 2021

- Act 74 of 2021, Sec. E.300.2 amended the submission dates in Act 155 of 2020:
 - Draft plan submitted to GMCB on or before **October 15, 2021**, to review and approve within 30 days following receipt
 - On or before **December 1, 2021**, the Director shall provide the updated health care workforce strategic plan to the House Committee on Appropriations, on Health Care and on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committees on Appropriations, on Health and Welfare, and on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Board Review Timeline



Summary of General Advisory Feedback

- A. Add representation from all state nursing programs, a member of the public, and more practicing nurses to the State Interagency Task Team.
- B. Include nursing faculty in scholarship and loan repayment programs.
- C. Incentivize sites, agencies, and preceptors to take UVMC and in-state students.
- D. Include specific language and programs to address retention to prioritize retaining our current workforce.
- E. Look into 6–12-month onboarding programs for APRN residents.
- F. Other than pay, investigate how to retain our nurses. One example: joint appointments between academic nursing programs and facilities.
- G. Create formal process of exit interviews to find out why they are leaving their job to help address retention issues.
- H. Increase number of ultrasonographers, diagnostic imaging services, and echocardiographers as they are in high demand.
- I. Train higher levels of workforce other than MDs. Associates degree in physical therapy can be valuable in getting work done, but Vermont does not have a PT program offering that.
- J. Hire change management experts and support hospital leaders to utilize executive training programs to improve leadership and work environment.
- K. Investigate if we are using current staff effectively and why nurses are retiring early.

Special Comment Period



- The Board received 6 public comments in total; 4 are posted to the Board's website. In summary, the public comments included recommendations to:
 - Add UVM College of Nursing and Health Sciences to list of entities to act on education and training recommendations
 - Add critical access hospitals and employees of FQHCs to funding/tuition reimbursement list
 - Address issues with consultation notes sent to private primary care providers (worsens care and contributes to burnout)
 - Increase scholarship and loan forgiveness dollars
 - Incentives to further education (e.g., scholarships for graduate degrees) and increased mentorship and job support
 - Increase housing to help recruit and retain Vermont workers
 - Promote and fund more training for PAs, NPs and nurses and provide adequate pay & benefits
 - Increase staff at treatment centers

Resources

- [Act 155 of 2020](#)
- [Act 74 of 2021](#)
- [Draft Health Care Workforce Strategic Plan](#)
- [10/20 Board Meeting Presentation](#)
- [10/25 General Advisory Committee Meeting](#)
- [Posted Public Comments submitted to the Board](#)

Board Discussion