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WHA Applauds Gov. Evers, Lawmakers for Enacting Critical Residency Funding Reforms

MADISON, Wis. — In 2013, following the release of the Wisconsin Hospital Association’s *100 New Physicians a Year: An Imperative for Wisconsin* report, WHA lobbied the Governor and lawmakers to provide \$5 million over the biennium to create a new Graduate Medical Education expansion program. Since then, and at WHA’s request, the Legislature has continued to authorize additional funding to meet growing needs for physician training in Wisconsin.

Since its inception over a decade ago, this program has funded the creation of 18 new residency programs across all areas of Wisconsin which produce 60 new physicians each year. To date, the grant program has provided \$36 million in state support to new residency programs or existing programs to expand capacity. The enactment of Senate Bill 643 as 2023 Wisconsin Act 185, led by Senator Romaine Quinn (R-Cameron), Representatives Todd Novak (R-Dodgeville), and Pat Snyder (R-Schofield) will build upon our previous success in expanding the physician workforce in Wisconsin. We know that Wisconsin-raised, Wisconsin-educated, and Wisconsin-trained physicians have an 86% chance of staying in Wisconsin to practice. If they cannot find a residency in Wisconsin, the likelihood they will practice here drops significantly.

“WHA greatly appreciates the leadership from Senator Quinn and Representatives Novak and Snyder in getting Senate Bill 643 to the Governor’s desk,” said WHA President/CEO Eric Borgerding. “This legislation will lead to more physicians practicing in Wisconsin, particularly in rural communities.”

Act 185 removes a per-hospital cap that has prevented some residency programs from expanding further, require DHS to renew funding for previously awarded grant applicants and allow newly created graduate medical education consortia to receive matching grant funds. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services partnered with the Wisconsin Hospital Association in support of Senate Bill 643.

“The Governor has continuously shown his support for this important program in every state budget, most recently proposing to increase funding by nearly \$2 million,” said WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding. “We applaud the Governor for signing Senate Bill 643 into law and thank the Department of Health Services for their great partnership in administering this critical program.”

Wisconsin's state-operated graduate medical education grant program is a national model that other states look to replicate as they develop strategies to recruit and retain physicians. To learn more, visit www.wha.org/HealthCareTopics/G/Graduate-Medical-Education.

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ABOUT THE WISCONSIN HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

WHA advocates on behalf of its 140-plus member hospitals and health systems to enable the delivery of high-quality, high-value care to the citizens of Wisconsin. Learn more at wha.org.