

Legislation Introduced to Help Grow More Physicians for WI

State lawmakers seek to break down unnecessary barriers to expanding GME training opportunities for Wisconsin physicians

In 2013, WHA worked with the governor and the state Legislature to create a grant program that funds and supports additional physician residency training slots in rural Wisconsin.

The "Grow Our Own" Equation



To date, 39 graduate medical education (GME) "Grow Our Own" grants have helped spur a \$45 million investment in Wisconsin GME and train an additional 60 new physicians ready to practice for Wisconsin each and every year.

The decade of experience our state has with GME grants has allowed us to identify opportunities to enhance an already successful program, and at [WHA's urging](#) legislation was introduced this week to do just that. The legislation will allow hospitals that have the capacity to further expand residency slots and will also provide the infrastructure support needed to bring more GME residency opportunities to rural Wisconsin.

[LRB 2762/1 and LRB 4860/1](#), circulated by Reps. Novak and Snyder and Sens. Quinn and Tomczyk, lifts the three-slot (i.e., \$225,000 state funding) cap for hospitals applying for expansion grants, to allow hospitals to apply for more slots if they are willing and able to expand further. The bill also allows for up to \$375,000 per year to be used for GME training consortia programs that overcome the unique challenges faced by rural hospitals in starting and sustaining GME programs. Finally, the bill clarifies the sustaining nature of the grant funding to hospitals that have previously received an award, as long as they continue to qualify for the program and clean up language that may be misinterpreted to only include certain specialties in the program.

GME Defined

Graduate Medical Education (GME)/Residency is the medical training that occurs after receiving a M.D. (Doctor of Medicine) or D.O. (Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine) degree, typically three to seven years at teaching hospitals and their associated ambulatory settings.

"The Wisconsin Department of Health Services and hospitals and GME programs across the state have been making exceptional use of these "Grow Our Own" grant dollars for the past decade," notes WHA Senior Vice President of Workforce and Clinical Practice Ann Zenk. "WHA and our members are appreciative of the efforts of our state legislators to support simple GME reforms that will make a huge impact."

Other Articles in this Issue

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