

## **Nursing Home Strike Teams & Infrastructure Projects (ARPA 2021): Education-based Programs to Engage and Expand the LTC Workforce**

**December 6, 2021**

### **The Teaching Nursing Home Program**

***The Revisiting the Teaching Nursing Home Initiative*** revived a model of care from the 1980s that demonstrated improved clinical outcomes, increased staff retention, and increased nursing student and other health care professionals' interest in nursing home careers. The model establishes a partnership between schools of nursing and nursing homes where the nursing home becomes a "teaching" environment that fosters student, faculty and nursing home staff collaboration to improve care for residents. This model provides opportunities for researchers to experiment with new methods of care, and for students to foster careers in nursing homes and geriatrics. The current Pennsylvania-based initiative aims to improve resident outcomes, enrich the clinical skills of nursing home staff, and promote retention, enhance faculty and student knowledge of nursing home care, and to track organizational and regulatory barriers that impact nursing home care.

Revisiting the Teaching Nursing Home initiative, led by Health Careers Futures, is the implementation of a contemporary version of the Teaching Nursing Home model in three regions of Pennsylvania to demonstrate how enhanced partnerships between academic nursing schools and skilled nursing facilities can improve quality and cost outcomes. The project draws upon existing resources from the [Age-Friendly Health Systems](#) initiative while integrating lessons learned and partnerships created through the COVID-19 pandemic and the original [Teaching Nursing Home](#) model implementation from the 1980s. The Pennsylvania State University College of Nursing, University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing (Penn Nursing) and University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing are each providing faculty and educational support. The Jewish Healthcare Foundation and the Henry L. Hillman Foundation co-fund this initiative.

The current *Teaching Nursing Home* model addresses the nursing home workforce pipeline by empowering nursing students, and other students in clinical placements in the nursing home, to have positive clinical experiences that increase their interest in nursing home careers and foster their understanding of geriatric care. Additionally, the initiative focuses on improving faculty and student attitudes about nursing homes and staff satisfaction.

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### **IHI Learning System Network Experience**

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) and The John A. Hartford Foundation's [COVID-19 Rapid Response Network for Nursing Homes](#) and the [AHRQ ECHO National Nursing Home COVID-19 Action Network](#) (NNHCAN) demonstrated the role that organizations play in building more sustainable quality, safety, and improvement in nursing homes. IHI engaged many experts across the federal, state, and local levels that represented a variety of stakeholders

including health departments, national associations, QIN-QIOs, and universities, who were engaging and supporting nursing homes throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Based on the experiences and lessons learned from these efforts, IHI believes there is an opportunity to build a learning system across and within states, to coordinate efforts that support nursing homes, provide an environment for rapid innovation, and more quickly close the nursing home quality of care and safety gaps.

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**HRSA Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP)**

In 2019, HRSA announced its support for 48 GWEP sites, which are partnerships between educational institutions and clinical systems to transform how primary care is delivered to older adults. The Geriatrics Workforce Expansion Program GWEP's purpose is to improve health outcomes for older adults by developing a healthcare workforce that maximizes patient and family engagement, and by integrating geriatrics and primary care. The goals of this program are: 1) to educate and train the primary care and geriatrics workforce to care for older adults in integrated geriatrics and primary care models, and 2) to partner with community-based organizations (CBOs) to address gaps in healthcare for older adults, promote age-friendly health systems and dementia-friendly communities, and address the social determinants of health.

Within this program, a new COVID-19 Competing Supplement was awarded to 24 sites to create and deliver COVID-19 specific education and training to the nursing home workforce and nursing home residents and their families and caregivers within the context of the Age-Friendly Health Systems framework. This training must address best practices regarding the management and treatment of older adults living in nursing homes, including those living with dementia, those who are at risk of contracting COVID-19 or who are currently ill with COVID-19, their families and caregivers who have been impacted by COVID-19, and families and caregivers of persons who have died of COVID-19.

GWEPs are already working with 13 Departments of Health, AMDA (St Louis and ND), as well as with 16 local chapters of the Alzheimer's Association, 7 independent providers of ARD services, and other community-based organizations to improve health outcomes for nursing home residents who have been impacted by COVID-19.

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