

ADDRESSING THE ALLIED HEALTH WORKFORCE DATA VOID: North Carolina's Innovative Strategy to Confront the Challenge

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Agenda

1. What Motivated this Project?
2. Project Goals and Products
3. Results and Outcomes
4. Challenges
5. How to Improve Workforce Planning Efforts



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The Allied Health Workforce Assessment Projects

- Initially funded by the North Carolina Area Health Education Centers (NC AHEC) Program, now funded by the Duke Endowment
- An assessment of the current need and supply of selected Allied Health professions in North Carolina
- A collaboration among diverse allied health stakeholders including practitioners, educators and employers

Collaborative effort between:



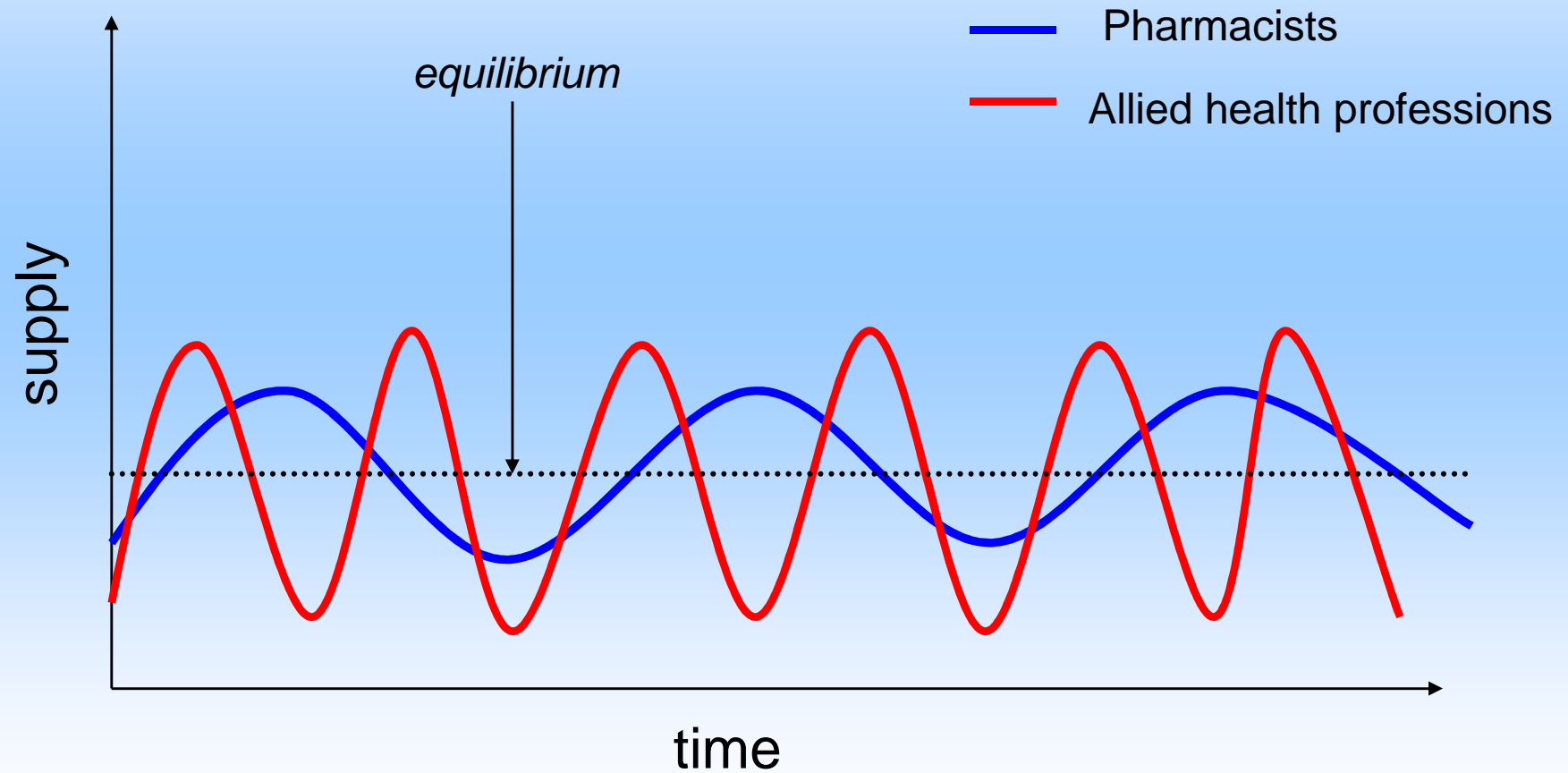
Council for Allied Health
in North Carolina



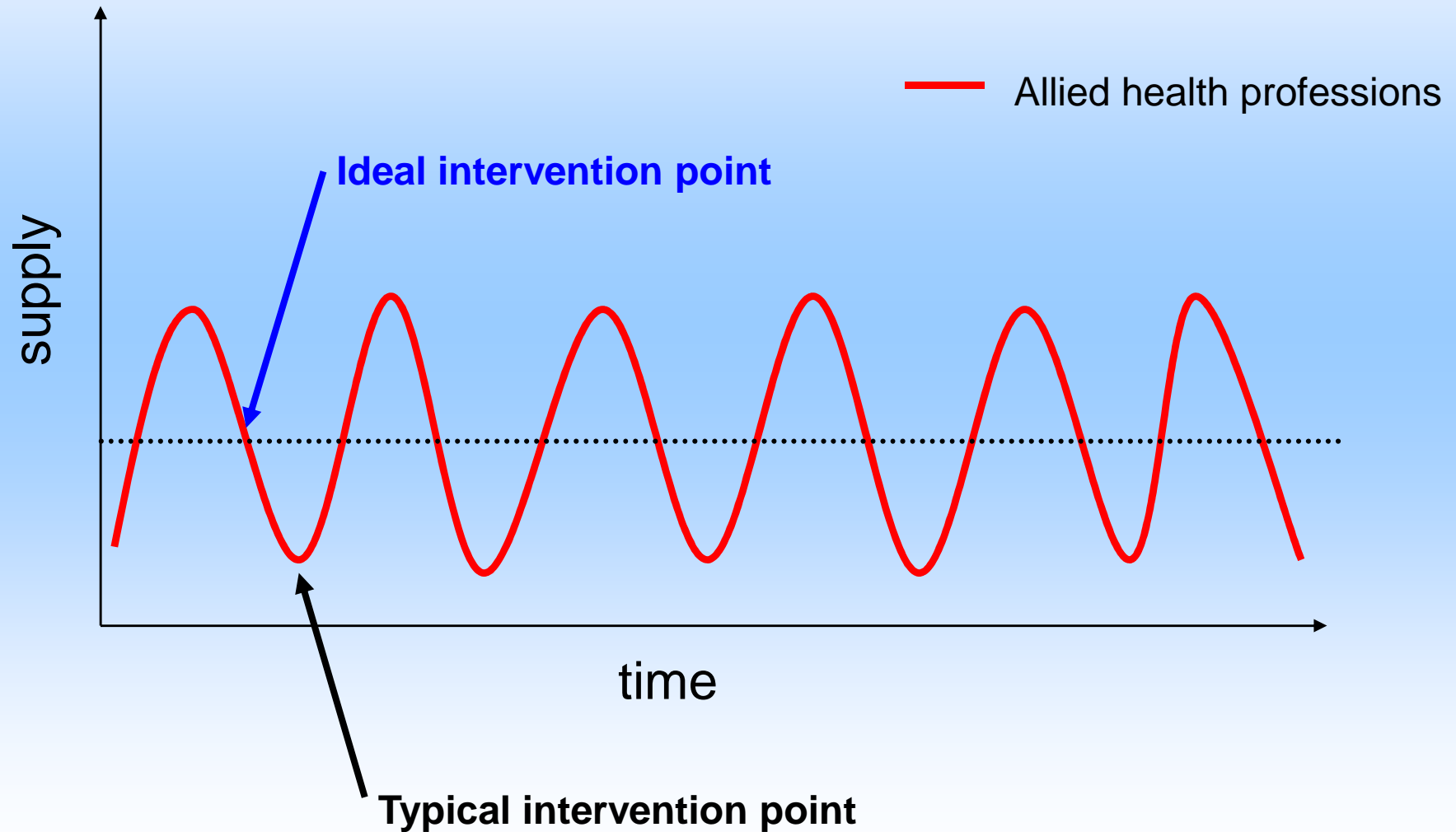
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What Motivated this Project?



Supply Cycle



Project Goals

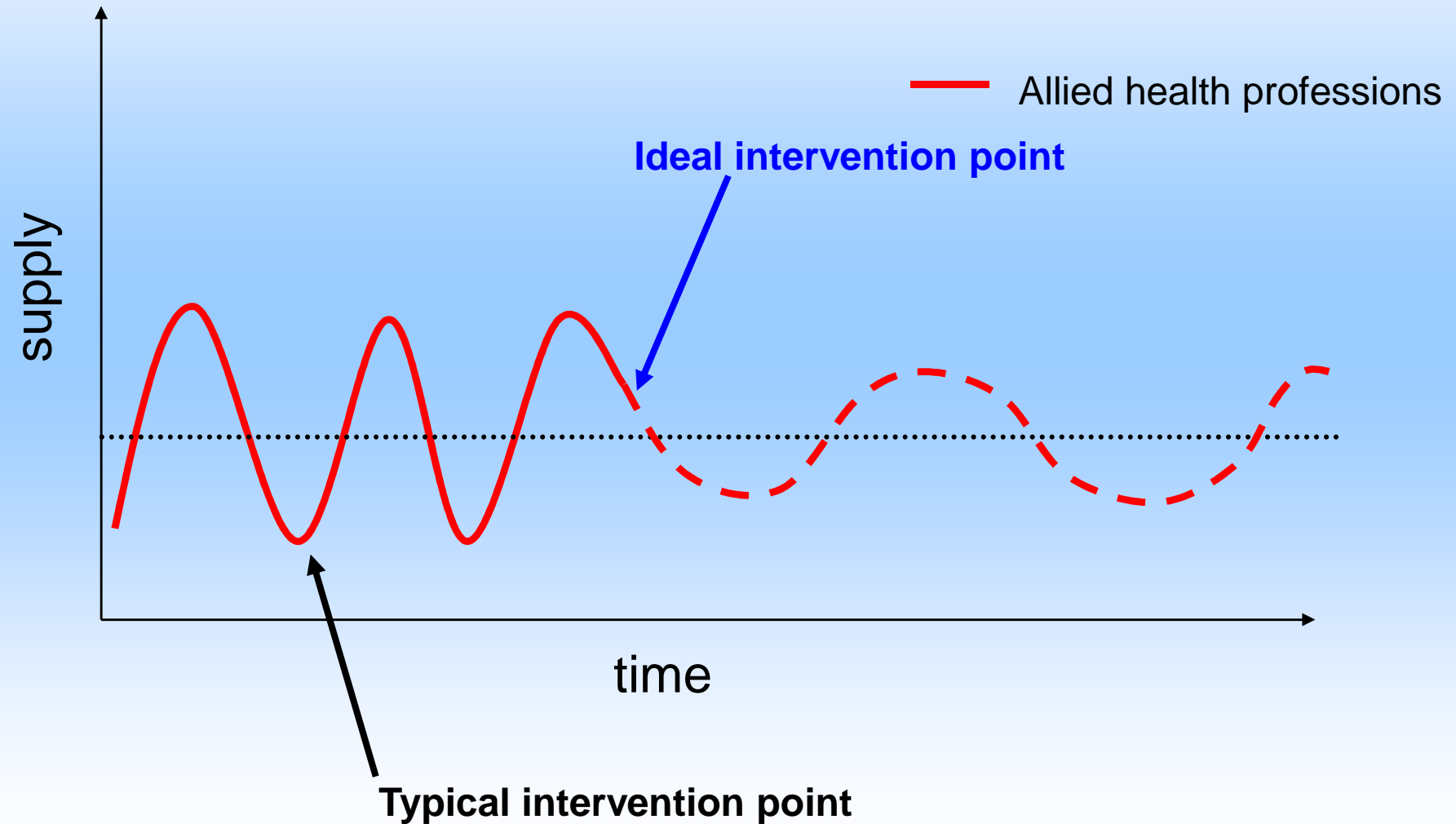
- Not only to identify if profession is *currently* facing a shortage...
- But is the profession likely to face a shortage in the *future* and what can we do now to prevent a shortage?
 - Are more educational programs needed? Do existing programs need to expand enrollments?
 - Does the geographic distribution of educational programs match the needs of the state?
 - Does the diversity/language abilities of the profession match that of North Carolina's citizens?
 - How will new technologies change the demand for certain skills within the profession?
 - Are changes in licensure/certification requirements, scope of practice regulations or practice acts needed?



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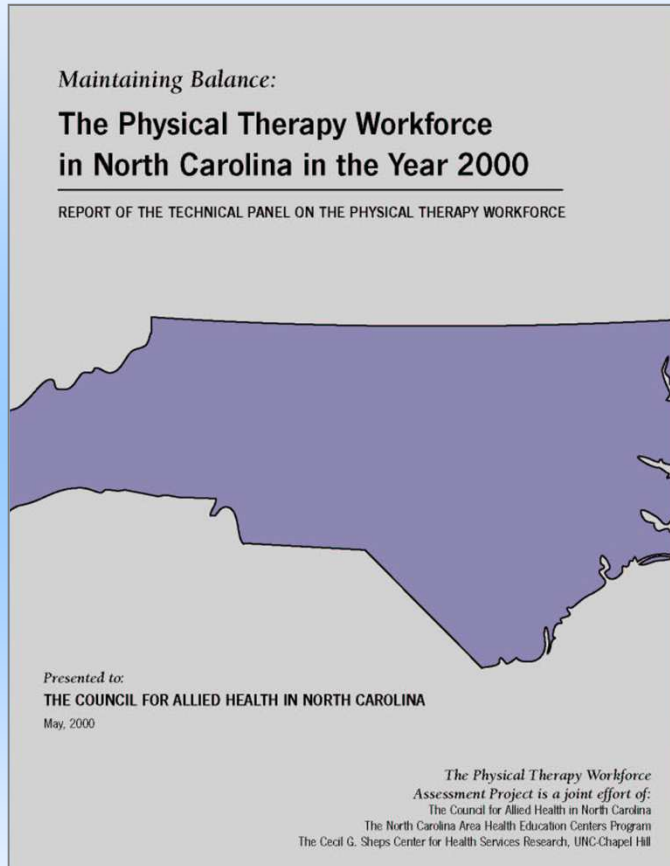
Supply Cycle



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Completed Studies



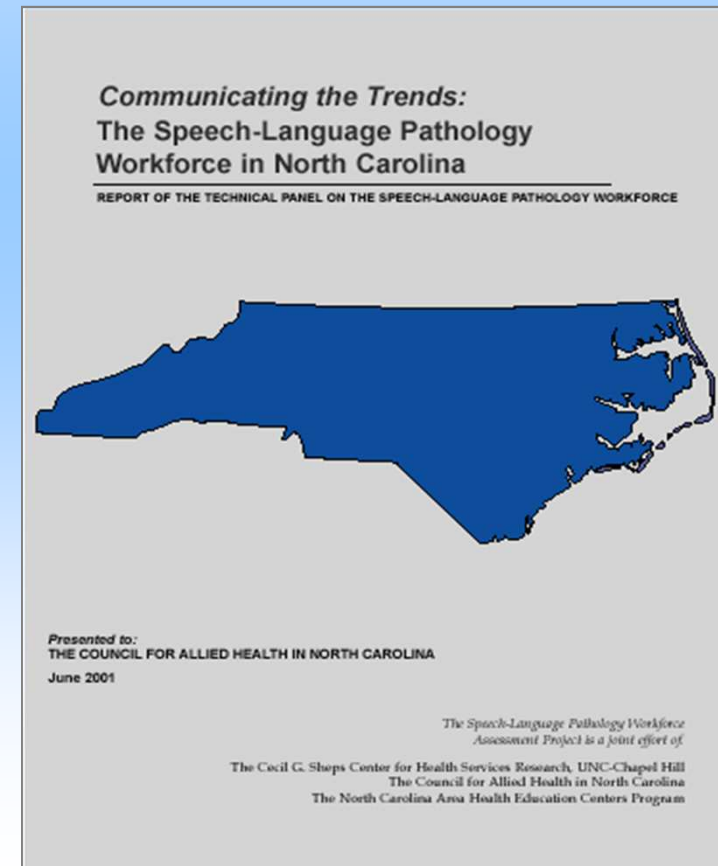
▲ Maintaining Balance: The Physical Therapy Workforce in North Carolina (2000)



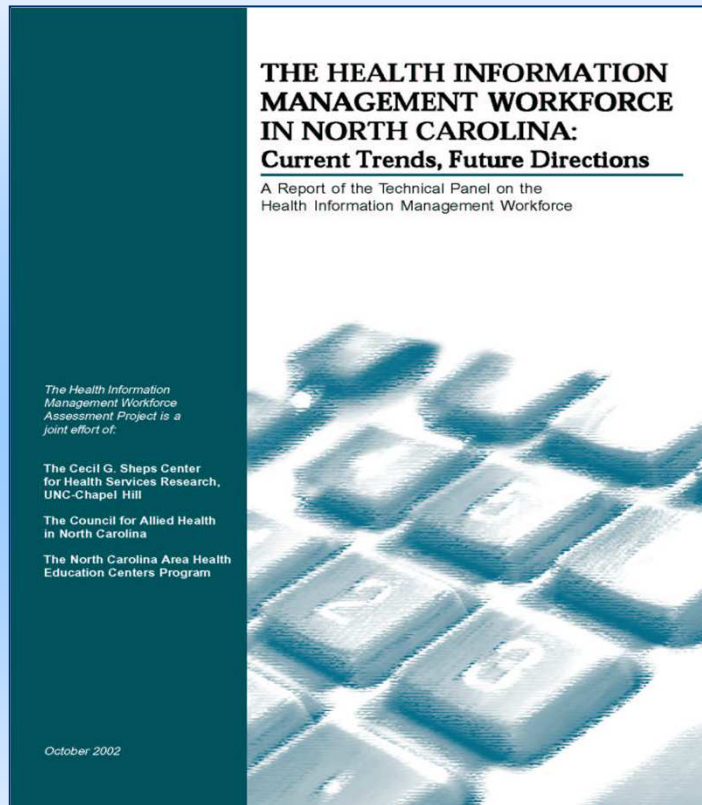
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Communicating the Trends: The Speech-Language Pathology Workforce in North Carolina (2001) ▼

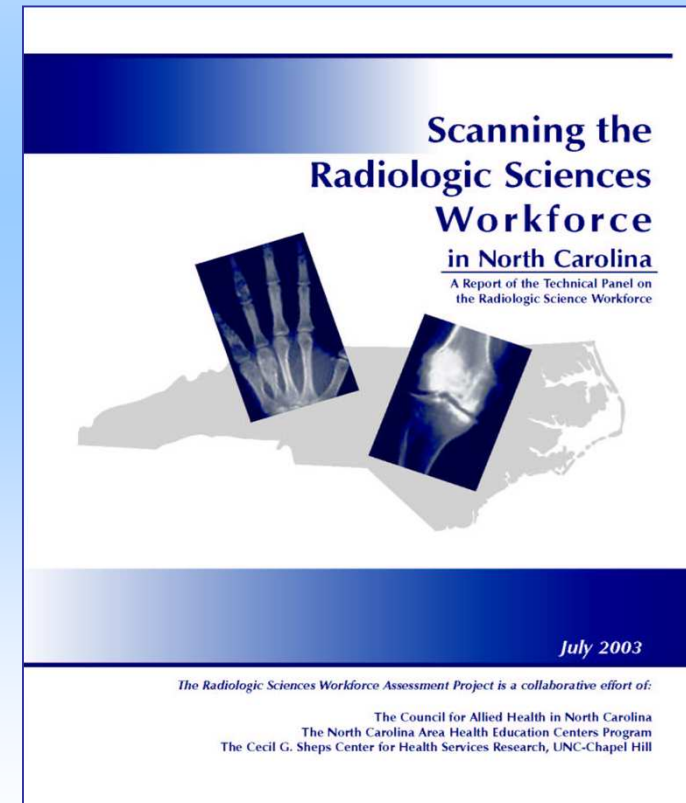


Completed Studies



▲ The Health Information Management Workforce in North Carolina: Current Trends, Future Directions (2002)

Scanning the Radiologic Sciences Workforce in North Carolina (2003) ▼



Types of Recommendations from the Reports

- **Supply and Distribution**
 - Shortage or poor distribution
- **Education**
 - Number, type and location of programs
 - Recruitment/retention of students
 - Faculty recruitment/retention
- **Workforce Planning**
 - Collaboration between educators and employers
 - Planning regions
- **Diversity of the Workforce**
 - Gender, race, ethnicity and language abilities
- **Data Collection and Workforce Surveillance**
 - Development or improvement of databases



Results and Outcomes of the Reports: **Better Data for Planning**

Data, recommendations and policy issues identified from the project have been used by:

- **The UNC Board of Governors and the North Carolina Community College System**
 - **In educational program planning efforts and initiatives**
- **AHECs and Regional Workforce Planning Groups**
 - **In collaborative workforce planning initiatives involving educators, employers, local workforce development boards**
 - **For mid- to long-term educational and workforce planning**
 - **In efforts to show need and secure grant funding**



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Results and Outcomes of the Reports: **Increased Communication**

Project Uses Panel Process to Derive Recommendations **The Panel Process Fosters:**

- **Communication between diverse group of individuals representing educators, employers, practitioners, and various professional associations.**
- **Buy-in to recommendations because panel is representative of profession**

Project provides objective information for discussions of difficult professional issues and has facilitated communication among disparate groups:

- **Between competing HIM credentialing organizations about development of minimum educational qualifications**
- **Between SLP licensure board and school employers about differences in licensing requirements**



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Results and Outcomes of the Reports: **Increased Attention to Allied Health Workforce Issues**

■ **Press**

- **Brought exposure to the allied health professions**
- **Featured in local, state and national publications (newspapers, magazines, newsletters)**

■ **Technical Assistance**

- **To other states and/or organizations to assess allied health trends**



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***Implementation Challenges:* The news is not always what the profession wants to hear**

The professions are excited and anxious to have their allied health profession assessed but they may have difficulty:

- **Accepting/Believing the Data**
 - May contradict widely held opinions (i.e. 28% of hospital HIM staff are not credentialed)
 - May reveal things the profession does not want to hear/not ready to hear (i.e. underutilization of assistive personnel)
- **Acknowledging the non-traditional workforce and educational programs**
 - The non-credentialed workforce (i.e. the nurse who also codes)
 - The non-traditional educational paths (i.e. continuing education, internet courses, on-the-job training)



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***Implementation Challenges:* Roadblocks Encountered in Translation Research into Policy**

Most recommendations have not been implemented. Passing the baton from research to implementation has been difficult.

Why?

- **Lack of an organizational infrastructure to interpret, and act on, recommendations**
- **Lack of champion change agent**
- **Limited sense of common outlook and/or desire to change status quo**
- **Imbalance of power**
- **Limited outcomes data**
- **Limited coordination among educators and employers for long-term planning**



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How Can Workforce Planning Efforts Improve?

- **Better Data Collection and Analysis**
- **Develop, Nurture and Sustain Solid Partnerships**
 - With all members of the workforce, not just those represented by a professional association (*acknowledging and identifying the non-credentialed*)
 - With competing credentialing/certifying organizations
 - With assistive personnel or other professions
 - With employers to solve local/regional/state workforce shortages



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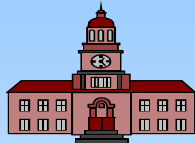
Unit of Analysis for Planning



- Hospital



- Neighboring hospitals



- Regional planning among educational programs and health care facilities



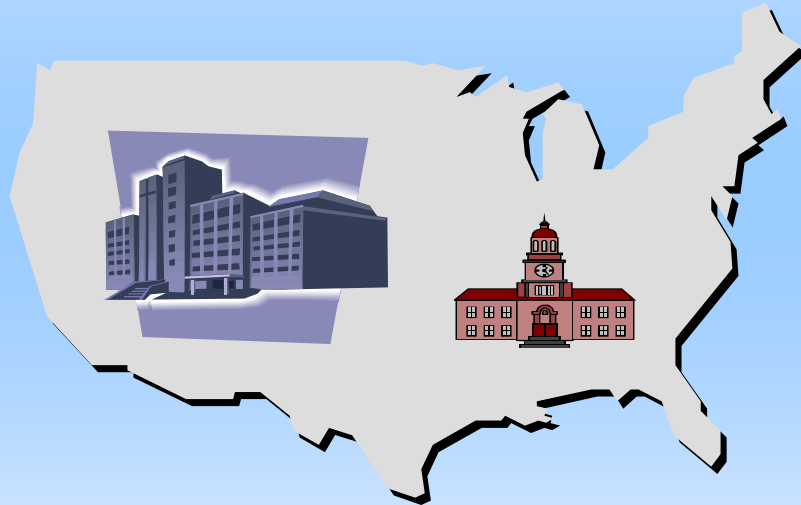
- State-wide/provincial planning efforts



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Unit of Analysis for Planning



- National
(international?)
allied health
workforce planning?



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For More Information

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