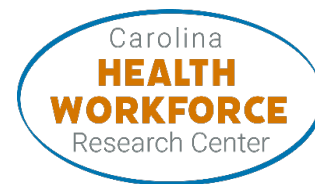


Health Care Workforce Playbooks and the COVID-19 Pandemic

A Health Workforce Policy Paper



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Abstract

- ◆ **Background:** The COVID-19 pandemic thrust healthcare workers across the nation into rapidly changing care environments without adequate support or sufficient training tools for most. The lack of a systematic approach to workforce planning necessary to optimally deploy healthcare human resources during the pandemic endangered these workers and their families as well as their communities, healthcare systems, and patients.
- ◆ **Objective:** To develop guidelines for training and information on accessing training resources to “surge” healthcare workforce professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. These documents are called “Playbooks” and are meant to provide health care systems, states, the federal government and other stakeholders with updated, state-of-the-art resources to promote local flexibility to respond to workforce challenges and shortages.
- ◆ **Methods** The development of these Playbooks was informed by the principles of patient-centered care where the individual’s health needs and goals drive all health care decisions (NEJM Catalyst 2017). The team used expert advice from a range of informants: clinicians, policy makers, and administrators to develop the playbook guideline. In these playbooks, we describe how the targeted skillsets of the healthcare workforce can be matched to patients’ needs and goals no matter who delivers the care or support.
- ◆ **Results & discussion:** The Playbooks for five domains of care are accessible via <https://www.ncahec.net/covid-19/training-and-literature-for-health-care-professionals/workforce-surge-planning-playbooks/>. They cover: 1. Home-Based Care, 2. Ambulatory Care, 3. Inpatient medical care, 4. Long-Term Care., and 5. Critical Care. Two of the Playbooks are supplemented by a free-standing “checklist” to further assist in planning. These playbooks are available via the NC AHEC website and it is our intention to modify them as needed. The uptake of the playbooks will be assessed in follow-up communications with users.
- ◆ **Policy Implications:** The long-term impact of COVID-19 on the U.S. healthcare workforce will be broad and have enduring effects. The development of these playbooks responds to the specific needs of the COVID-19 pandemic but they can be used in future crises that pressurize the health care workforce and require policy adaptations to deploy and support the healthcare workforce.

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