

HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius has announced the availability of nearly \$200 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to support student loan repayments for primary care medical, dental and mental health clinicians who want to work at National Health Service Corps (NHSC) sites. In exchange for the loan repayments, clinicians serve for two years with the Corps.

The new funds are expected to double the number of Corps clinicians and provide 3,300 awards to clinicians that serve in health centers, rural health clinics and other health care facilities that care for uninsured and underserved people.

Am I Eligible?

- U.S. citizen or national [+]
- Trained and credentialed in an eligible primary care discipline:
 - Allopathic (MD) or Osteopathic (DO) Physician [+]
 - Primary Care Nurse Practitioner [+]
 - Certified Nurse-Midwife [+]
 - Primary Care Physician Assistant [+]
 - Dentist [+]
 - Dental Hygienist [+]
 - Health Service Psychologist [+]
 - Licensed Clinical Social Worker [+]
 - Psychiatric Nurse Specialist [+]
 - Marriage and Family Therapist [+]
 - Licensed Professional Counselor [+]

What is the Service Commitment?

National Health Service Corps loan repayors are committed to serve two years at an approved site in a Health Professional Shortage Area.

You can apply if you are already working at an approved site or seeking employment at a site that is either approved or meets site eligibility requirements and plans to become approved by applying for Recruitment and Retention Assistance (for more information, see [Communities](#)).

Many types of health care facilities are approved NHSC sites. About half of NHSC clinicians fulfill their service commitment at Federally-supported health centers. Health center clinicians can be granted medical malpractice liability protection through the Federal Tort Claims Act.

Other types of NHSC approved sites include rural health clinics, Indian Health Service clinics, public health department clinics, hospital-affiliated primary care practices, managed care networks, prisons, and U.S. Immigration, Customs & Enforcement sites.

Loan repayors negotiate their salaries with the employing site, but the NHSC requires that they be paid at least as much as they would in an equivalent Federal civil service position. In some cases, loan repayors fulfill their service commitment in their own or an established private practice in a Health Professional Shortage Area. These arrangements must be approved by the NHSC and scholars working in them are not protected by the NHSC minimum salary requirement. (for more information, see [Private Practice](#)).

All NHSC approved sites accept Medicare, Medicaid and provide services on a sliding fee scale or other method that enables poor and uninsured patients to receive care whether or not they are insured or able to pay.

Sites that have applied to and been approved by the NHSC post vacancies on [NHSC Job Opportunities](#), which currently lists more than 7,000 jobs across the U.S.

Loan Repayors fulfill their service commitments by providing full time clinical care (at least 40 hours each week), with at least 32 of those hours in the ambulatory care setting. (Except obstetricians/gynecologists, certified nurse-midwives, and family practitioners who practice obstetrics on a regular basis, who must work in outpatient clinical practice at least 21 hours per week with delivery and other clinical hospital-based duties making up the remaining 19 hours).

For behavioral and mental health providers, at least 21 hours of the 40 hours per week must be spent providing direct patient counseling during normally scheduled office hours in an ambulatory outpatient care setting in the office(s) specified in the Community Site Information Form or on the Practice Agreement. The remaining hours must be spent providing clinical services in alternative settings, or performing practice-related administrative activities. Administrative activities may not exceed 8 hours per week.

Additional information is available at <http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/>