

NC Center on the Workforce for Health

Summary of Meeting

7/13/22

Welcome

From NC Department of Commerce Secretary, Machel Sanders:

- Meeting challenges for health care workforce is paramount to NC and a priority of the NC Department of Commerce.
- Work of the Center is necessary to the state's health and is necessary now. Thanks for everyone's work with the Center to develop today's and tomorrow's health workforce.
- Center fits with "First in Talent: Strategic Economic Development Plan for the State of North Carolina" – <https://www.nccommerce.com/documents/first-talent-strategic-economic-development-plan-state-north-carolina>

Review of 4/4 Summary and Findings

See PowerPoint slides. Participants agreed that the summary was accurate and reflected desired next steps for the Center.

NC Center Pillars: Access, Synthesis, and Action

See PowerPoint Slides

- Access website with summaries of major reports, initiatives, and policies that have a strong evidence base, as well as a user-friendly data repository with NC workforce statistics, data visualizations, and downloadable data files
- Synthesis A variety of in-person and virtual learning opportunities, both short and longer-term, that connect people and ideas for thoughtful reflection and action planning.
- Action Convening cross-organizational teams for collective strategy
- When applied to Nursing Retention Case Study, the Center would:
 - Provide access to data – multiple resources currently available; best practices and bright lights for resolving challenges; also access to national reports to see bigger picture.
 - Help synthesize what the data is telling us – webinar with NC and US experts; brief-term meetings to clarify org's concerns; develop an arm that focuses on nursing
 - Act by convening leaders to identify consensus on where state should invest public funds; help secure funding for organizations to implement best practices; staff serve as "coach" to communities interested in replication

Small Group Discussion

Four groups discussed the following questions: a composite summary of the responses is included after each question.

Discussion Questions:

- Do the potential Center activities listed (both general and in the nursing example) strike you as on the right track?
 - Love leading with data and letting data tell the story.
 - Thought needs to lead to action.
 - The bully-pulpit function is useful.
 - Be careful not to be too academic.
 - Workforce shortages and oversaturation need to be kept in balance.
 - Important to support cross-sector collaboration.
 - Data needs to drill down to address local concerns about specific professions.
 - Capacity to switch between local and policy at a macro level is very important.
 - Setting the scope of problems to tackle is critical; needs to highlight quick action and response.
 - Center can help bring together multiple health professionals and groups that don't view the problem in the same way.
 - Idea of collaborating to enhance participants better addressing their own issues is useful.
 - "Advocacy" (information sharing) on behalf of workforce needs, including to non-traditional bodies (e.g., NC Works)
- What other potential activities are missing?
 - Pay attention to multiple health related professions, even those not necessarily represented, for example dental technicians.
 - Needs more clarity about the governance of the center
 - A comprehensive, user-friendly, website would be invaluable.
 - Identify future issues, opportunities, and needs.
 - Need a way of gaining insight from health care workers with situational awareness of local workforce issues.
 - Insight about compensating, retaining, and recruiting faculty is needed.
 - Help stakeholders respond to funding opportunities.
 - Need to add a pillar around marketing/dissemination/public awareness, listening
 - A library presence would be useful.
 - A listening mechanism that can pay attention to qualitative feedback.
- What activities and services of the Center would be most useful to your organization, to your profession, and/or to NC health ecosystem as a whole? Which would you be most likely to use?
 - Access and synthesis functions will be very helpful
 - Analysis to support local needs and activities.
 - Strategies to build networks of support and potentially advocacy.
 - Stakeholder outreach and support.
 - Opportunities to participate in pilot efforts, sharing data, and participating in learning collaboratives.

- Paying attention to career progression and connection with jobs that are high-demand and pay a living wage.
- Having a venue to focus on health policies that need to change.
- What are your thoughts on how Center users and participants could build on Center work additional action?
 - Selecting the data and projects to start is critical.
 - Need to be selective and not try to take on too much initially. “Not no, but not now.”
 - Scoping needs to be informed by what the future looks like.

Large Group Discussion

There was a reporting of the small group discussions and then all participants responded to the following discussion prompts:

- Do these pillars best serve the potential topic areas the Center will tackle?
- Is there anything you would add, take away, or revise? Any new pillars?
- What other pressing issues could be served well by this model?
- What other organizations (in North Carolina or elsewhere) do any or all of this type of work well? What makes them successful?

Summary of the discussion:

- Make sure there is some legislative power, make sure pillars aren't too academic, pull in insights as part of the synthesis pillar -- get to the “so what.”
- Make sure local needs are reflected, not just shortages it's oversaturation – want to align supply and demand.
- What is most useful is the data, learning collaboratives very important, lots of discussion of advocacy, identifying cross-sector benefits
- Importance of scoping the Center and want to weigh interest of multiple stakeholders that don't necessarily weigh the problem the same way, importance of data to help inform the scope, may need to add a pillar around the problem area itself.
- Articulation of what the problems are, function of center would be great if it could help organizations understand potential funding opportunities, thought is great – but needs to lead to action
- The Center helps organizational leaders to take full plates and focus individual and org efforts more efficiently.
- Add pillar around partnerships/marketing/bully pulpit, data and library sounds awesome – only works if it's well done.
- Feel strongly that we need a listening mechanism. Can't be just the data, need to hear what people are experiencing in community and what they are living with. Qualitative and quantitative together would bring level of credibility and authenticity. Bi-directional feedback from State and local.
- Need for dentists and dental assistance in certain areas, knowing where you can go to talk to the groups to try to spread the workforce around. Issue of maldistribution could be focus area.

- Faculty salaries and faculty recruitment and retention could be other areas of focus.
- My Future NC is trying to look at those jobs that can sustain families, have high demand, and have growth. Some of our non-credential areas that is an issue.

Learning from Each Other

At each meeting we will take time for participants to share their own successes and challenges with each other.

- In response to the respiratory therapy shortage in eastern NC, Vidant (now ECU Health) has been organizing 8 hospitals and talking to area schools to talk about respiratory therapy and the need for workforce.
- In AHEC's pipeline work, they are working to convey that "you can have a great career in health care, and we can help you find your way into that profession."
- Community college budget for marketing health science programs is very little – the legislature might allocate funds for high need professions
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- Nursing schools pairing students with home health and hospice orgs:
<https://www.ncbon.com/news-publications-statistics-publications-current-nursing-bulletin>

Next Steps

- Putting into place strategies around how to pull in resources.
- Next meeting will be on October 13 from 1:30-3:30pm; we will spend more time talking about the Center with more definition.
- Subtext of urgency – The Center needs to tie on one or two projects that can show the instrumental value of Center and show action.
- We will follow up with a summary of this meeting.
- Please feel free to drop a note to any member of the committee. We are interested in working with you.