



NATIONAL  
RURAL HEALTH  
RESOURCE CENTER

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# Midwest Retention Toolkit 2012

## Indiana, Minnesota, Wisconsin

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# Purpose

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The National Rural Health Resource Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to sustaining and improving health care in rural communities. As the nation's leading technical assistance and knowledge center in rural health, The Center focuses on five core areas:

- Performance Improvement
- Health Information Technology
- Recruitment & Retention
- Community Health Assessments
- Networking



# Midwest Retention Toolkit

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- Created by:
  - The National Rural Health Resource Center
  - The National Rural Recruitment and Retention Network (3RNet)
- Under contracts with:
  - Indiana State Department of Health
  - Minnesota Department of Health, Office of Rural Health and Primary Care
  - Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Primary Care Office



# National Health Service Corps

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- In 2011 NHSC expanded Scholarships and Loan repayment programs to 10,000 providers
- NHSC supports primary care and psychiatric physicians, physician assistants, advanced practice nurses, mental health providers, dentists and dental hygienists
- Funding provided to 36 state Primary Care Organizations to support and track retention of NHSC providers



# Midwest Retention Toolkit

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- Retention Issues
- Retention Plan
- Retention Elements
  - Orientation
  - Practice Feedback and Satisfaction Surveys
  - Recognition Activities
  - Mentor Programs
  - Other Retention Tools
- Resources



# Retention Toolkit Samples

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- Worksheets
- Surveys
- Timelines
- Checklists
- Presentations
- Interviews



## Retention Challenges

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- Lack of individual clinic staff responsibility for retention
- Limited salary and benefit resources
- Retaining providers after completion of their loan repayment obligation
- Limited partner/spouse employment opportunities



## Retention Solutions

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- Affiliations with local Universities to offer continuing education and professional networking
- Creating retention committees
- Conducting satisfaction surveys
- Developing provider recognition efforts, including a “Provider of the Year” award selected by peers





# Health Care Provider Retention Survey

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- 123 health care providers surveyed; 48% response
- 30% mental health, 26% advanced practice nurses, 16% dentists, 12% physicians, 9% physician assistants
- 52% rural and 48% urban
- 55% in practice 2-3 years and 38% over 4 years
- Majority planned to stay in the practice following obligation; 26% not sure they would stay



# Health Care Provider Retention Survey

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- Professional relationships with partners and colleagues
- Workload/call schedule
- Compensation/benefits
- Community/lifestyle



# Health Care Provider Retention Survey

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- Recognition activities
- Community integration
- Participation in clinic/hospital decision making
- Less than 30% of the sites offered these activities



## Top 10 Retention Factors

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- Availability of relief coverage
- Quality of schools
- Compatibility with others in health care
- Availability of quality housing
- Availability of practice partners and specialists



## Top 10 Retention Factors

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- Income potential
- Employment for spouse/partner
- Help with retiring education loans
- Availability of continuing education
- Opportunity to be a preceptor



# Retention Plan Components

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- Goals, timeline and person accountable
- Committee or those part of the plan
- Resources (materials, community and health care contacts and budget)
- Elements of Retention
- Evaluation (outcome measures)



# Orientation

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- Welcoming and orient the new provider and spouse/partner to the health care community and the broader community
- Arrange opportunities for the provider to “check-in”
- Matching a mentor of “buddy” to the provider for the first year
- Address concerns or issues
- Recognize the provider for service
- Satisfy compensation, benefits and education needs as appropriate



## Provider Feedback and Satisfaction Surveys

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- Build communication
- Assess potential retention issues
  - Understanding of organizational mission
  - Benefits and compensation
  - Workload
  - Technology
- Conduct annually by a neutral party
- Confidential
- Address issues identified from the survey





## Recognition Events

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- Years of service
- Practice research, presentations, and publications
- Community or hospital service
- Teaching and precepting students
- Achieving Meaningful Use
- Specialty certification
- Patient satisfaction survey results



# Mentor Program for New Provider

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- Monthly lunch or breakfast with a staff member or colleague
- Discuss retention factors
- Obtain feedback and follow-up on issues
- Use same process with the spouse/partner
- Discuss acceptance, quality of work environment, community integration



## Other Retention Tools

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- Exit interviews
  - Determine reasons for leaving
  - Gain perspective on the practice and community
- Financial retention samples



## National and State Resources

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- Initial recruitment
- Clinical and management support
- Academic linkages
- Professional development and continuing education
- Family ties and support
- Teaching/supervision opportunities



# Minnesota Technical Assistance

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- Midwest Retention Toolkit Webinar
- Thursday, October 4, 9:30 -10:30 am
- Available to NHSC sites, health care administrators, CEOs, recruiters
- Toolkit distributed to sites
- Follow-up technical assistance through MN AHEC



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