



POLICY FORUM

When 'Heal Thyself' Is Not Enough

Introduction

The *North Carolina Medical Journal* periodically publishes an update on workforce issues. We include data and trends, and—as a journal of discussion and public policy—invite a response to the rapidly changing demographics and needs of our rapidly changing state.

This issue is different.

This time, we describe an urgency not simply explained by changing demographics, emerging and existing health conditions, and an inadequate number of trainees in the pipeline. This is an urgency born of pandemic stress and provider distress, and an urgency born of opportunity. Health care, our state's largest employer, is challenged more than ever to engage, interest, and attract new students and to recruit and retain current staff to meet existing—much less future—demand.

Our authors not only describe a crisis that could still worsen but suggest solutions to reverse our losses, gain on our gaps, and prepare a health care workforce that is desperately needed by not simply training new workers, but supporting them and the ones we already have. Our authors describe the social determinants of the health of our health care workforce, including child care, personal time off, and attention to the physical and mental health and well-being of the healers.

Read on. Attend. NCMJ

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