



Continuing Education - Health Systems

# New Mexico's Health Profession Shortage and Medically Underserved Areas

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Continuing Education - Health Systems

## Primer - Health Professions Shortage Areas (HPSA)

Daniel Derksen, MD updated 08/12/07

- HPSA - Health Professions Shortage Areas - federal designation that affects funding for 34 federal programs designed to improve access to health services. There are primary care, mental health & dental HPSA designations. Counties can be all or partial (only certain zip codes) HPSA.
- Primary care HPSA: >3000 pop. to 1.0 FTE Primary Care Physician (2/3 rural areas qualify), % < poverty, infant mortality, travel time to available services
- U.S. - 25% of counties are HPSAs, 20% U.S. pop. in HPSA counties
- NM 30/33 counties (90%) HPSA designations



- Automatic facility HPSA scoring for all Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) and Rural Health Clinics (RHC) done for those that provide access to care regardless of ability to pay.
- Scoring Methodology: four factors rated from 1 (lowest need) to 5 (highest need)- pop to primary care physician ratio, % pop below 100% FPL, infant mortality rate or low birth weight rate (higher score), travel time or distance to nearest available source of care (higher score). Max score would be 20 = highest need.



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- Go to  
<http://hpsafind.hrsa.gov/HPSASearch.aspx>
- Choose New Mexico, Choose Hidalgo County
- Choose Discipline: Primary Care
- Press on Show me the HPSAs
- Hidalgo County is a HPSA, current PCP fte = 0.8, # physicians short = 1.0 fte, HPSA score = 15/20.



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<http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/shortage/muaguide.htm>

- MUA - Medically Underserved Areas - federal designation based on parameters including % pop. below poverty.
- Index of medical underservice (IMU) - is a scale from 0 (completely underserved) to 100 (best served). An  $IMU < 62 = MUA$ .
- Like HPSA designations, MUA can be full county, or partial, based on census tracts, travel time, census county divisions
- Factors used include % pop below poverty, %  $\geq 65$  y.o., infant mortality rate, ratio fte PCP per 1000 pop. These are weighted based on a table available on the web site.

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- 30/33 NM counties - moderate to severe shortage of health professionals (federally defined: HPSA = health profession shortage areas, MUA = medically underserved areas). 32/33 NM counties all or partial county HPSA or MUA!!!
- Most of NM's rural patients can't access primary care, mental health, dental or specialty services



# Geographic Distribution of Physicians in the U.S. - Interventions

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- 1970 - Funding for National Health Service Corps, Community & Migrant Health Centers
- 1973 - Medically Underserved Areas (MUA) arose in the HMO Act of 1973 to promote rural HMOs
- 1997 - Balanced Budget Act - phased out cost based reimbursement of community health centers (federal responsibility) and rural health clinics (state responsibility)
- 2005 - HPSA Medicare Bonus Payment to Rural Physicians



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- Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) - includes FDA, NIH, HRSA (Health Resources & Services Administration)
- HRSA - oversees Bureaus of Primary Care and Health Professions; Maternal & Child Health
- HPSA designation necessary for National Health Service Corps recruitment assistance
- MUA designation necessary for community health center funding (sec. 330 Public Health Svc. Act) -



## Changing HPSA and MUA Designations Affects Funding for:

- National Health Service Corps
- Federally Qualified Health Centers
- Cost-based reimbursement to Rural Health Clinics
- Allocation of Health Professional Education and Training Grant Programs
- Indian Health Professions Scholarship Grants
- Medicare HPSA bonus payments to physicians in underserved areas
- Eligibility for Medicare telehealth reimbursement



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- 1 Rational Service Area - map, travel times, composition of population, census tracts, counties
- 2 Population Count - Census Bureau or State pop. Estimates; Practitioner Count - #FTE non-Federal practitioners in the area; >3000 pop:1 FTE MD  
3000 patients to one PCP is the estimated capacity per FTE - very ambitious (3000 pts X 3 to 5 visits per year = 9,000-15,000visits/yr)
- 3 Contiguous Resources - excessively distant (>30 min. travel time for primary care, 40 min for dental and mental health); high needs populations - 30% pop <200% poverty



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- 1 Index of Medical Underservice (IMU) - scale from 0 to 100 - An IMU of  $< 62.0$  receives MUA designation.
- 2 Service Area - county or groups of counties, minor civil divisions, census county divisions, pop ctrs within 30 miles of each other, metro census tracts
- 3 Data - population, %pop $<200\%$  poverty, % $>65$ yo, infant mortality rate,% minority pop.,current FTE PCP in area