

Oregon Nursing Critical Shortage Areas Defined for the Purpose of Selection of Participants for the Oregon Nursing Services Program

A law was passed during the 2001 Oregon Legislative Session to establish a new Nursing Services Program. This program will be administered by the Oregon Student Assistance Commission to provide loan repayments on behalf of registered nurses who agree to practice in nursing-critical shortage areas.

The law provides that the Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN) shall annually identify, in consultation with the Office of Rural Health, those areas considered "nursing-critical shortage areas."

The OSBN acknowledges that "critical nursing shortage areas" exist in all areas of Oregon. However, for the purposes of defining the term for Senate Bill 331, the definition is in relation to frontier and rural areas of the state. In turn the shortages in these areas, as well as the difficulty in recruitment, may be more acute depending on practice setting (locality) and practice specialty. For the purposes of Oregon Nursing Services Program, the OSBN believes the following localities and practice specialties, in rank order, are as follows:

Priority 1

Frontier Counties (Baker, Crook, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Lake, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Wallowa and Wheeler)

- 1) Public Health - County Public Health and Outpatient Health District Clinics
- 2) Acute Care
- 3) Nursing Education, including Community Colleges and Universities
- 4) Long-Term Care
- 5) Any Other

Priority 2

Rural Counties (Clatsop, Columbia, Coos, Curry, Douglas, Hood River, Jefferson, Josephine, Klamath, Lincoln, Polk, Tillamook, Umatilla, Union, Wasco and Yamhill)

- 1) Public Health - County Public Health and Outpatient Health District Clinics
- 2) Acute Care
- 3) Nursing Education, including Community Colleges and Universities
- 4) Long-Term Care
- 5) Any Other

Priority 3

Areas of Benton, Clackamas, Deschutes, Jackson, Lane, Linn, Marion, Multnomah and Washington Counties that are 40 or more miles outside a Metropolitan Statistical Area.

- 1) Public Health – County Public Health and Outpatient Health District Clinics
- 2) Acute Care
- 3) Nursing Education, including Community Colleges and Universities
- 4) Long-Term care
- 5) Any Other

The Oregon Student Assistance Commission, in the selection of participants for the Oregon Nursing Services Program, will give first priority to those registered nurse applicants who most closely match the nursing critical shortage areas as ranked in the list above, (e.g. first priority in selection of participants will be to a registered nurse who signs an agreement to work in a public health setting in a frontier county).

The OSBN shall review, and when necessary revise, this list on an annual basis in consultation with the Office of Rural Health.