

# Health Care Workforce Challenges Facing Nevada and Policy Considerations

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**School of Medicine**

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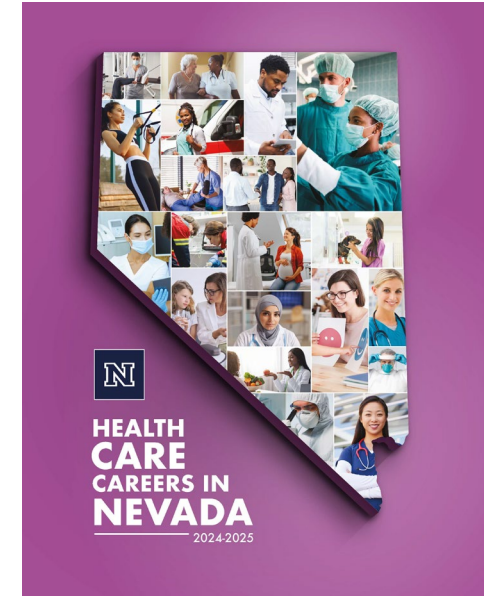
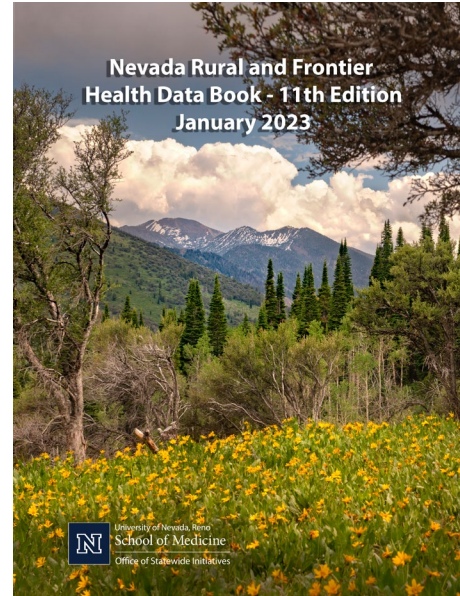
# Nevada Health Workforce Research Center

## NEVADA INSTANT ATLAS

Nevada's County-Level Health Database



<https://med.unr.edu/statewide/nevada-instant-atlas>



<https://med.unr.edu/statewide/reports-and-publications>

# Health Care Challenges in Nevada

- Relatively high uninsured rates
- Rising *underinsured* rates and cost-sharing
- High cost of health care
- Health care debt burden
- Uneven quality of care and patient safety
- Cybersecurity and health information technology
- Health care spending and cost containment
- Low vaccination rates, vaccine misinformation
- Rising sexually transmitted infection rates
- Access to reproductive health services
- Rural maternal and child health crisis
- Mental health and substance addiction
- Associated opioid/fentanyl/meth epidemics
- Public health system capacity
- Pandemic and disaster preparedness
- Obesity-related chronic disease
- Tobacco use, youth vaping
- Rural-urban health disparities
- Health equity and social determinants
- Health care services for an aging population
- Firearm injury and mortality
- Covid-19 and other emerging infectious diseases

# Health Workforce Development *is* Economic Development

- Health workforce shortages require renewed attention to broader health workforce development in Nevada
- Targeted strategies are also needed to address geographic maldistribution of workers and medically underserved areas
- Medical and health services sector remains economically underdeveloped versus other regions of the country
- Health workforce development, in turn, must play a larger role in regional and statewide economic development and diversification

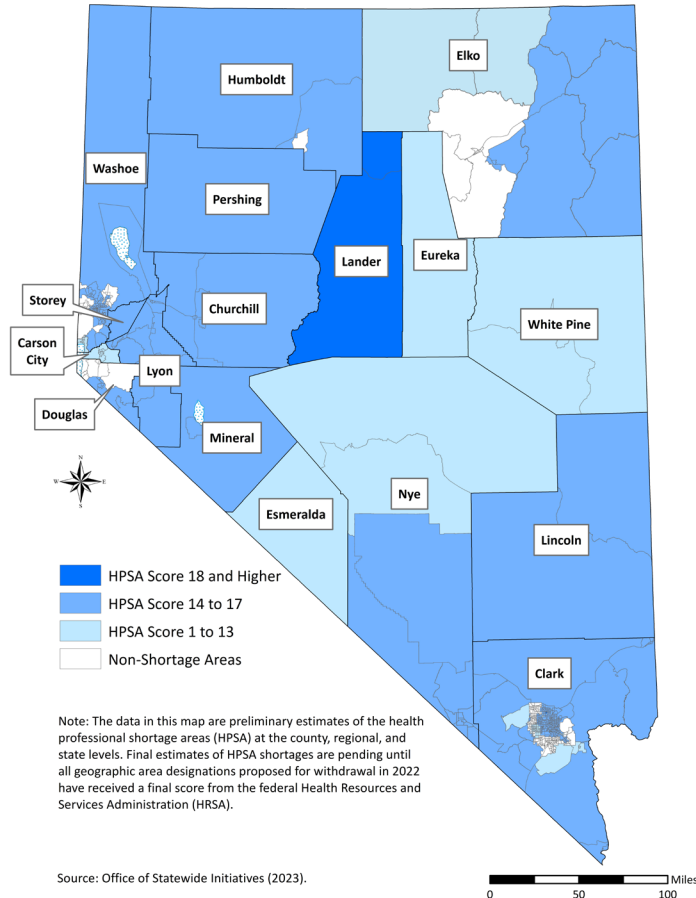
# Health Workforce Demand in Nevada

- Population growth, aging, and diversification
- Economic growth and diversification
- Gains in public and private insurance coverage
- Evolving population health needs
- Health system and technological change
- State and federal policy (and policy wild cards)

# Health Workforce Supply in Nevada

- Steady growth of licensed health professionals, yet “treading water” in per capita growth of licensees
- Persistent workforce shortages in medicine, nursing, behavioral health, public health, and many other health professions
- Aging health workforce serving an aging population
- Diversity mismatch between providers and populations served
- Geographic maldistribution of health professionals

# Primary Care Workforce Shortages



- Over 2 million Nevadans reside in a primary care health professional shortage area (HPSA) or 68.4% of the state's population of 3.3 million
- 11 of 14 rural and frontier areas of Nevada are single-county primary care HPSAs

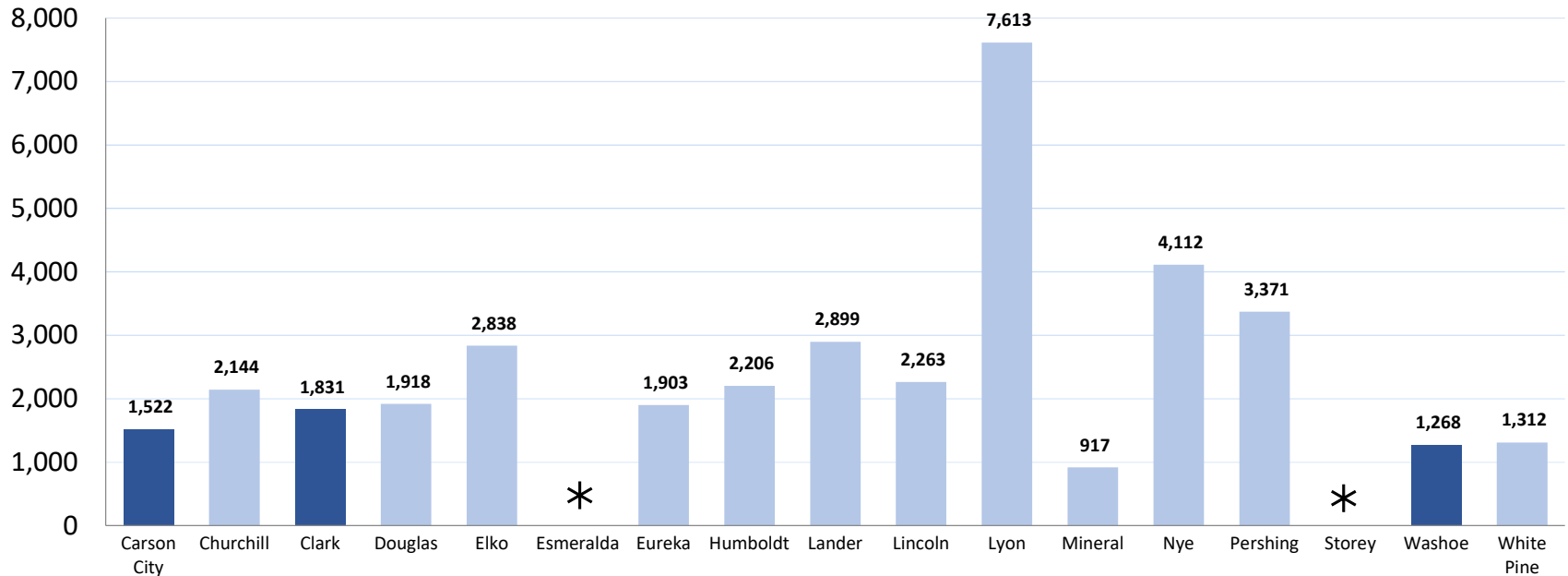
# Primary Care Physician Workforce

Ratio of population to primary care physicians

US Average = 1,330:1

Nevada Average = 1,763:1

Nevada Range = 917:1 to 7,613:1



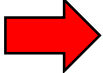



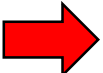

Source: Area Health Resource File/American Medical Association (2021).

\* = No primary care physicians in Esmeralda County and Storey County in 2021



# Registered Nurses per Capita Ranked by State

Number of Employed RNs per 1,000 Population

	51. Utah: 7.26	45. Nevada: 7.92	
	50. Georgia: 7.31	44. Oklahoma: 7.96	
	49. Texas: 7.47	43. Arizona: 8.01	
	48. Hawaii: 7.63	42. New Mexico: 8.04	
	47. Virginia: 7.76	41. Washington: 8.11	
	46. Idaho: 7.83	40. California: 8.20	

# What it Takes to be Average – Nursing

To meet national population-to-provider averages, Nevada would need an additional:

- 3,162 registered nurses (RNs)
- 3,284 licensed practical nurses (LPNs)
- 5,055 certified nursing assistants (CNAs)
- 626 nurse practitioners (NPs/APRNs)
- 307 certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs)

# State Policy Measures to Address Health Workforce Shortages

1. “Grow your own” – Increase the number and diversity of health program graduates
2. Stretch the existing health care workforce
3. Beg, steal, borrow, or barter health care workers from other states (and countries)

# 1. Grow Your Own (and Keep those You Grow)

- Expand publicly supported health care education programs
- Expand GME programs – residencies and fellowships – for physicians
- Support innovative industry-higher education partnerships and programs
- Support apprenticeships and new paths to licensure
- Support and expand health care career pipeline programs and STEM in K-12
- Expand scholarship programs for current and prospective health care students
- Expand loan repayment and forgiveness programs for health care graduates
- Maximize participation in federal health workforce development programs

## 2. Stretch the Existing Health Care Workforce

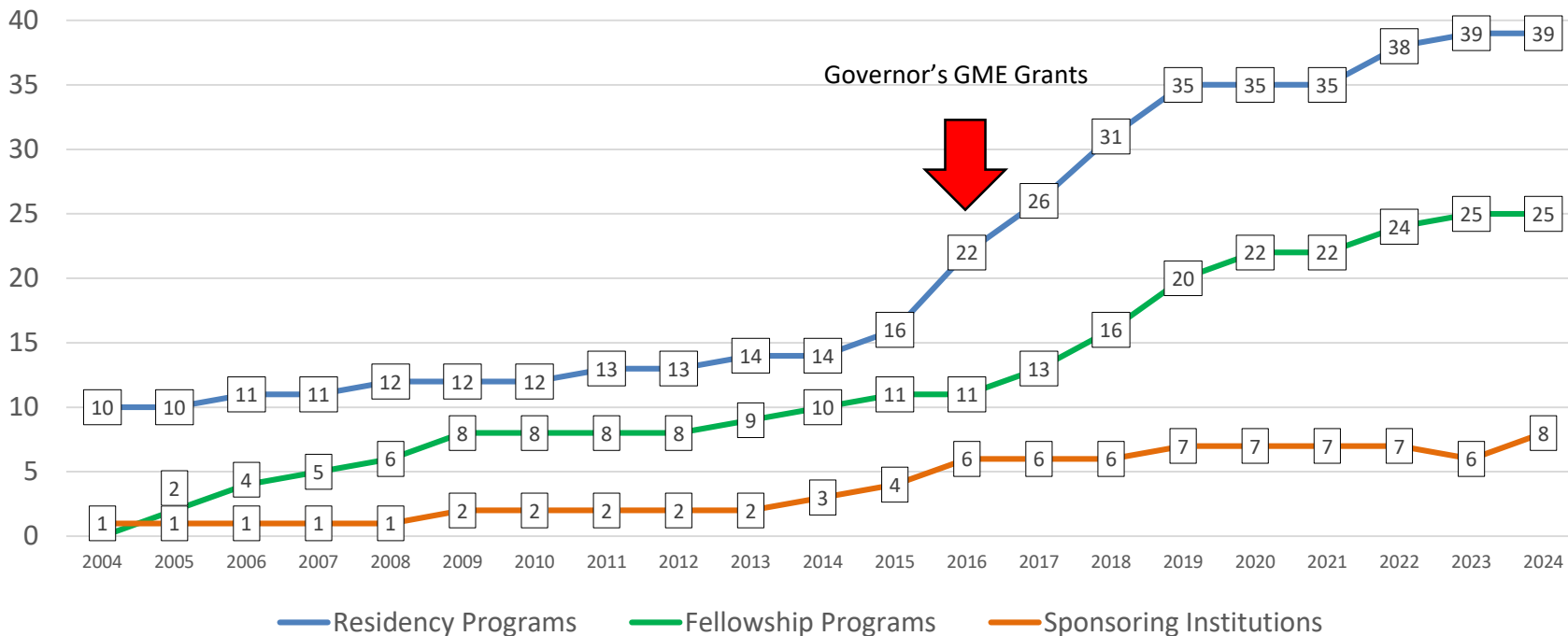
- Expand team-based models of care across a range of health care settings
- Increase use of non-physician workers practicing at the top of their scope
- Explore expanding the scope of practice of current health professionals
- Preserve and expand what worked during the public health emergency
- Support and reimburse traditional telemedicine consultations
- Support and reimburse Project ECHO telehealth applications
- Address a wide range of work environment issues

# 3. Beg, Steal, Borrow, or Barter

- Licensure compacts and reciprocity
- Signing bonuses and other financial incentives
- Traveling and “gig” nurses and health professionals
- Foreign trained health professionals, e.g., J-1 Visa Waiver Program
- State and County Medical Reserve Corps (SERV-NV, Battle Born Med Corp)
- Re-engage inactive licensees and recent retirees
- Underemployed immigrants and resettled refugees
- Poaching from other health facilities, states, and countries

# GME Programs in Nevada – 2004 to 2024

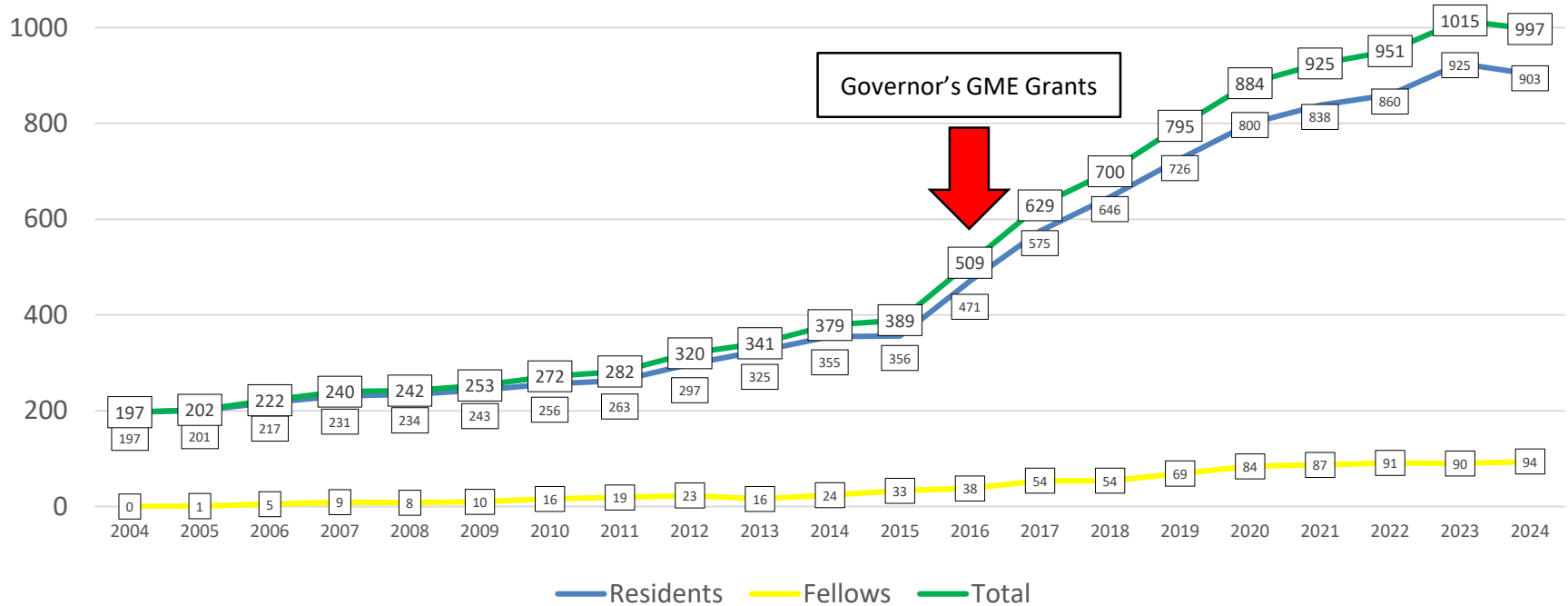
Number of ACGME-Accredited Sponsoring Institutions, Specialty Programs (Residency Programs), and Subspecialty Programs (Fellowship Programs)



Source: Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education (2024).

# Residents and Fellows in Nevada – 2004 to 2024

Number of Physicians in ACGME-Accredited Residency and Fellowship Programs

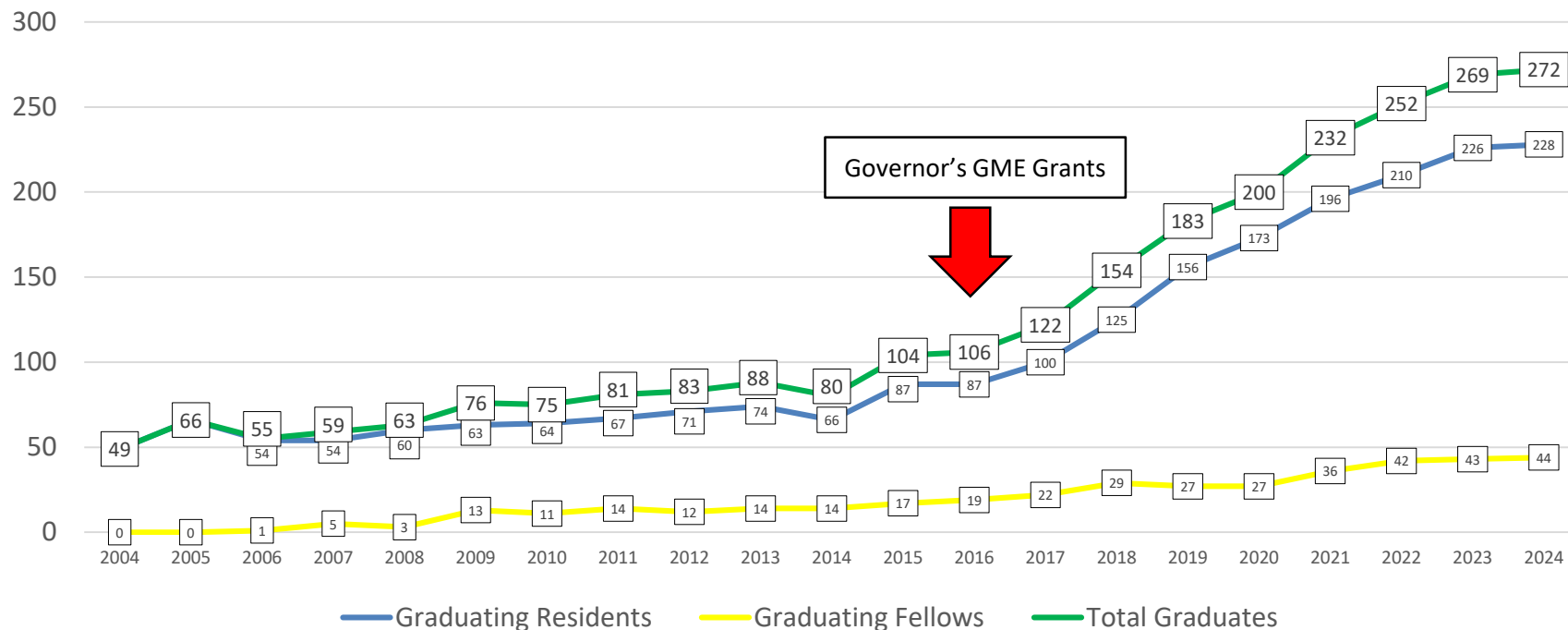


Source: Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education (2024).



# GME Graduates in Nevada – 2004 to 2024

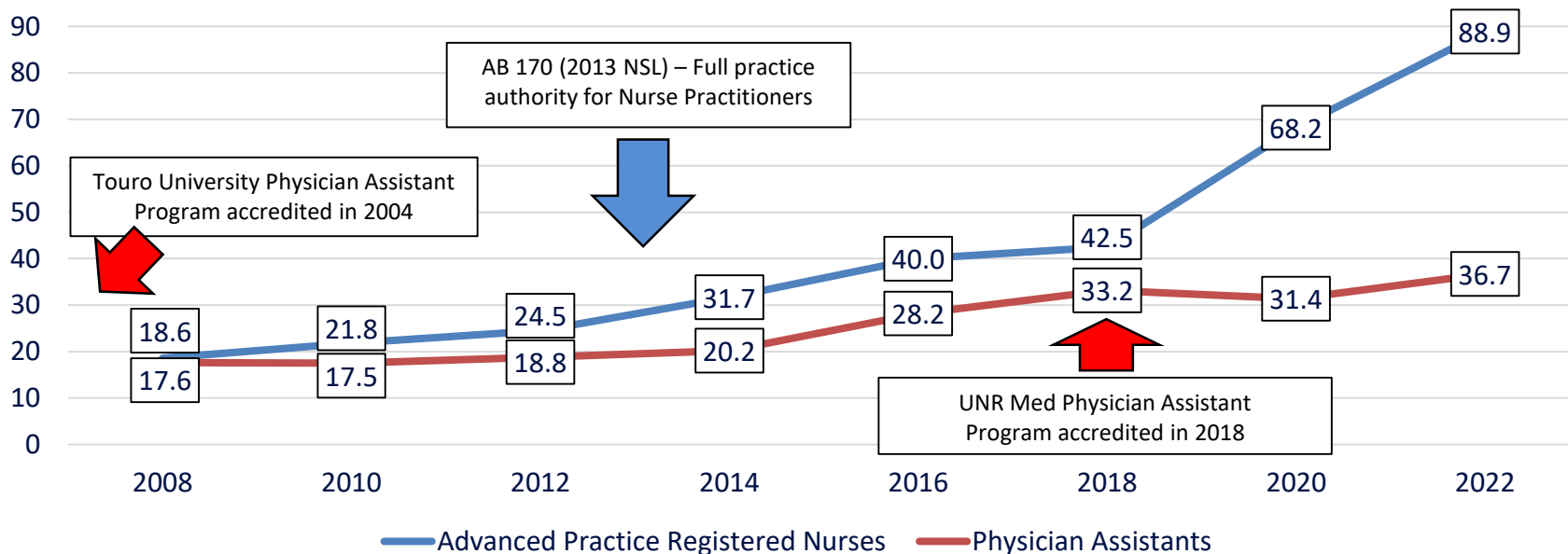
Number of Physicians Completing ACGME-Accredited Residency and Fellowship Programs



Source: Nevada Health Workforce Research Center (2024).

# Scope of Practice and New Programs for Advanced Practice Clinicians

Number of Licensees per 100,000 Population



Source: Packham, et al., *Health Workforce in Nevada: A Chartbook* (March 2023), Nevada Health Workforce Research Center.

# Health Workforce Wins in the 2023 Session

- SB375 – \$20 million for NSHE nursing grants
- AB45 – Health care loan repayment and matching funds for NHSC
- AB37 – Behavioral health workforce pipeline from K-12 to college
- SB118 – Flexible funding for local public health authorities
- AB522 – NSHE COLA in FY24 & FY25 for faculty and classified staff
- AB457 - \$9.2 million for UNLV Medical School class expansion
- SB119 – Telehealth reimbursement

# Two Steps Forward, One Step Back in 2023?

- AB404 – Medical malpractice caps increased
- AB401 – Increases permissible number of nursing students per instructor
- AB69 – Loan repayment for behavioral health providers and faculty
- SB300 – Stipends for clinical psychologist internships
- AB108 – Nurse licensure compact
- AB364 – Physician assistant independent practice authority
- AB198 – Uniform Telehealth Act

# Unfinished Business as We Approach 2025

- Numerous “one-shot” appropriations for health and higher education
- Inadequate state funding for GME development and sustainability
- Increase utilization of non-physician and non-clinical workforce
- Licensure compacts and reciprocity
- Student scholarships and faculty loan repayment
- Hospital and provider reimbursement from public and private payors
- Health care work environment – job conditions, pay and benefits, burnout

# Recent and Forthcoming Workforce Reports

- *Nevada Rural and Frontier Health Data Book 11<sup>th</sup> Edition* (January 2023)
- *Health Care Careers in Nevada, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition* (January 2024)
- *Graduate Medical Education Trends in Nevada – 2024* (July 2024)
- *Physician Workforce in Nevada: A Chartbook* (September 2024)
- *Health Workforce in Nevada: A Chartbook* (November 2024)
- *Nevada Rural and Frontier Health Data Book 12<sup>th</sup> Edition* (January 2025)

# Additional Information

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