

Health Care Workforce Challenges Facing Nevada and Policy Considerations

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School of Medicine

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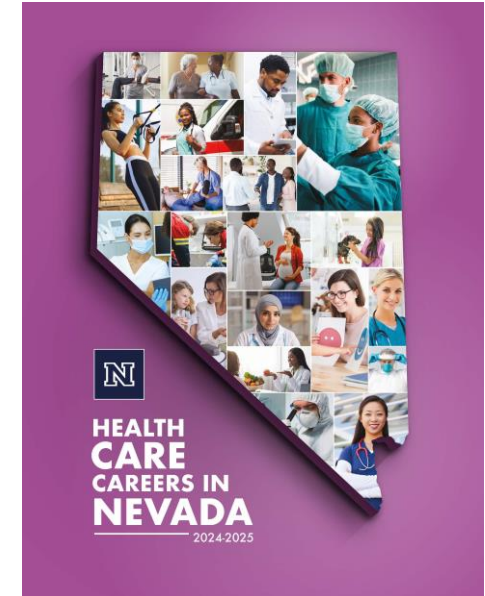
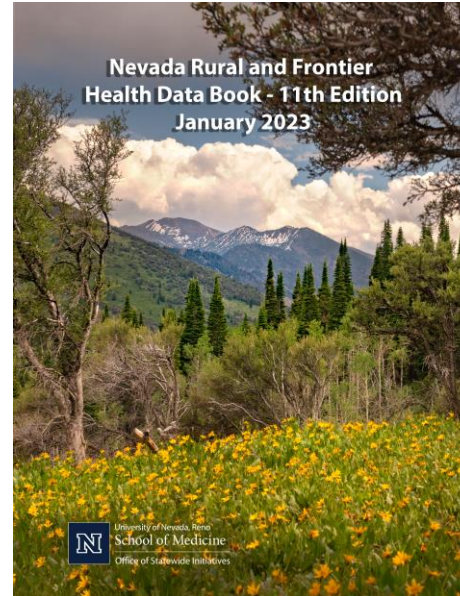
Nevada Health Workforce Research Center

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

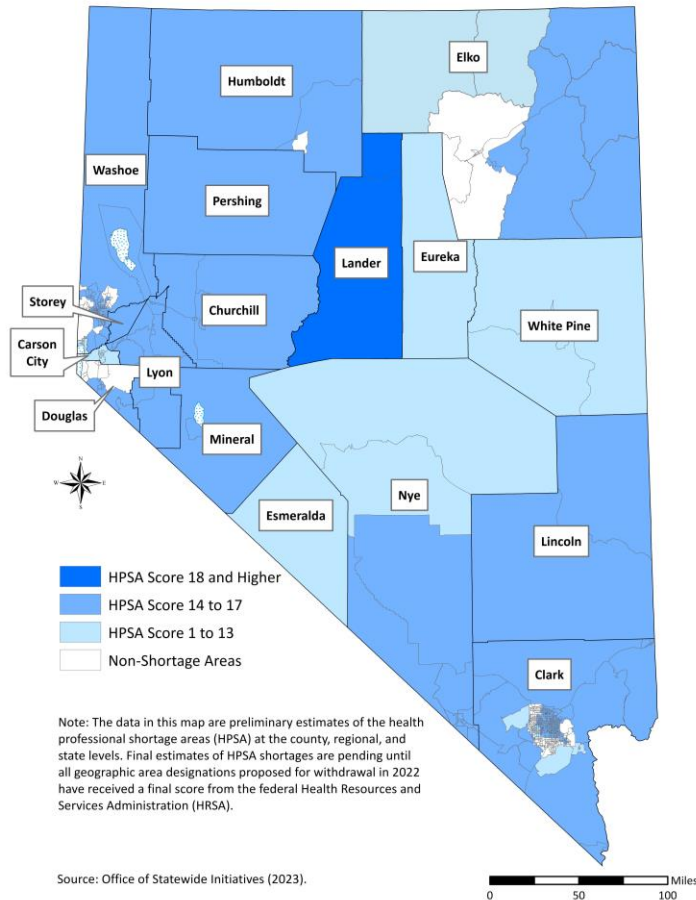
Health Workforce Demand in Nevada

- 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

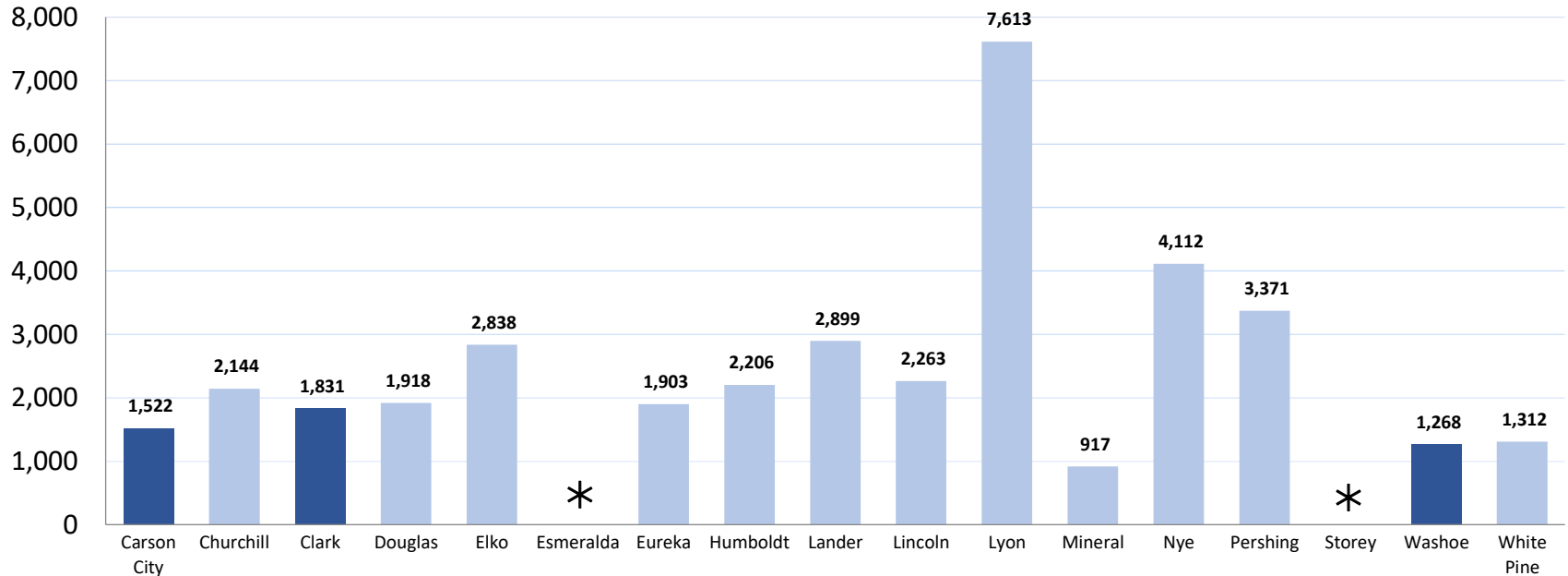
Primary Care Physician Workforce

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

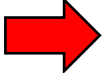


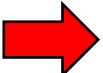



Source: Area Health Resource File/American Medical Association (2021).

* = 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

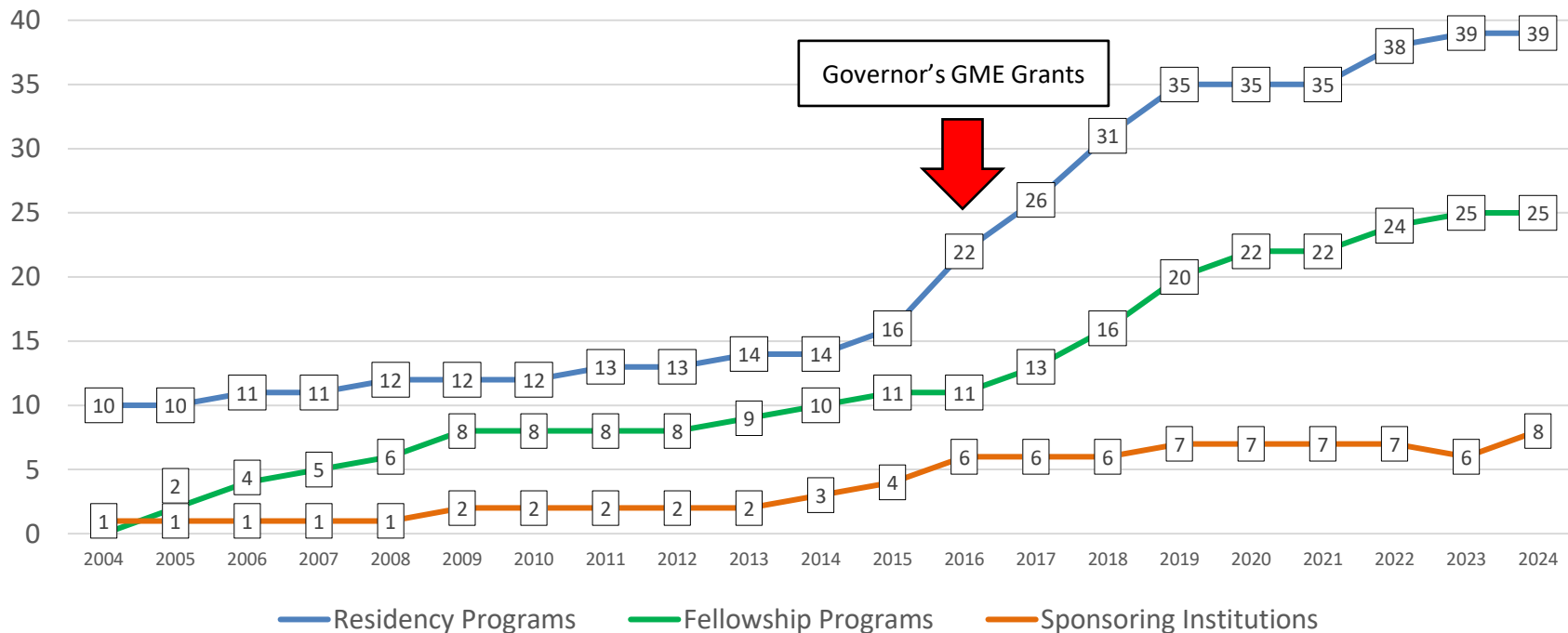
- Expand team-based models of care across a range of health care settings
- Increase use of non-physician workers practicing at the top of their scope
- Explore expanding the scope of practice of current health professionals
- Preserve and expand what worked during the public health emergency
- Support 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

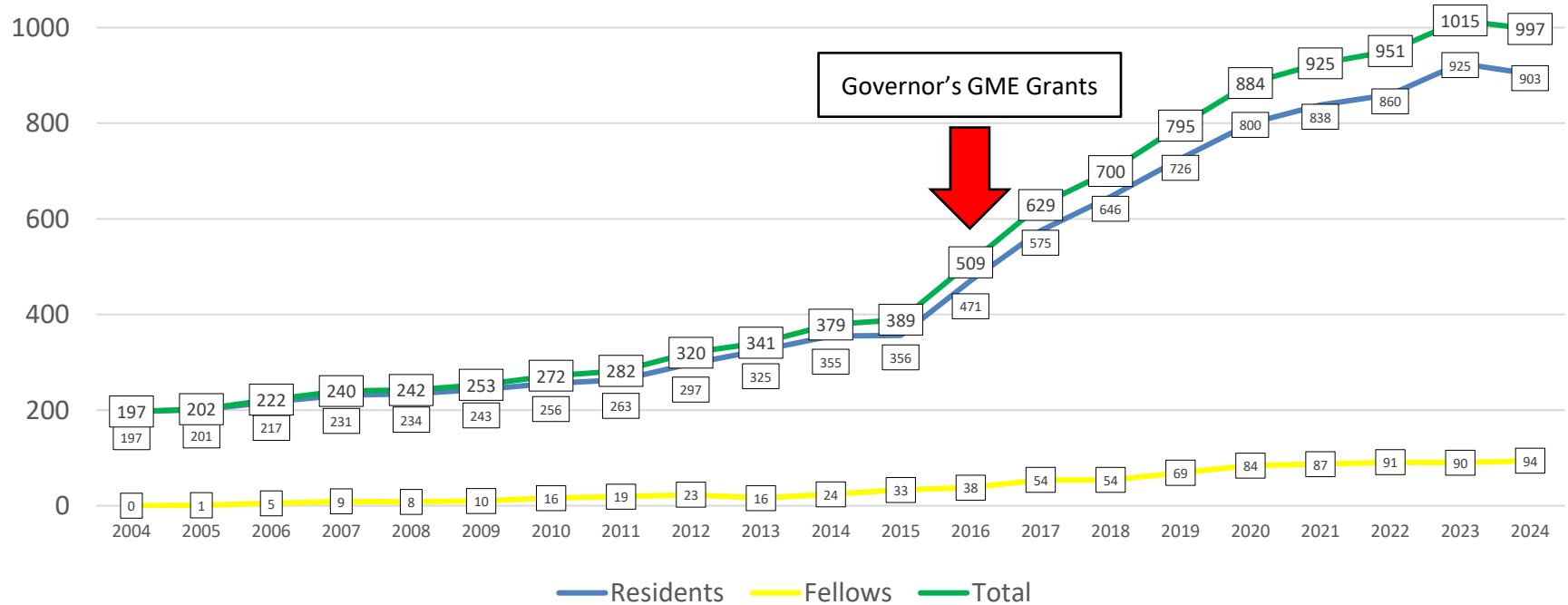
Number of ACGME-Accredited Sponsoring Institutions, Specialty Programs (Residency Programs), and Subspecialty Programs (Fellowship Programs)



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

Residents and Fellows in Nevada – 2004 to 2024

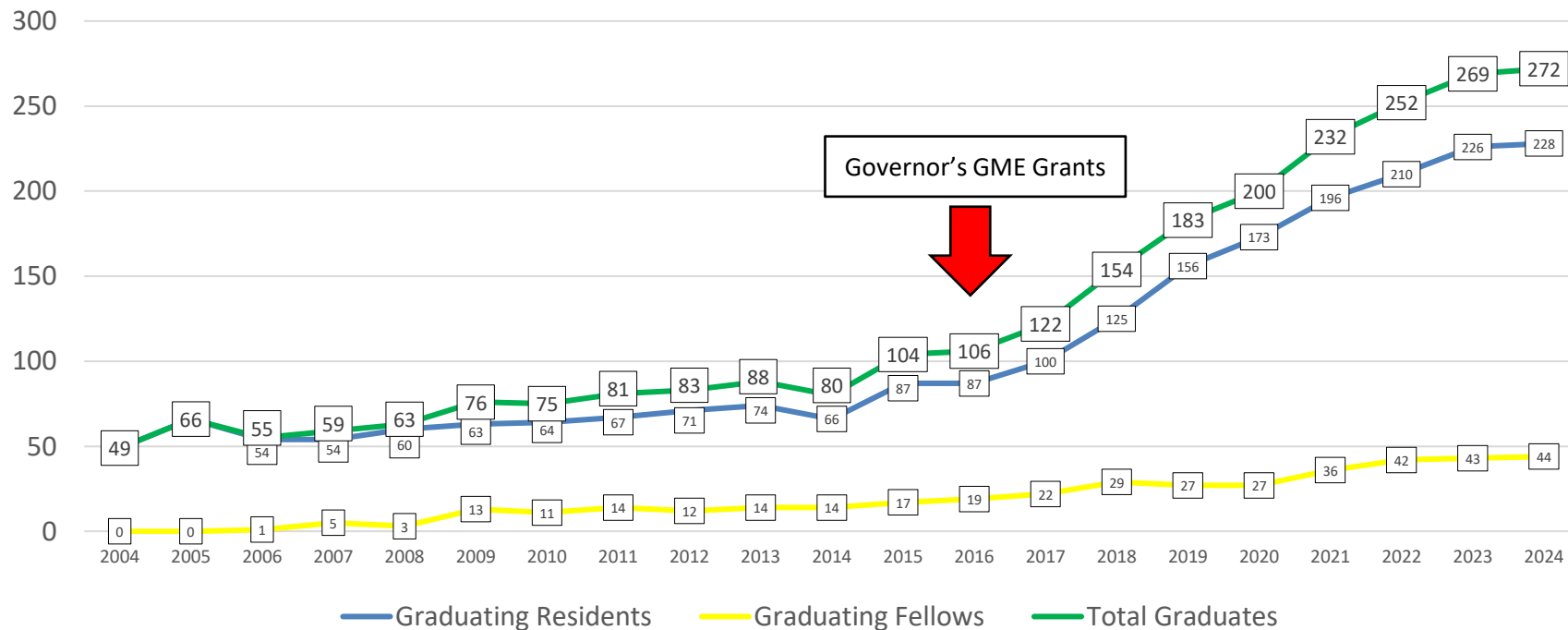
Number of Physicians in ACGME-Accredited Residency and Fellowship Programs



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

GME Graduates in Nevada – 2004 to 2024

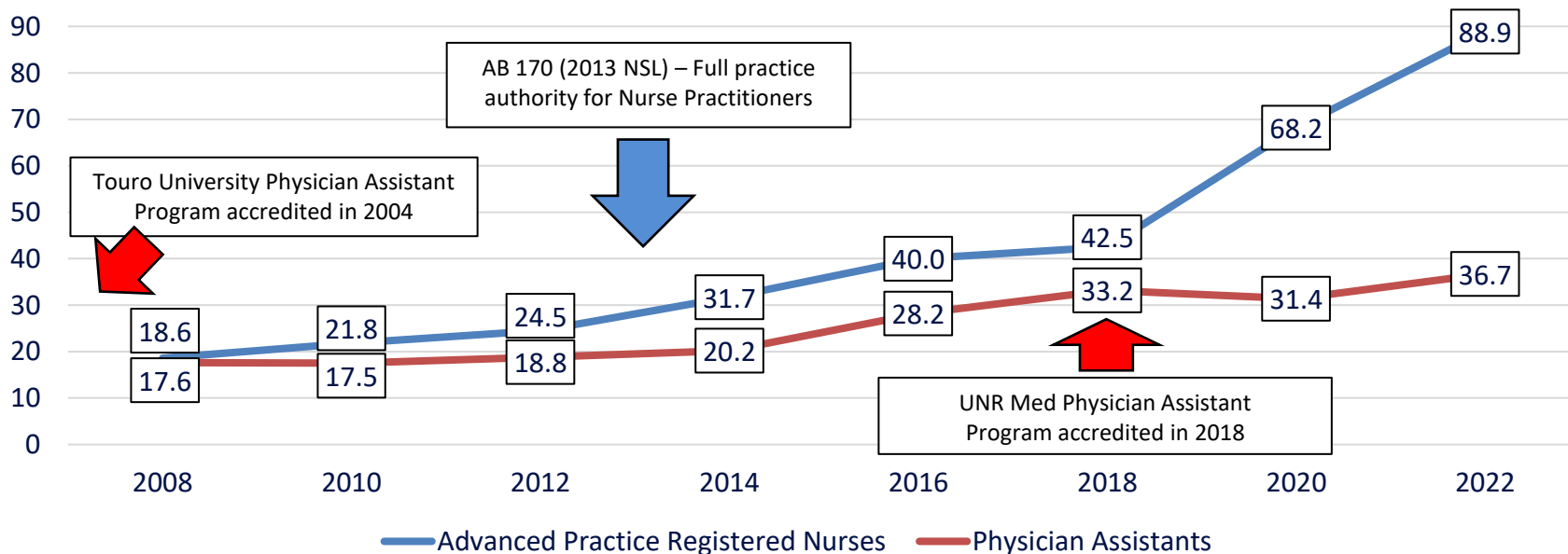
Number of Physicians Completing ACGME-Accredited Residency and Fellowship Programs



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 11th Edition* (January 2023)
- *Health Care Careers in Nevada, 7th 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 12th Edition* (January 2025)

Contact Information

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