

Joe Lombardo
Governor

Richard Whitley, MS
Director



DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
PATIENT PROTECTION COMMISSION

Helping people. It's who we are and what we do.



Joseph Filippi
Executive Director

Dr. Ikram Khan
Commission
Chairman

Patient Protection Commission
Semi-Annual Report
July 1, 2024

Background

The Nevada Patient Protection Commission (PPC) is a public body comprised of 12 voting members appointed by the Governor with representation from across the health care spectrum, including advocates, providers, and industry professionals who are dedicated to improving health care in Nevada. Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 439.902-918 provides the PPC with statutory authority to systematically review issues related to the health care needs of residents of Nevada and the quality, accessibility, and affordability of health care in the State. This report is being submitted in accordance with NRS 439.918.2.(a), which requires the PPC to submit a semi-annual report describing the meetings of the Commission and the activities during the immediately preceding six months. The report must include, without limitation, a description of any issues identified as negatively impacting the quality, accessibility or affordability of health care in this State and any recommendations for legislation, regulations or other changes to policy or budgets to address those issues.

Staffing Updates

Pursuant to NRS 439.914, the Governor appoints the Executive Director to perform the administrative duties of the Commission and such other duties as directed by the Commission. As of April 1, 2024, the Governor appointed Joseph Filippi to serve as the Executive Director for the Patient Protection Commission. The Executive Director position had previously been vacant since March 2023. The Executive Director may appoint employees to assist in carrying out the duties as directed by the Commission. Madison Lopey was recently appointed to serve as the PPC Policy Analyst and Meybelin Rodriguez was appointed to serve as the Executive Assistant.

Meetings and Activities

Since the last report, the Commission held public meetings on May 15, 2024 and June 21, 2024. The meeting minutes from May 15 are attached for reference. The meeting minutes from June 21, 2024 and other meeting materials will be available on the Commission's website <https://ppc.nv.gov/>. Highlights of PPC meeting discussion and action items over this timeframe included:

- Adoption of amended PPC Bylaws and Conflict of Interest Form
- Overview and review of the Governor's [Executive Order 2024-002](#)
- Overview of Nevada Open Meeting Law
- Overview of Bill Draft Request (BDR) proposal process
- Overview of health care workforce challenges and policy considerations
- Discussion of possible PPC workforce policy recommendations
- Discussion of possible BDRs for the 2025 Legislative Session

With the Executive Director position vacant, the Commission had not met since early 2023. Following the appointment of Executive Director Filippi, the Commission reconvened and held its first public meeting of the year on May 15, 2024. Currently, nine of the twelve voting member positions are filled and three positions remain vacant. A majority of the current voting members are newly appointed to the Commission. The meeting on May 15 served as an opportunity for members to introduce themselves, become familiar with the Commission's statutory authority and discuss issues and policy considerations to address the health care workforce shortages in Nevada. At the time of writing this report, the Commission is scheduled to hold its second meeting of the year on Friday, June 21, 2024. The meeting will include presentations on *Opportunities Identified to Address Health Care Workforce Shortages from Other States* and *National Trends in Occupational Licensing Policy*. Additionally, the PPC will continue to discuss policy recommendations to address the health care workforce shortages in Nevada.

Current Commission Priorities

Executive Order 2024-002

On April 11, 2024, Governor Joe Lombardo signed [Executive Order 2024-002](#) directing the PPC to make recommendations aimed at addressing the state's health care workforce shortage, so more patients have access to quality health care, statewide. The Executive Order (EO) directs the PPC to review available data and national best practices to provide recommendations for the following:

- (a) Attracting and retaining talent to address health-care workforce challenges in urban and rural communities;
- (b) Improving access to primary care and public health services;
- (c) Removing unnecessary state administrative hurdles to recruiting and retaining health-care workers;
- (d) Identifying sustainable funding strategies for strengthening the state's health-care workforce, which includes supporting competitive Medicaid reimbursements;
- (e) Ensuring recommended strategies for increasing provider reimbursement are based on payment methodologies that incentivize and reward for better quality and value for the taxpayer dollar; and
- (f) Identifying strategies for evaluating new and existing state investments in efforts to improve the capacity and size of the state's health-care workforce.

At this time, the PPC has not made formal recommendations in response to the EO. The Commission is in the process of receiving and reviewing available data, and in the coming months will work to determine workforce policy recommendations. The Commission has shown interest in several workforce policy solutions, which include, but are not limited to:

- Investing in and expanding Graduate Medical Education residency and fellowship programs.
- Simplifying the licensure process through interstate licensure compact agreements and reciprocity.
- Investing in and increasing health care apprenticeships and scholarship opportunities.
- Identifying sustainable funding strategies to recruit and retain health care providers.

Bill Draft Requests

Pursuant to NRS 218D.213, the Commission may request the drafting of not more than three bill draft requests (BDR) for consideration by the Nevada Legislature. The BDRs must be submitted to the Legislative Council Bureau (LCB) on or before September 1, 2024. The Commission's top priority and focus in preparation for the 2025 Legislative Session is providing recommendations to address the health care workforce shortages in Nevada, and determining its top three BDR policy concepts.

Description of Identified Issues

NRS 439.918.2.(a) requires this report to include, without limitation, a description of any issues identified as negatively impacting the quality, accessibility or affordability of health care in this State and any recommendations for legislation, regulations or other changes to policy or budgets to address those issues. Since the last report, the

Commission has been focused on reviewing issues related access, quality and affordability to health care due to the lack of health care providers in the State. To provide a brief context of the health care workforce shortage issues in Nevada, the table below identifies Nevada’s ranking when compared to the national average of certain health care provider types per 100,000 population. As shown, Nevada ranks below the national average in a majority of health care provider areas.

Health Care Provider Rankings

Providers	NV		
	Nevada	National	Ranking
Rate of physicians per 100,000 population (2020)	218.5	272.0	45th
Rate of primary care physicians per 100,000 population (2020)	73.5	94.7	48th
Rate of registered nurses per 100,000 population (2023)	810.5	948.1	45th
Rate of licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses per 100,000 population (2023)	94.9	188.2	42nd
Rate of physicians in psychiatry per 100,000 population (2023)	2.2	7.4	44th
Percent of physicians who are specialists (2024)	50.3	52.5	32nd
Rate of physicians in general surgery per 100,000 population (2020)	5.7	7.7	49th
Rate of physicians in pediatrics per 100,000 population 17 years and younger (2021)	66.8	127.9	49th
Rate of physical therapists per 100,000 population (2023)	58.9	71.9	46th
Rate of dentists per 100,000 population (2023)	59.0	64.6	28th
Rate of mental health providers per 100,000 population (2023)	263.1	324.9	32nd
Rate of marriage and family therapists per 100,000 population (2023)	6.3	18.9	28th
Rate of child, family, and school social workers per 100,000 population (2023)	119.0	105.1	21st

Sources: AAMC Nevada Physician Workforce Profile (<https://www.aamc.org/media/58251/download>), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (<https://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm>), Kaiser Family Foundation State Health Facts (<https://www.kff.org/statedata/>), The American Board of Pediatrics Workforce Data Book (<https://www.abp.org/sites/public/files/pdf/workforcedata2020-2021.pdf>), America’s Health Rankings (<https://www.americashealthrankings.org/>), Population Estimates from the US Census

According to data provided to the PPC by the Nevada Health Workforce Research Center, 2 million Nevadans, nearly 70% of the state’s population, reside in a federally designated primary care health provider shortage area. Additionally, 2.8 million Nevadans, nearly 88% of the state’s population, reside in a federally designated mental health provider shortage area. The chronic lack of health care providers statewide has direct negative implications on health care access, quality and affordability for Nevada residents. The Commission will continue to review available data and national best practices to provide recommendations that align with the EO 2024-002.

Collaboration

NRS 439.918.1, paragraphs (a) and (b) additionally requires the Commission to attempt to identify and facilitate collaboration between existing state governmental entities that study or address issues related to the quality, accessibility, and affordability of health care in this State, including, without limitation, the regional behavioral health policy boards created by NRS 433.429; and attempt to coordinate with such entities to reduce any duplication of efforts among and between those entities and the Commission. Since April 2024, the Executive Director has met with several stakeholders, governmental entities and institutions of higher education to build relationships and collaborate on statewide efforts related to the scope of the Commission.

The Commission is willing to collaborate with any state governmental entity that studies or addresses issues related to the quality, accessibility, and affordability of health care in this State; and looks forward to continuing this

practice through open communication with the Commission and offering direct collaboration from the Executive Director.

Reduce Duplication of Efforts

The Commission is committed to attempting to coordinate with any state governmental entity to reduce any duplication of efforts among and between those entities and the Commission. Commission staff monitor public meeting notices and attend meetings that relate to health care access, quality and affordability. Additionally, Commission staff monitor available data, reports and other publications relating to the scope of the Commission. The Executive Director will continue to identify opportunities for the Commission to reduce duplication and coordinate with partners statewide.

Next Steps

The current focus of the Commission is to identify BDR concepts and to provide formal recommendations as directed by the Governor's Executive Order. A solicitation of recommendations was released on June 3, 2024, asking all interested parties to provide recommendations on how to address the health care workforce shortages in Nevada. Commission staff will review meeting materials and testimony received at meetings to develop a list of recommendations for review by the Chair and possible consideration by the Commission during future work sessions.

The Commission is scheduled to meet next on July 19, 2024. Three of the nine Commissioner's terms currently expire June 30, 2024. All three Commissioners have applied for reappointment through the Governor's Office. To date, the PPC stands ready to meet quorum at the scheduled July meeting.

Enclosures:

1. PPC Meeting Minutes (May 2024)
2. Solicitation of Recommendations (June 2024)