

**Mesa County
Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA)
Benefits Summary**

HPSA is a federal designation that recognizes the fact that we have too few primary care physicians in Mesa County relative to the low-income population. The calculation used to arrive at this conclusion took into account many factors, such as:

- Total physician-patient contact time
- Primary Care Physician sub-specialties
- Primary Care Physician patient characteristics (age, area of treatment, inpatient/outpatient/ER)
- Patient ability to pay (Sliding fee, Medicaid/Medicare, etc.)

State and Federal programs use the HPSA designation for eligibility for program application. Recent changes in federal programs as a result of the [Recovery Act](#) have placed health care in the position of adding funding to existing programs such as HPSA. And taking advantage of the programs below is more important than ever if you are a provider planning to expand your practice/services.

Allied Health professionals are not eligible for loan repayment or reimbursement at this time for any of the programs listed below. Physician specialists may be eligible for specific programs as listed below.

Mesa County is currently classified (until November 2013) as a whole county, Primary Medical Care, Low-income population HPSA. Mesa County's HPSA score is 14 on a scale from 1 (low need) to 25 (high need.)

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) Primary Care office keeps a list of Federal Programs that use HPSA designation as criteria for program qualification. Visit the Primary Care Office website at: <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/pp/primarycare/index.html>. This list is updated periodically and guidance should be requested from the specific program.

Main Workforce Programs under the CDPHE Primary Care Umbrella:

Colorado State Health Professions Loan Repayment Program: requires HPSA status for a non-profit agency allowing recruitment of Physicians, PAs, APNs (this category includes Nurse Practitioners' beyond BSN), CNMs, Psychologists, Clinical Social Workers, and licensed Family and Addictions Counselors. (This program doesn't include dental service providers because this is CURRENTLY covered by another Primary Care program.) Qualified health care providers can receive up to \$25,000 a year to repay their student loans for a minimum two year employment commitment in a designated Health Professional Shortage Area in Colorado. There also a tax incentive with this program that removes the burden of benefit taxes under existing federal law.

National Health Service Corps: Site and Applicant assistance through CDPHE primary care office. Same groups as the **Colorado State Health Professions Loan Repayment Program** and includes dentists and dental hygienists.

[National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program](#) - Eligible- mentioned above. For primary care professionals. For more information, contact the Primary Care Office at 303-692-2470. For more information and a Loan Repayment Application, visit: <http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov/applications/lrp/default.htm>

[National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program](#) - Eligible- mentioned above. For primary care health professions students. The Primary Care Office is the lead contact for health care facilities wanting to become an approved site for NHSC recruitment. For more information, contact the Primary Care Office at 303-692-2470.

Foreign Medical Graduate Waiver program: For physicians that are in US from a foreign medical school and they can get a residents waiver for work in these HPSA areas. **Specialists** can be considered even though the designation was for primary care. A Staff development plan or other similar documentation will be needed to support this type of request. [Conrad State 30 Program](#) allows States 30 J-1 visa waivers each year in exchange for service in a shortage area (3 year commitment).

Other HPSA Related programs (or those that use HPSA for eligibility) for Mesa County Agencies and Providers:

[Health Center Program](#) Colorado Community Health Network received a grant from HRSA and Mesa County is being considered as a site. Primary Care Office will have more information at a later date. MUA/MUP is a large factor in this determination of need.

The [Colorado Health Care Provider Loan Repayment Program](#) is a newly funded program in Colorado, which helps health care professionals working in [shortage areas](#) repay their student loans.

The [Colorado Health Foundation Physician Loan Repayment Program](#) provides an incentive for physicians to practice in certain rural and urban underserved sites across Colorado. The Physician Loan Repayment Program provides up to \$50,000/year for three years for use in repaying the physician's educational loans. Non-profit status is required.

The [Colorado Provider Recruitment](#) program (CPR) was created by the Colorado Rural Health Center. The CPR program provides a broad range of recruitment and retention services for both employers and employees. Non-profit urban, and any rural are eligible.

The [Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program](#) Nurses apply to Federal program directly. (NELRP) funded by Health Resources Services Administration, Bureau of Health Professions, offers Registered Nurses substantial assistance to repay educational loans in exchange for service in eligible facilities, which are located in areas experiencing a shortage of trained nurses. Two year commitment is required, with an optional third year incentive. Benefits are taxable.

Mesa County is not eligible for the following programs:

- [Indian Health Service Scholarship Program](#)
- **CROP** (Colorado Rural Provider Grant Program) is NOT an eligible program for Mesa County. However, they CAN provide recruitment assistance for agencies that are urban and non-profit.
- [Rural Health Clinic Program](#) - is not available in Mesa County.
- [Medicare HPSA Bonus Payment](#) - Not eligible for Mesa County. This is a passive program that applies to primary care outpatient services only (non-specialties).