

# **In Critical Condition:**

Seattle-King County's  
Hospital Staffing Crisis



Challenges and Solutions Identified  
by Seattle-King County Hospital,  
Education and Labor Leaders

*Sponsored by:*

Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County  
*and the Washington State Hospital Association*

# Panel Composition

- 17 industry representatives
  - + Hospitals
    - Selected based on size and geographic distribution
  - + Education, Labor and Workforce Leaders





# Critical Issues

- Labor shortages
  - + High demand for personnel
  - + Increased unemployment rate



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- Labor shortages
  - + High demand for personnel
  - + Increased unemployment rate
- Aging population
  - + Growing need for health care services
  - + Retiring health care workforce
- Educational capacity
  - + Lack of resources to meet demand
  - + Long college waiting lists

# Panel Charge

- Build upon national and state efforts
- Provide a local perspective with local solutions
- Develop feasible strategies





# Challenge One

- Develop and support education system to meet employer demand

## *Barriers:*

- + Lack of clinical training sites
- + Faculty, classroom and laboratory shortages
- + Lack of college resources



# Challenge One

- Develop and support education system to meet employer demand

## *Solutions:*

- + Clinical site coordination
- + Stronger hospital-college partnerships
- + Raise additional funding for colleges





## Challenge Two

- Encourage health care progression

### *Barriers:*

- + Lack of support for career progression
- + Difficulty transferring between college programs



## Challenge Two

- Encourage health care progression

### *Solutions:*

- + Hospital-based career specialists
- + Improve articulation between training programs



## Challenge Three

- Promote legislative action for long-term success

### *Barriers:*

- + Competing priorities

# Challenge Three

- Promote legislative action for long-term success

## *Solutions:*

- + Leverage strategic contacts for key political support



# Summary of Solutions

- Clinical site coordination
- Stronger hospital-college partnerships
- Raise additional funding for colleges
- Hospital-based career specialists
- Improve articulation between training programs
- Leverage strategic contacts for key political support

# A Call to Action

- Long-term support from colleges and hospitals
- Increase state revenue for health care programs
- Political leadership
- Commitment from hospital staff and management
- Leadership from health care training programs





# Career Pathways

- **Public-Private Partnership**
- **Connects incumbent workers to high demand healthcare training and resources**
- **Hospital experience educates the WorkSource system to the nuances of healthcare environments**



# Success Factors

- **Visibility and Program Marketing**
- **Partnership with Human Resources and link to internal programs**
- **Executive Support**
- **Multiple Organizations, shared program staff**
- **Hard-wire outcome measurement**
- **Long term community based view**



# Best Practices

- Weekly, Career Specialists send personal e-mail to all employees with last names of one letter of the alphabet, resulting in two personal invitations per year per incumbent to maintain visibility of resource
- Internal Career Fair once per year
  - + Resume review
  - + Tuition Assistance
- Incumbent carries responsibility for further action – set up job shadow, or other action



# Challenges

- Struggle with pre-requisite funding – suggest hospitals avoid limiting funding to program acceptance
- Time required to measure real outcome juxtaposed with political nature of funding streams