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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT

Lori A. Shibiante
Commissioner

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Kerrin A. Rounds
Chief Financial Officer

July 29, 2021

The Honorable Ken Weyler, Chairman
Fiscal Committee of the General Court
State House
Concord, NH 03301

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu
and the Honorable Council
State House
Concord, NH 03301

REQUESTED ACTION

1. Pursuant to the provisions of RSA 14:30-a, VI, authorize the Department of Health and Human Services, New Hampshire Hospital, to accept and expend federal funds in the amount of \$5,000,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to fund strengthening the healthcare workforce capacity for underserved populations, effective upon approval by the Fiscal Committee and Governor and Council through June 30, 2023 and further authorize the allocation of these funds in the accounts below: **100% Federal Funds.**
2. Contingent upon approval of Requested Action #1, pursuant to RSA 124:15, authorize the Department of Health and Human Services, to create one full-time temporary position for programmatic purposes effective upon Fiscal Committee and Governor and Council approvals through June 30, 2023. **100% Federal Funds.**

05-095-094-940010-24650000¹ HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES, DEPT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, HHS: NEW HAMPSHIRE HOSPITAL, NEW HAMPSHIRE HOSPITAL, ARPA DHHS FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDS

Class/Obj	Class Title	Current Modified Budget	Increase (Decrease) Amount	Revised Modified Budget
000-400338	Federal Funds	\$23,350,413	\$5,000,000	\$28,350,413
	General Funds			
	Total Revenue	\$23,350,413	\$5,000,000	\$28,350,413

¹ All direct program costs will be accounted for using activity 00FRF602PH9506A and all administrative and indirect costs will be accounted for using activity 00FRF602PH9506Z. Accounting classifications may be subject to technical changes at the discretion of the Department of Administrative Services' Division of Accounting Services.

020-500200	Current Expense	\$1	\$0	\$1
030-500301	Equipment	\$1	\$0	\$1
040-500800	Indirect Costs	\$2,121,473	\$0	\$2,121,473
041-500801	Audit Fund Set Aside	\$21,206	\$5,000	\$26,206
042-500620	Post-Retirement Benefits	\$0	\$8,733	\$8,733
046-500464	Consultants	\$1	\$0	\$1
047-500240	Own Forces Maintenance (Bldg-Grnds)	\$1	\$0	\$1
048-500226	Contract Repairs; Bldg, Grounds	\$1	\$0	\$1
059-500117	Temp Full Time	\$0	\$98,792	\$98,792
060-500601	Benefits	\$0	\$126,251	\$126,251
102-500731	Contracts for Program Services	\$13,947,729	\$750,000	\$14,697,729
103-502664	Contracts for Ops Services	\$7,260,000	\$4,011,224	\$11,271,224
	Total Expenses	\$23,350,413	\$5,000,000	\$28,350,413

EXPLANATION

The Department is requesting to accept and expend American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to expand the current State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP), which provides funds to health care professionals working in areas of the state designated as being medically underserved who are willing to commit to a contract with the State for a minimum of three years (or two if part-time). These healthcare professionals work in primary care, which includes medical care, oral health, and behavioral health services. Primary care plays a key role in health promotion and disease prevention, as well as management of ongoing conditions. COVID-19 has taken a heavy toll on primary care and other healthcare teams who have been on the front lines of the pandemic with many suffering from stress, trauma, burnout and increased behavioral health challenges. Healthcare workforce shortages existed prior to the pandemic and now have been further exacerbated. SLRP has been an effective tool for recruitment and retention of highly qualified clinicians serving rural and underserved regions. If approved, the funding will enable the program to serve increased numbers of providers, including registered nurses, behavioral health providers, oral health providers, and physicians in primary care, behavioral and oral health care settings, hospitals, and schools.

In July 2021, the program expanded to include registered nurses in a primary care setting and behavioral health providers at eligible sites who are under two-year supervision to acquire their license, but the program had to limit each type to ten slots for this year because of funding constraints. If approved, the additional funds will eliminate these slot limits. In June 2021, the program launched the Private Practice Dentist Loan Repayment program to increase the dental capacity available for Medicaid patients and limited it to two slots. The additional funds, if approved, will enable more slots. The proposed funding will also enable the program to expand to include school psychologists in school settings who are licensed by the board of psychology and serving Medicaid enrolled students in the school setting through the Medicaid to Schools and/or Medicaid to Schools for Medical Services Programs. The program will also expand to include Hospitalists at the Critical Access Hospitals who are in great demand and support local primary care providers. The funding will also be used to increase SLRP recruitment by adding funds to an existing Recruitment Center contract to support a national marketing campaign directed towards healthcare workforce and have them coordinate with other programs in the state doing workforce recruitment and economic development. A new staff position will be created in order to accommodate the additional work of supporting the SLRP participants. The funds will be used for costs incurred by the program during the period that begins on March 3, 2021, and ends on December 31, 2024, and award funds for the financial obligations incurred by December 31, 2024 must be expended by December 31, 2026.

The funds are to be budgeted as follows:

- Class 041 The funds will be used to pay for audit fund set aside per State requirement.
- Class 042 The funds will be used to pay for post-retirement expense.
- Class 059 The funds will be used to pay for a full-time temporary Program Assistant I who will be responsible for reviewing applications for the State Loan Repayment Program and processing service verifications.
- Class 060 The funds will be used to pay for benefits to support the above position.
- Class 102 The funds will be used to increase State Loan Repayment Program marketing and recruitment
- Class 103 The funds will be used to increase the number of loan repayment contracts for obligated clinicians serving underserved populations.

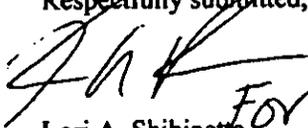
The following information is provided in accordance with the comptroller's instructional memorandum dated September 21, 1981:

1. List of personnel involved: 1 Temporary full time positions: 1 Program Assistant I
2. Nature, Need, and Duration: The position will provide for the increased needs for the State Loan Repayment Program as a recruitment and retention tool due to healthcare workforce shortages caused by the COVID-19 public health event. The position will be needed for five years while the additional contracts are being supported.
3. Relationship to existing agency programs: This is an expansion of the existing State Loan Repayment Program.
4. Has a similar program been requested of the legislature and denied? No
5. Why wasn't funding included in the agency's budget request? At the time of budget submission the impact of COVID-19 on the healthcare workforce was not known.
6. Can portions of the grant funds be utilized? All grant dollars are being used for this request.
7. Estimate the funds required to continue this position(s):

Positions (Salary & Benefits)	<u>FY 2022</u>	<u>FY 2023</u>
Program Assistant I	\$65,806	\$78,780

In summary, additional funding is requested to aid the Department to maintain a sufficient primary care workforce to provide high quality care for patients and the population in the State of New Hampshire. The Source of Funds is 100% Federal Funds. ARPA Funding is requested to strengthen the healthcare workforce capacity for underserved populations. Healthcare workforce shortages have been exacerbated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This is thus an allowable use of ARPA State Fiscal Recovery Funds under Section 602(c)(1)(a), to respond to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts.

In the event that these Federal Funds become no longer available, General Funds will not be requested to support this program.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori A. Shibinette
Commissioner