



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

for

EMERGENCY RELIEF AND RECOVERY

December 6, 2021

The Honorable Karen Umberger, Chairman
Fiscal Committee of the General Court

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu
And the Honorable Council
State House
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

REQUESTED ACTION

Pursuant to RSA 14:30-a VI, authorize the Governor's Office For Emergency Relief and Recovery (GOFERR) to accept and expend in an amount not to exceed \$785,385 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) to fund the New Hampshire Needs Caregivers Licensed Nursing Assistants (LNAs) Extended Learning Opportunities (ELO) Program to rapidly grow a pipeline of caregivers available for work in New Hampshire's nursing homes and other healthcare settings by piloting a program to recruit and train at least 300 high school students to become LNAs. This is an allowable use of ARPA SFRF funds under Section 602 (c)(1)(A) to respond to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts, effective upon Fiscal Committee and Governor and Council approval through June 30, 2023. 100% Federal Funds.

Funds are to be budgeted in FY2022 in the following account:

Table with 5 columns: CLASS, ACCOUNT, FY2022 CURRENT MODIFIED BUDGET, FY2022 BUDGET REQUEST, FY2022 REVISED BUDGET. Rows include EXPENDITURES (040-042, 072, 103), SOURCE OF FUNDS (000), and TOTAL EXPENSES/REVENUE.

1 All direct program costs will be accounted for using activity 00FRF602PH0214A and all administrative and indirect costs will be accounted for using activity 00FRF602PH0214Z. Accounting classifications may be subject to technical changes at the discretion of the Department of Administrative Services' Division of Accounting Services.

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EXPLANATION

Approval of this funding is to rapidly grow a pipeline of caregivers available for work in New Hampshire's nursing homes and other healthcare settings by piloting a program to recruit and train at least 300 high school students to become LNAs. By offering student scholarships that cover the full cost of training, uniforms and licensing for an accelerated LNA course, the program will reduce barriers that keep students from entering the healthcare field while in high school. In addition to recruitment and training, this program will assist high school students in finding job placements, after having completed the course and obtaining licensure, in a NH Healthcare setting.

Between March 2020 and June 2021, New Hampshire experienced a net loss of 226 working LNAs, according to the New Hampshire Board of Nursing.² Prior to the pandemic, New Hampshire had among the nation's highest nursing home occupancy rates. Due to the lack of adequate staffing, (32.9% of New Hampshire nursing homes had shortages of nurses and/or aides), many New Hampshire nursing homes currently have significantly reduced occupancy levels.³ The ability of New Hampshire's nursing homes to recover census is constrained not only by the increased physical separation and other measures needed to maintain infection control during COVID but also by the challenge to hire and retain licensed staff.

The Sector Partnerships Initiative has been meeting with High School ELO Coordinators for the past few years. These relationships have helped to engage schools and employers to help solve the healthcare workforce shortages. This proposal offers students the ability to explore a healthcare career and get started on a career pathway.

Currently, the only available pathway for high school students to obtain experience as a nursing assistant is through Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. CTE programs require a 2 year commitment that culminates in LNA licensure. Many students, who are interested in healthcare, are unable to fit this 2-year commitment into their high school experience. This program provides an alternative pathway that allows students to expeditiously obtain their LNA before graduation from high school.

LNA Health Careers has designed an LNA course for high school students and can provide the classes and clinical work for this program statewide. The course runs for 14 weeks and clinical work is completed in a local long-term care facility. The most common schedule is two days a week, 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The course is 110 hours, 50 hours theory classroom and 60 hours clinical work at a host site. If the pilot is successful, classes could be provided three times a year.

These scholarships will be provided on a first-come first-served basis to up to 300 New Hampshire high school students that enroll in 2022 in LNA Health Careers LNA training course, which has been developed specifically for New Hampshire high school students and will be available statewide. Scholarships are valued at \$2,000 - \$1,850 for tuition and \$150 for licensing and uniforms.

² https://www.laconiadailysun.com/news/local/nursing-home-shortages-reach-crisis-belknap-county-boosts-pay-with-american-rescue-plan-funds/article_6a5cb378-1d66-11ec-a760-4ffdea5fd7d1.html

³ Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services data for the week ending November 14, 2021 show NH nursing homes at 75% occupancy.

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Funding will be disbursed by Lamprey Health Care as \$2,000 payments to LNA Health Careers for each student enrolling in the program (up to \$600,000). Lamprey may also reimburse NH Needs Caregivers for expenses incurred for program management (up to \$36,000) and marketing (up to \$75,000). Finally, the budget provides for reimbursement of Lamprey's administrative expenses (up to 10% or \$71,100). There will be an option to renew for 2 additional years of funding.

Funds are being budgeted in the classes listed below as follows:

Class 040 – Indirect Costs to recover, per by RSA 21-I:75, a proportional share of the outside funding source to alleviate agency indirect costs.

Class 041 – Audit Fund Set Aside to comply with RSA 124:16 that requires all agencies that receive federal funds to set aside a percentage (0.1%) of the federal revenue amount received to pay for financial and compliance audits.

Class 072 – Grants-Federal to provide funding for grants to sub-grantees.

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

Respectfully submitted,



Taylor Caswell,
Executive Director, GOFERR