UNIVERSITY OF HAWAIʻI SYSTEM
ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT TO THE 2022 LEGISLATURE

Annual Report on the Hawaiʻi Medical Education Council

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November 2021
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INTRODUCTION

Executive Summary

Physician workforce shortages persist

Hawai‘i’s significant physician shortage persists. With an aging provider workforce, Hawai‘i falls short by more than 720 physicians when accounting for the neighbor island and specialty demands. This shortage remains more pronounced in all areas of the state outside of urban Honolulu. The shortage is projected to worsen as demand for medical care increases with an aging population burdened by increasing chronic illness and aging providers retiring or moving out of state. The most significant shortages statewide, on all islands, are in primary care (family medicine, primary care internal medicine, pediatrics, and geriatrics). Insufficient access to primary care frequently results in delays in care and more costly care in emergency departments or hospitals. Other specialties have significant shortages, including colorectal surgery, adult pulmonology, several pediatric subspecialties (including pulmonology and endocrinology), and several other medicine subspecialties (infectious disease, rheumatology, and endocrinology) reflecting the increasing chronic disease burden across the lifespan. The shortages are worse on the neighbor islands. Practicing physicians in all specialties were already closing practices to new Medicaid or Medicare patients pre-COVID. The pandemic has and continues to worsen the primary care and physician shortage crisis. The excess cost associated with avoidable emergency care is borne by the state and by Hawai‘i’s hospitals.

Why GME Matters

Physicians who train in Hawai‘i are far more likely to practice in Hawai‘i. (See Appendix D). Studies of Hawai‘i’s physician population consistently show that most Hawai‘i physicians have robust and long-standing family ties to our state. The University of Hawai‘i John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) is the medical school source for most of Hawai‘i’s physicians. Physicians who train in Hawai‘i-based residency programs (also known as Graduate Medical Education or GME programs) are more likely to practice and remain in Hawai‘i. The retention rate (i.e., practicing in Hawai‘i) for physicians who do both their medical school education and full GME training is nearly 80%.

Despite extreme physician shortages and the expansion of the JABSOM class size to 77 matriculants per year, there has been a contraction of overall GME positions in Hawai‘i from 241 (2009) to 230 (2021) [-5%]. Nationally, Hawai‘i is in the bottom quintile of GME positions per population. (See Appendix C)

Our GME programs, especially those in primary care, geriatrics, psychiatry (adults and children), and addiction medicine, serve a high proportion of O‘ahu’s most vulnerable populations – in both the outpatient and inpatient settings. The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare and accentuated existing health inequities. Our GME learners and faculty have been working with health system leaders to ensure our diverse populations suffering direct and indirect impacts of the pandemic receive the highest quality of care.

This downward trend in GME training positions based in Hawai‘i during critical physician shortages is of grave concern to this Council.

Decreased federal and local GME funding, resulting in loss of GME positions

Funding is the most significant barrier to expanding GME in Hawai‘i. The federal GME reimbursement from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to teaching hospitals has decreased substantially over the past several years. Despite new federal legislation
proposing a modest increase in GME positions, the current definitions do not favor Hawai‘i receiving priority scoring for allocations of new positions. Hawai‘i’s major community teaching hospitals (The Queen’s Health Systems hospitals, Hawai‘i Pacific Health system hospitals, Kuakini Medical Center) have historically funded the gap between the cost of GME and federal GME support for these programs. The economic impact of COVID-19 challenges our teaching hospitals to fund the growing gap between the actual cost of training and federal GME support due to declining reimbursement for medical care, steeply rising hospital costs, malpractice claims naming residents who function as trainees under the supervision of a fully licensed attending physicians and increasing amounts of under-compensated care for specific high-risk populations. As a result, significant GME training expansion in the next few years will not be possible on the shoulders of our health systems alone.

State reductions in funding to the UH and JABSOM have also resulted in reduced funding for crucial faculty needed to provide excellent teaching and expand selected GME programs. Thus, financing GME in a sustainable manner to address future provider training needs remains a critical challenge for JABSOM, teaching hospitals, and the state legislature.

Myriad other factors negatively impact our ability to retain our GME trainees in Hawai‘i or to attract and retain them to practice in the neighbor islands or more rural community settings. This report documents specific strategies to understand and reverse the decline of GME training opportunities and the resultant impact on the health of the peoples of Hawai‘i. Expanding GME to meet the needs of Hawai‘i’s population will require close collaboration and synergistic efforts with the state, teaching hospitals, private practicing physicians, businesses, private foundations, and federal government agencies, including the United States Department of Defense, United States Department of Veterans Affairs, and the United States Health and Human Services Departments.

The HMEC discussed these findings and recommendations in the context of the economic impact of COVID-19. One of the busiest parts of the state’s economy is the health care sector. Numerous studies have demonstrated a strong correlation between a healthy economy and the health and education conditions of the population. Having a vibrant medical school that addresses the underlying contributors to health disparities and brings federal dollars to Hawai‘i to address those mechanisms is critical to improving Hawai‘i’s overall health. Many medical school faculty have played active roles on the front lines at our health system facilities and with the Hawai‘i State Department of Health. As the state wrestles with the long-term consequences of the pandemic on health, a key economic growth area is in the health sciences through service delivery and federally supported innovation and discovery through research. Having sufficient faculty members who contribute to instruction and innovation/discovery will be essential to ramp up the health science sector and mobilize effective partnerships to assist in economic recovery.

**RECOMMENDATION #1**

UH/HMEC recommends that the 2022 State Legislature and State Executive Branch continue supporting and providing a State financial match to the Hawai‘i State Loan Repayment Program. Ideally, this match would be provided as a supplement to the annual Department of Health (DOH) budget with the explicit instruction for the DOH to annually transfer those funds to JABSOM as long as JABSOM oversees the health professional loan repayment program for Hawai‘i - including coordination of the National Loan Repayment Program Federal match for Hawai‘i.

**RECOMMENDATION #2**

UH/HMEC recommends that the 2022 State Legislature and State Executive Branch provide funding to support JABSOM faculty and staff members who implement enhanced training experiences in the neighbor islands and underserved populations throughout the state. Critical faculty and staff positions are needed to maintain and grow existing medical student and resident
rotations on the neighbor islands, maintain currently existing innovative programs, and assess the impact of these innovations on meeting the needs of underserved communities.

**RECOMMENDATION #3**

UH/HMEC recommends that the State Department of Human Services and other stakeholders develop a working group to explore the mechanisms and develop a plan to obtain future Federal Medicaid GME funding since many residency programs provide inpatient and ambulatory care for Medicaid populations.

**Statutes and Definitions**

The University of Hawai‘i System (UH) and its John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) administer two (2) statutes related to graduate medical education (GME) and addressing the severe physician shortage needs in Hawai‘i. *See excerpted text of statutes in Appendix A.*

- **[HRS § 304A-1701]** – **GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION (GME) PROGRAM** was established to formally encompass the administration of UH JABSOM’s institutional graduate medical education (GME) program.
- **[HRS §§304A-1702, 1703, 1704, 1705]** – **MEDICAL EDUCATION COUNCIL**, was created within UH JABSOM and called “The Hawai‘i Medical Education Council” (HMEC). HMEC was given the administrative **DUTIES AND POWERS** to:
  1. Analyze the State healthcare workforce for the present and future, focusing in particular on the state’s need for physicians;
  2. Assess the state’s healthcare training programs, focusing on UH JABSOM’s institutional GME enterprise to determine its ability to meet the workforce needs identified by HMEC;
  3. Recommend to the Legislature and UH Board of Regents (BOR) ways in which identified GME and other healthcare training programs can improve and change in order to effectively meet the HMEC assessment;
  4. Work with other entities and state agencies, and in consultation with the Legislature and BOR, develop and implement a Plan to ensure the adequate funding of healthcare training programs in the state, with an emphasis on UH JABSOM GME programs;
  5. Seek funding to implement the Plan from all public (county, state, and federal government) and private sources;
  6. Monitor and continue to improve the funding Plan; and,
  7. Submit an annual report to the Legislature no later than twenty days before the convening of each regular Legislative session.

HRS §304A-1701 defines “**GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION**” or **GME** as that period of clinical training of a physician following receipt of the medical doctor (or osteopathic doctor) degree and prior to the beginning of an independent practice of medicine.

“**GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM**” means a GME program accredited by the American Council on Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). UH JABSOM has maintained full ACGME institutional accreditation.

“**HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE**” includes physicians, nurses, physician assistants, psychologists, social workers, etc. “**HEALTHCARE TRAINING PROGRAMS**” means a healthcare training program that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting body.
HMEC Membership

Membership in the Hawai‘i Medical Education Council (HMEC) comprises eight Governor-appointed and Legislature-confirmed individuals and five ex-officio members depicted in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Hawai‘i Medical Education Council Membership &amp; Staff</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Member #</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Ex-Officio</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
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</table>

PART 1. FINDINGS

HMEC Meetings

Four (4) HMEC meetings were convened, and the recommendations are included in this report. In addition, agendas and minutes were posted on our JABSOM website as required for meetings held on January 25, April 26, July 26, and October 25, 2021. Appendix B shows a sample meeting agenda. Each item provides members with an opportunity for strategic brainstorming, synthesis, and development of specific next steps, recommendations, or directives to the HMEC/GME administrator.

Statutory Duties of HMEC

DUTY (1): Analyze the State healthcare workforce for the present and future, focusing in particular on the state’s need for physicians

The 2021 Hawai‘i Physician Workforce Assessment Project showed 3,293 physicians practicing in non-military settings in Hawai‘i. These physicians provide a total of 2,857 estimated full-time equivalents (FTE) of direct care to patients, an increase of 45 since 2020. However, there remains a shortage of about 500 FTE of physician services to meet the demand [Figure 1] and over 720 FTE short when examining specific island and specialty needs. Last year’s shortage numbers were over 1,000, but this difference may be due to a change in the demand model. Table 2 reflects the physician shortage by county. Table 3 shows the most significant shortages remain in primary care. However, other specialties and subspecialties are also needed throughout the state. Selected information from the Report to the 2022 Legislature, “Annual Report on Findings from the Hawai‘i Physician Workforce Assessment Project”, is included below.
The most significant number of physicians needed is in primary care (family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, and geriatrics), with 163 FTEs needed across the islands. The impact of the physician shortages on access to care is felt most severely on the neighbor islands because of the geographic limitations to access.

There are also significant shortages of Pediatric Gastroenterology (70%), Colorectal Surgery (66%), Adult Pulmonology (65%), Pediatric Pulmonology (64%), Pediatric Endocrinology (61%), Infectious Disease (58%), Thoracic Surgery (53%), Allergy & Immunology (50%), Rheumatology (50%), and Adult Endocrinology (49%) throughout the islands. Because of the relatively small population, most subspecialists (surgical or medical) would have insufficient patients to maintain a full-time practice on a neighbor island. Insufficient behavioral health providers (physicians and non-physicians) remain a challenge on every island, especially in Hawai'i, Maui, and Kauai counties. The lack of access likely influences continued high chemical dependency rates and suicide.

Physician retirement is a significant factor in widening the gap between demand and supply. About half (48%) of practicing Hawai'i physicians are older than 55, with 22% already over 65, which means they will likely retire within 5-10 years. In addition, payment transformation and other significant health system changes are pushing some older physicians in small offices...
(those with less than five physicians per practice) toward early retirement. On average, Hawai‘i loses an average of 50 FTE of physicians annually due to retirement. In the three years of 2017-19, at least 223 physicians retired, and 385 are known to have left the state. In 2020, at least 110 retired, at least 139 left the state, and 120 decreased their time in practice, and in 2021, at least 71 retired, nine passed away, 154 moved out of state, and 46 decreased their work time.

- The JABSOM GME programs graduate about 85 residents and fellows per year. Still, most surgeons and orthopedic surgeons, about half of pediatricians, and about two-thirds of internal medicine residents go to the continental US for sub-specialty fellowships. Many of those with Hawai‘i ties do eventually return home. Still, their return may be 10-15 years later, depending on the specialty and the availability of Hawai‘i jobs that account for the high cost of living. The Hawai‘i Island Family Medicine Residency Program (Hawai‘i Health Systems Corporation (HHSC-sponsored)) graduated six physicians in 2021 and will soon graduate five physicians in 2022. Most of their graduates thus far have stayed in Hawai‘i to practice. The Kaiser Permanente Internal Medicine Residency Program graduates five per year, with five of their recent graduates currently practicing primary care internal medicine in Hawai‘i.

- Appendix D provides a snapshot of JABSOM medical school or GME graduates practicing in Federally or State-designated health professions shortage areas or medically underserved areas.

**DUTY (2): Assess the State’s healthcare training programs, focusing on UH JABSOM’s Institutional GME enterprise to determine its ability to meet the workforce needs identified by HMEC**

The GME programs of UH JABSOM are fully accredited and in compliance with accreditation requirements. The UH JABSOM is the Sponsoring Institution for nineteen ACGME accredited programs (Table 4). Without a UH-owned-and-operated hospital, beginning in 1965, UH JABSOM formed collaborations with private community hospitals/clinics and state and federal health care departments and agencies to form an integrated network of teaching hospitals/clinics. UH JABSOM learners, i.e., residents and fellows (and 3rd and 4th-year medical students), are educated and trained within this network of clinical learning environments. In addition, the core teaching hospitals and clinics house UH JABSOM’s eight clinical departments: Family Medicine (Hawai‘i Pacific Health-Pali Momi Medical Center), Geriatric Medicine (Kuakini Medical Center and Queen’s Medical Center), Obstetrics/Gynecology and Pediatrics (Hawai‘i Pacific Health-Kapi‘olani Medical Center and Queen’s Medical Center), and Internal Medicine, Pathology, Psychiatry and Surgery (The Queen’s Medical Center).

An average of 230 physician-trainees (residents and fellows) train annually in our accredited GME programs listed in Table 4. About a third of these physicians are graduates from JABSOM, a third from US Medical Schools outside Hawai‘i, and a third from international medical schools.¹ This mix of Hawai‘i, US national, and international medical graduates (IMG) is ideal for Hawai‘i-based GME programs. It is particularly appropriate for Hawai‘i with its diverse, multicultural population of indigenous and migrant ethnic groups. JABSOM’s GME programs produce primary care, specialty, and subspecialty physicians who become independent licensed practitioners in Hawai‘i and the US. A few practice in Guam and many JABSOM faculty (who were once JABSOM students or residents) provide training to health providers in Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, the Compact of Free Association nations, i.e., Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands. A few

¹ Since 2002, the number of available residency positions across the U.S. has exceeded the combined numbers of graduates from U.S. allopathic and osteopathic medical schools. According to the 2020 National Residency Match Program report, 77% of PGY-1 positions were filled with U.S. graduates, 10% of positions were filled by U.S. citizen-IMG, and 13% filled by non-U.S. IMG.
graduates have returned to Japan to transform the medical education system to become more consistent with the competency-based training model used by all ACGME-accredited residency and fellowship programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JABSOM GME PROGRAM</th>
<th>2009 Actual Positions</th>
<th>*2009 Additional Positions Needed to Address Shortage</th>
<th>2021 Actual GME Positions</th>
<th>Current GAP positions</th>
<th>Desired Total GME Positions in 2025</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CORE RESIDENCY PROGRAMS (8):</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Medicine (FM)(^A)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internal Medicine (IM)(^B)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>67</td>
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<tr>
<td>Obstetrics &amp; Gynecology (OB/GYN)</td>
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<td>Orthopedic Surgery (ORTHO)</td>
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<td>Pathology (PATH)</td>
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<td>Pediatrics (Peds)</td>
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<td>Surgery (SURG)(^D)</td>
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<td><strong>Core Program TOTALS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>SUBSPECIALTY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS (11):</strong></td>
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<td>IM – Cardiovascular Disease (CVD)(^E)</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>IM – Geriatric Medicine (Geri-Med)</td>
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<td>OB/GYN – Maternal Fetal Medicine (MFM)</td>
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<td>OB/GYN – Complex Family Planning (CFP)</td>
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<td>Peds-Neonatal Perinatal (Neo-Peri)</td>
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<td>PSY-Addictions Psychiatry (Addict-PSY)</td>
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<td>PSY-Child &amp; Adolescent Psychiatry (CAP)(^F)</td>
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<td>PSY-Geriatric Psychiatry (Geri-PSY)</td>
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<td>SURG-Surgical Critical Care</td>
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<td><strong>Subspecialty Program TOTALS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Core + Subspecialty TOTALS</strong></td>
<td>241</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>55(^*)</td>
<td>288</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

\(^*\)Current GAP positions mean there is no funding allocated. CVD was recently approved for increased positions starting in 2022, so for Table 4 purposes, we are not including these three positions in the gap column.

Priorities for new or expanded GME programs at JABSOM (superscripts are from Table 4).

\(^A\) Family Medicine (FM) (3-year core program). Given the high need for primary care, as well as the FM Program’s track record of retaining 80-85% of their graduates in Hawai‘i (including several on Hawai‘i Island, Maui, and Kaua‘i), the short-term goal was to expand the program to 21 residents over the next 3-4 years was met. If resources allow, further expansion to 24 residents would occur in 5-6 years. Ideally, the UH Family Medicine program would have 36 residents, with at least 12 in rural training tracks, where the last two years of their training would be done on a neighbor island (i.e., Kaua‘i, Maui). Expansion to the neighbor islands requires teaching and clinical space, faculty resources, and judicious use of telehealth to connect to specialists and FM colleagues on O‘ahu.

\(^B\) IM – Subspecialty programs and fellowships. Gastroenterology (3-year Fellowship) – This subspecialty remains highly needed, especially given the increased prevalence of liver disease in specific Asian and Pacific populations and more endoscopic procedural needs in the elderly. Medical Oncology (2-year Fellowship) – Given the high burden of cancer, which is expected to
increase as Hawai‘i’s population ages, and the anticipated retirement of almost 25% of our current oncology workforce within the next ten years, we are starting to explore developing a small medical oncology fellowship (1-2 fellows per year). More academic subspecialty faculty members would first need to be hired before pursuing either of these options actively. Exploration of the fellowships and other medicine subspecialty programs (such as neurology) is presently on hold due to the severe resource restrictions worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. The core Internal Medicine program has developed a Primary Care Track and had increasing numbers of recent graduates choosing careers in Primary Care. The primary care track requires continued expansion of residents, faculty, and practice sites.

\(^C\) Addiction Medicine (ADM) (1-year fellowship). Due to the high prevalence of substance use disorders and chronic medical and social conditions resulting from addiction to various substances, we successfully created this ACGME approved fellowship that began on July 1, 2019, with one fellow. The fellow is trained in inpatient and emergency settings and ambulatory and community-based settings so that important primary care-behavioral health integration and complex care management can be well-coordinated across settings and providers. As resources expand, we aim to train 2 Fellows per year.

\(^D\) General Surgery (SURG) (5-year core program). Gradual expansion to 25 residents per year (graduating five new surgeons annually) will allow for increased training on the neighbor islands and Leeward O‘ahu. However, significantly increasing the neighbor island training will require some additional faculty resources and sufficient patient volume. Ideally, all patients requiring emergency surgery should be able to receive it within an hour on their island. The aging surgical workforce is also of significant concern. Emergency Medicine (EM) (3-year core program) – There remains a high need for more emergency medicine physicians on Maui and Hawai‘i Island, according to the latest workforce modeling. Given the shortage of primary care (and other specialties) physicians across the state, our hospitals’ emergency departments (with their emergency physicians) provide a safety net for many who seek health care in Hawai‘i and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. The possibility of a joint program with Tripler Army Medical Center continues to be discussed. Still, it is not likely to occur soon due to fiscal and other constraints resulting from the pandemic.

\(^E\) *Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) (3-year fellowship). Given the increasing burden of cardiovascular diseases in Hawai‘i, including heart failure, ischemic heart disease, valvular heart disease, and more children with congenital heart disease living well into adulthood, the CVD program recently received funding and approval to recruit four fellows per year, growing the program to 12 fellows by 2024. In addition, the expansion of fellows and faculty will allow us to explore the feasibility of having some components of training done on the neighbor islands.

\(^F\) Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (CAP) (2-year fellowship). The COVID-19 pandemic has acutely exacerbated pre-existing shortages in caring for this highly vulnerable population of children and adolescents. Lack of inpatient beds and provider shortages impact wait times and increase the risk of successful suicide attempts. In addition, insufficient providers and programs in ambulatory settings increase the risk of poor performance in school, which negatively impacts the individual’s potential to be a healthy, independent, and contributing adult. Funding is needed to restore the program to 6 fellows (3 per year) and to increase faculty providers to expand services on the neighbor islands, in particular.

**Significant Gaps remain in the number of GME positions needed**
• Table 4 shows the large current gap of 55 positions in GME needed to address both current and 2022 projected Hawai‘i Workforce Shortages. Additionally, the total number of GME positions is 11 less than it was in 2009.

• Before the pandemic, there was insufficient and declining federal and hospital funding and little state funding for more resident/fellow positions. The pandemic has worsened this situation.

• Resources beyond resident positions and administrative support are also needed for training faculty members and additional clinical training sites to ensure the provision of appropriate clinical supervision in the context of providing high quality and safe patient care. Currently, many of the patients cared for on the academic teaching services are under-or uninsured or highly medically and socially complex.

Continuing work on improving retention (or return to Hawai‘i) of GME program graduates

• JABSOM has increased its class size to maximum capacity given physical space constraints at the Kaka‘ako campus and crowded clinical rotations on O‘ahu. Since July 2019, JABSOM has accepted seventy-seven (77) medical students. In July 2021, eight self-identified as Native Hawaiians entered the UH JABSOM class of 2025 from a pool of 2,894 applicants. Sixty-three (82%) of the entering students attended high school in Hawai‘i, and 24 (31%) were graduates of UH. The new class includes five residents from Hawai‘i Island and two from Maui. Sixty are from O‘ahu, and seven of the new class earned their way into the Class of 2025 through the challenging one-year ‘Imi Hoʻōla Post-Baccalaureate Program. Eleven students are from the US Mainland or Canada and one from Guam, reflecting the JABSOM mission to provide medical education opportunities for the children of Hawai‘i and the Pacific Islands.

• Many of our GME programs retain more than 80% of their program graduates who also completed their medical education at JABSOM: Family Medicine, Obstetrics-Gynecology, Complex Family Planning, Geriatrics, General Psychiatry, Addiction Psychiatry, Addiction Medicine, and Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. In Pediatrics, those who subspecialize after residency often return to Hawai‘i. Internal Medicine is also steadily improving in retention or return of their graduates (these numbers include the internal medicine subspecialties, in addition to primary care). All GME programs are recruiting residents who are more likely to practice in Hawai‘i, but the National Resident Matching Program rules disallow direct recruitment or guaranteed placement. Therefore our programs do not have complete control over who is hired into the residency program. For those programs whose graduates continue in subspecialty fellowships on the continental US, those with Hawai‘i ties eventually return home, but it may be 10-15 years later, depending on the specialty.

• Continued work is needed to develop more teachers of JABSOM students and residents throughout the state as further increases in medical student class size and residency (GME) positions will require additional faculty for both teaching and supervision. Graduates of our GME programs are being actively recruited to help fill this gap.

Additional barriers to physician retention that must be addressed

• High student loan burden combined with lower salaries and reimbursement rates (compared to other parts of the country) and the very high cost of living in Hawai‘i may entice JABSOM graduates to the continental US. Our GME residents and fellows, including those who attended medical school in the continental US, carry an average educational debt load of about $260,000. However, those trained at JABSOM (because 90% are State residents) have less debt (median debt of $177,500 for those graduating in 2021). In addition, many Hawai‘i
residents whose families live on O’ahu can live with their families during their training. This lower debt burden makes it more attractive for them to practice in Hawai’i. However, we note that in 2021, 32% of JABSOM graduates had a combined educational debt equal to or more than $200,000. Additionally, about 89% of JABSOM students receive some form of financial aid. Changes in loan repayment policies mean that prolonged payment deferral is no longer an option. Continued growth of philanthropy (4-year scholarships including tuition and fees, with a service commitment) is needed to recruit talented and promising Hawai’i students to JABSOM. Expansion of loan repayment programs or scholarships, especially those prioritizing practice in rural areas or with underserved communities, helps attract our JABSOM graduates to help meet our state’s workforce needs.

- Rapid changes in medicine and reimbursement sway many young physicians away from primary care specialties and ambulatory practices in the communities where they are most needed. As a result, local health systems and insurers need to work together to create attractive and meaningful jobs for JABSOM graduates and other Hawai’i-born physicians who have completed their schooling in the continental US. In addition, more group practices with staffing to provide team-based, high-quality care are needed, especially on the neighbor islands.

- The disturbing trend of JABSOM residents being named as parties in malpractice claims during training – when they were providing proper care while supervised by a fully licensed physician as a part of the resident’s formal training program – has further limited our teaching hospitals’ ability to fully fund GME and consider expanding residency positions in high-need specialties. In addition, being named in a malpractice claim during training, even when the trainee is subsequently removed from the claim, has discouraged residents from accepting future jobs in Hawai’i.

GME Programs Outside of JABSOM

- In addition to the UH GME programs, Hawai’i Health Systems Corporation (HHSC) Hilo Medical Center has welcomed its eighth class of residents to the Hawai’i Island Family Medicine Residency Program. In 2021, they have 15 residents and hope to increase to 18 residents total (6 graduates per year) over the next few years.

- Kaiser Permanente on O‘ahu recruited their seventh class of five (5) residents to its Internal Medicine Residency Program and currently has 16 residents.

- Tripler Army Medical Center’s (TAMC) 11 GME programs also continue to help serve the physician workforce needs of the military community. Some of those trained at TAMC eventually return to Hawai’i to practice in the military and then the civilian community upon retirement. Of note, three recent graduates of TAMC GME programs have remained in Hawai’i to practice. UH also jointly sponsors our neonatal-perinatal fellowship with TAMC. Recent fellows have been active-duty military.

Funding GME is the largest barrier to JABSOM’s ability to meet workforce needs
Declining federal and hospital funding of GME is a challenge for the state of Hawai’i because Hawai’i, unlike most states, does not currently directly appropriate state funds for GME. Hawai’i also does not have access to Federal Medicaid GME funding. For these reasons, a significant focus of HMEC since 2016 has been to strengthen partnerships and examine possibilities for additional GME resources.

State-level collaboration and coordination of GME efforts are needed
• To the extent possible, it is in Hawai‘i’s best interest to have the HMEC serve as a systems-level forum through which statewide strategic planning of GME programs can help find the optimal economies of scale to train and deploy graduating residents/fellows into the physician workforce.

• Currently, there is a strong collaboration with the Veterans Administration (VA) Pacific Islands Healthcare System. The VA representative on the HMEC provides essential information regarding current and anticipated VA needs and how the UH GME programs may help the VA meet future workforce needs, particularly outside of urban Honolulu on neighbor Hawaiian Islands, Guam, and American Samoa. Several GME programs train their residents and fellows in VA sites throughout Hawai‘i and the Pacific. Given different curricular requirements and clinical constraints at the VA, we have maximized the different rotation opportunities in Family Medicine, Geriatrics, and Psychiatry. In addition, we are exploring options to expand training in addictions for general psychiatry residents, addiction medicine, and addiction psychiatry fellows.

• As part of a long-standing collaboration with the Tripler Army Medical Center (TAMC), several UH residency and fellowship programs have a portion of their clinical rotations at TAMC. Similarly, several TAMC programs rotate their residents at The Queen’s Medical Center and Kapi‘olani Medical Center for Women and Children. In addition, the only neonatology program in the U.S. Pacific is shared between UH and TAMC.

• In July 2020, the Family Medicine ambulatory teaching site was successfully relocated to the Pali Momi Outpatient Center, adjacent to the hospital campus. The program gradually expanded from 18 to 21 residents. A key, and as yet unfunded, component of the business plan and consortium model included securing State funding to permit the growth of the Family Medicine residency as required to meet the primary care and family medicine shortages on O‘ahu, Maui, and Kaua‘i. Almost 85% of the UH FMRP graduates since 2007 currently practice in Hawai‘i, with many serving rural and underserved populations. Securing necessary resources for statewide expansion of the FMRP is critical. The demand is much higher than the current supply of Family Medicine residency graduates, even with the Hawai‘i Island Family Medicine Program (providing an additional 5-6 graduates per year). Full expansion of the UH Family Medicine residency remains a long-term goal, but we will not fully pursue this until the health care systems and economy recover more.

• Stronger partnerships between local health systems and JABSOM are now in place to attract and retain academic faculty committed to working with diverse populations, teaching, and conducting scholarly activity to reduce health disparities and improve health for all of Hawai‘i’s populations. In September-November 2021, JABSOM physician faculty who were part of the University Health Partners of Hawai‘i faculty practice have joined with either the Queen’s University Medical Group or the Hawai‘i Pacific Health Medical Group. Both health systems and JABSOM have committed to further strategic priorities which will ultimately improve access to care and the health of Hawai‘i residents. These partnerships are critical for both medical student education and residency/fellowship GME training.

DUTY (3): Recommend to the Legislature and UH Board of Regents (BOR) ways in which identified GME and other healthcare training programs can improve and change in order to effectively meet the HMEC assessment

The JABSOM’s Institutional Program and its 19 UH GME training programs are fully accredited and continually address any citations, concerns, or anticipated threats to success. The Annual Institutional Review meeting in September 2021 refined the numerous activities used for
continuous improvement of the Institution (across programs) and to support program-specific quality improvement efforts. In addition, starting in late 2016, the JABSOM GME programs, their primary hospital partner training sites, and key community stakeholders, including the HMEC, started a long-term strategic planning process aimed at identifying viable and sustainable strategies to develop a physician workforce which continues to advance the health and well-being of the people of Hawai‘i. The HMEC, JABSOM, and key stakeholders continue to work on these strategic areas:

1. Secure additional resources to maintain and expand GME programs. This includes funding for resident positions, supplemental educational activities, and additional faculty and clinical training sites (especially on the neighbor islands).

2. Develop a multi-pronged approach to improve physician retention in Hawai‘i. This includes ongoing activities before and during residency training and a significant need to engage health systems, insurers, the state, and other partners to make Hawai‘i a desirable place to practice – especially for new graduates with educational debt. Nationally, new medical school graduates have an average of $200,000 in educational debt to address while completing their residency training.

3. In partnership with the health systems and insurers, develop strategies to address and prevent physician burnout and promote physician well-being.

4. Expand neighbor island and telehealth training opportunities for residents and fellows. Numerous national studies prove that the best ways to attract and retain physicians in rural settings are to ‘grow your own’ and provide clinical training embedded within local community clinics and hospitals. Resources will be needed to develop clinical sites and faculty, as well as for resident housing and transportation. The current lack of these resources constrains most programs’ ability to offer neighbor island rotations. HMEC recommendation #2 specifically addresses the need for core compensated faculty members and educational space in neighbor islands. Faculty members who have dedicated administrative, teaching, faculty development, and scholarly activity duties and expectations are needed to ensure the consistent and high-quality medical education that is required by the various accrediting bodies.

5. Incorporate more aspects of population health and interprofessional education and training into all GME programs to better equip future physicians to practice in team-based, patient and population-centered clinical settings. This effort includes primary care-behavioral health integration.

DUTY (4): Work with other entities and state agencies, and in consultation with the Legislature and BOR, develop and implement a Plan to ensure the adequate funding of healthcare training programs in the state, with an emphasis on JABSOM GME programs

RECOMMENDATION #1
UH/HMEC recommends that the 2022 State Legislature and State Executive Branch continue supporting and providing a State financial match to the Hawai‘i State Loan Repayment Program. Ideally, this match would be provided as a supplement to the annual Department of Health (DOH) budget with the explicit instruction for the DOH to annually transfer those funds to JABSOM as long as JABSOM oversees the health professional loan repayment program for Hawai‘i - including coordination of the National Loan Repayment Program Federal match for Hawai‘i.

RECOMMENDATION #2
UH/HMEC recommends that the 2022 State Legislature and State Executive Branch provide funding to support JABSOM faculty and staff who implement enhanced training experiences in
the neighbor islands and underserved populations throughout the state. Critical faculty and staff positions are needed to maintain and grow existing medical student and resident rotations on the neighbor islands, maintain currently existing innovative programs, and assess the impact of these innovations on meeting the needs of underserved communities.

**RECOMMENDATION #3**

UH/HMEC recommends that the State Department of Human Services and other stakeholders develop a working group to explore the mechanisms and develop a plan to obtain future Federal Medicaid GME funding since many residency programs provide inpatient and ambulatory care for Medicaid populations.

- In FY2017, twenty-eight States (not Hawai‘i) and Washington DC made separate GME payments directly to teaching hospitals, managed care organizations, or teaching programs under managed care contracts\(^2\). Hawai‘i is not one of them. States do not separately report GME payments that are included in base payment rates to hospitals.
- Strategies to also explore include, but are not limited to, alternative arrangements with health insurers, Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment Programs (DSRIP or DSRIP-like),\(^3\) an all-payer GME financing models.

**DUTY (5): Seek funding to implement the Plan from all public (county, state, and federal government) and private sources**

- Federal and private funding to retain health providers through loan repayment programs was obtained in 2012. The 2017 Legislature and Governor Ige approved matching funds to increase the number of educational loan repayments offered through the Hawai‘i State Loan Repayment Program. The program works to retain existing primary care and behavioral health providers through loan repayment, contingent on a commitment to practice in a Health Professions Shortage Area in Hawai‘i for two years after loan repayment. Efforts will continue to demonstrate the long-term effectiveness and seek renewal of matching funds this year and for longer durations of time. (HMEC Recommendation #1)
- The Hawai‘i/Pacific Basin Area Health Education Center (AHEC)’s three Federal grants support the “Pre-Health Career Core” program that establishes a pathway for health careers. The program has already recruited more than 500 high school and college students interested in health careers. The program is funded for four years and covers health sciences, shadowing, mentoring, research experiences, and Medical College Admissions Test preparation. These and other JABSOM pathway programs target students of Native Hawaiian descent and public-school students from medically underserved areas, including the neighbor islands.
- Philanthropic support for 4-year scholarships to medical school will need to increase. Currently, about 29% of JABSOM first-year students have 4-year scholarships. Eighty-nine percent of JABSOM students receive some form of scholarship or other financial aid. Reducing the educational debt for JABSOM graduates will allow those considering high need specialties (for Hawai‘i) to choose to stay in Hawai‘i, with its high cost of living and a generally lower salary, compared to some markets in the continental US. Some states have provided such scholarship funds to the state medical school.

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• Restoration of state funding to support JABSOM faculty and staff members is needed to preserve our excellence in medical education, including expanding current training on the neighbor islands and with underserved populations throughout the state. (HMEC Recommendation #2)

• Continued work with our major health system partners as detailed in Duty 2 and 3 (pages 12-13). These partnerships allow for system improvements and some additional resources to support faculty in achieving excellent clinical learning opportunities for our medical students and residents/fellows.

• Legislative funding to support the Primary care consortium training and thus expand Family Medicine residency training was sought in 2016 but was not released by the Governor.

• Work will be undertaken with key stakeholders to explore obtaining Federal Medicaid GME funding (HMEC Recommendation #3).

DUTY (6): Monitor and continue to improve the funding Plan

See recommendations under DUTY 4 and DUTY 5.

Monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the plans to stabilize and grow GME in the shortage specialties will be done by JABSOM’s Graduate Medical Education Committee (GMEC), with oversight by the Office of the Designated Institutional Official (DIO) and HMEC. A summary of the results shall be submitted to the Legislature in our annual HMEC report.

DUTY (7): Submit an annual report to the Legislature no later than twenty days before the convening of each regular Legislative session.

Please see this report to the legislature.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerris R. Hedges, MD, MS, MMM.
Professor & Dean and Chair of HMEC
Barry & Virginia Weinman - Endowed Chair
John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa
Part II. Summary

HMEC Recommendations to 2022 Legislature

RECOMMENDATION #1
UH/HMEC recommends that the 2022 State Legislature and State Executive Branch continue supporting and providing a State financial match to the Hawai‘i State Loan Repayment Program. Ideally, this match would be provided as a supplement to the annual Department of Health (DOH) budget with the explicit instruction for the DOH to annually transfer those funds to JABSOM as long as JABSOM oversees the health professional loan repayment program for Hawai‘i - including coordination of the National Loan Repayment Program Federal match for Hawai‘i.

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UH/HMEC recommends that the 2022 State Legislature and State Executive Branch provide funding to support JABSOM faculty and staff who implement enhanced training experiences in the neighbor islands and underserved populations throughout the state. Critical faculty and staff positions are needed to maintain and grow existing medical student and resident rotations on the neighbor islands, maintain currently existing innovative programs, and assess the impact of these innovations on meeting the needs of underserved communities.

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UH/HMEC recommends that the State Department of Human Services and other stakeholders develop a working group to explore the mechanisms and develop a plan to obtain future Federal Medicaid GME funding since many residency programs provide inpatient and ambulatory care for Medicaid populations.
Part III. Appendix

Appendix A: State Statutes Related to HMEC

HRS excerpts below were downloaded on December 22, 2014 from the following sites:
HRS0304A-1701 Definitions
HRS0304A-1702 Graduate Medical Education Program
HRS0304A-1703 Medical Education Council
HRS0304A-1704 Council Duties
HRS0304A-1705 Council Powers

CHAPTER 304A
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

Part I. System Structure Section

Part IV. Divisions, Departments, and Programs

J. Medical Education Council
304A-1701 Definitions
304A-1702 Graduate medical education program
304A-1703 Medical education council
304A-1704 Council duties
304A-1705 Council powers

J. MEDICAL EDUCATION COUNCIL

[§304A-1701] Definitions. As used in this subpart:
- “Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services” means the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services within the United States Department of Health and Human Services.
- “Council” means the medical education council created under section [304A-1703].
- “Graduate medical education” means that period of clinical training of a physician following receipt of the medical doctor degree and prior to the beginning of an independent practice of medicine.
- “Graduate medical education program” means a graduate medical education training program accredited by the American Council on Graduate Medical Education.
- “Healthcare training program” means a healthcare training program that is accredited by a nationally-recognized accrediting body. [L 2006, c 75, pt of §2]

[§304A-1702] Graduate Medical Education Program.

a) There is created a graduate medical education program to be administered by the medical education council in cooperation with the department of health.

b) The program shall be funded with moneys received for graduate medical education and deposited into the Hawai‘i medical education special fund established under section [304A-2164].

c) All funding for the graduate medical education program shall be nonlapsing.

d) Program moneys shall only be expended if:
   1) Approved by the medical education council; and
   2) Used for graduate medical education in accordance with sections [304A-1704] and [304A-1705]. [L 2006, c 75, pt of §2]


A. There is established within the University of Hawai‘i, the medical education council consisting of the following thirteen members:

   1) The dean of the school of medicine at the University of Hawai‘i;
   2) The dean of the school of nursing and dental hygiene at the University of Hawai‘i;
3) The vice dean for academic affairs at the school of medicine who represents graduate medical education at the University of Hawai‘i;
4) The director of health or the director’s designated representative;
5) The director of the Cancer Research Center of Hawai‘i; and
6) Eight persons to be appointed by the governor as follows:
   a. Three persons each of whom shall represent a different hospital at which accredited graduate medical education programs are conducted;
   b. Three persons each of whom represent the health professions community;
   c. One person who represents the federal healthcare sector; and
   d. One person from the general public.
B. Except as provided in subsection (a) (1), (2), (3), and (4), no two council members may be employed by or affiliated with the same:
   1) Institution of higher education;
   2) State agency outside of higher education; or
   3) Private entity.
C. Terms of office of council members shall be as follows:
   1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the dean of the school of medicine, dean of the school of nursing and dental hygiene, vice dean for academic affairs of the school of medicine at the University of Hawai‘i, and the director of health, or the director’s designated representative, shall be permanent ex officio members of the Council, and the remaining nonpermanent council members shall be appointed to four-year terms of office;
   2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the governor at the time of the initial appointment shall reduce the terms of four nonpermanent council members to two years to ensure that approximately half of the nonpermanent council members are appointed every two years; and
   3) If a vacancy occurs in the membership for any reason, the replacement shall be appointed by the governor for the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment was made.
D. The dean of the school of medicine at the University of Hawai‘i shall chair the Council. The Council shall annually elect a vice chair from among the members of the Council.
E. All council members shall have voting rights. A majority of the council members shall constitute a quorum. The action of a majority of a quorum shall be the action of the Council.
F. Per diem and expenses incurred in the performance of official duties may be paid to a council member who:
   a. Is not a government employee; or
   b. Is a government employee, but does not receive salary, per diem, or expenses from the council member’s employing unit for service to the Council.
A council member may decline to receive per diem and expenses for service to the Council. [L 2006, c 75, pt of §2]

[§304A-1704] Council Duties. The medical education council shall:
1) Conduct a comprehensive analysis of the healthcare workforce requirements of the state for the present and the future, focusing in particular on the state’s need for physicians;
2) Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the state’s healthcare training programs, focusing in particular on graduate medical education programs and their role in and ability to meet the healthcare workforce requirements identified by the Council;
3) Recommend to the legislature and the board of regents changes in or additions to the healthcare training programs in the state identified by the Council’s assessment;
4) Work with other entities and state agencies as necessary, develop a plan to ensure the adequate funding of healthcare training programs in the state, with an emphasis on graduate medical education programs, and after consultation with the legislature and the board of regents, implement the plan. The plan shall specify the funding sources for healthcare training programs and establish the methodology for funding disbursement. Funds shall be expended for the types of costs normally associated with healthcare training programs, including but not limited to physician salaries and other
operating and administrative costs. The plan may include the submission of an application 
in accordance with federal law for a demonstration project to the Centers for Medicaid and 
Medicare Services, for the purpose of receiving and disbursing federal funds for direct and 
indirect graduate medical education expenses;
5) Seek funding from public sources, including state and federal government, and private 
sources to support the plan required in paragraph (4);
6) Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the plan required in paragraph (4), 
making such modifications as may be required by future developments and changing 
needs and after consulting with the legislature and the board of regents, as appropriate; 
and
7) Submit a summary report to the legislature no later than twenty days before the convening 
of each regular session, of the expenditures of program moneys authorized by the Council 
under this subpart. [L 2006, c 75, pt of §2]

§304A-1705 Council Powers. The medical education council may:
1) Conduct surveys, with the assistance of the department of health and the department of 
commerce and consumer affairs, to assess and meet changing market and education 
needs;
2) Appoint advisory committees of broad representation on interdisciplinary clinical 
education, workforce mix planning and projections, funding mechanisms, and other topics 
as is necessary;
3) Use federal moneys for necessary administrative expenses to carry out its duties and 
powers as permitted by federal law;
4) Distribute program moneys in accordance with this subpart; provided that any 
expenditures authorized shall be for a public purpose and shall not be subject to chapters 
42F, 103, 103D, and 103F;
5) Hire employees not subject to chapters 76 and 89 necessary to carry out its duties under 
this subpart; and
6) Adopt rules in accordance with chapter 91, necessary to carry out the purposes of this 
subpart. [L 2006, c 75, pt of §2]
Appendix B: Sample HMEC Meeting Agenda

Figure 2: Sample HMEC Meeting Agenda

AGENDA

1. Review & Approval of Minutes – Dr. Hedges
2. Report from HMEC Chair – Dr. Hedges
   a. Announcements/Discussion
      i. Impacts and adjustments due to COVID-19
      ii. Graduate Medical Education updates – Lee Buenconsejo-Lum
   b. Update on Legislative Strategies – Jerris Hedges and Cynthia Nakamura
3. Physician Workforce Data Updates & Synergies - Aimee Grace & Kelley Wihley
   a. Preceptor Tax Credit Update
   b. Physician Workforce
   c. Federal Appropriations Update
4. HMEC Recommendations to propose to the 2021 Legislature - Lee Buenconsejo-Lum

2020 RECOMMENDATION #1
UH HMEC recommends that the 2020 State Legislature and State Executive Branch continue to support and provide a State match to continue the Hawaii State Loan Repayment Program. Ideally, this match would be provided as a supplement to the annual Department of Health (DOH) budget with the explicit instruction for the DOH to annually transfer those funds to JABSOM as long as JABSOM oversees the health professional loan repayment program for Hawaii, including coordination of the National Loan Repayment Program Federal match.

2020 RECOMMENDATION #2
UH HMEC recommends that the 2020 State Legislature and State Executive Branch support the expansion of JABSOM faculty and staff to provide satellite educational programs for year round undergraduate medical education on Hawaii and Maui Islands which will allow expansion of the medical school class size with more neighbor island medical education, and will allow exploration of residency training expansion to these islands.

2020 RECOMMENDATION #3
UH HMEC recommends that the 2020 State Department of Human Services and other stakeholders explore the mechanisms to obtain Federal Medicaid GME funding once many of the residency programs provide inpatient and ambulatory care for Medicaid populations.

5. Additional Items - Next HMEC Meeting
6. Adjournment
Appendix C: Number of Medicare-funded GME training positions by state, per 100,000 populations, 2010


Figure 3: Appendix C: Number of Medicare-funded GME training positions by state, per 100,000 populations, 2010

Note: Hawai’i is in the lowest category (1.63-13.84 training positions per 100,000 population)
Figure 4: Appendix D: Where JABSOM medical school/GME program graduates practice as of October 2017.

Appendix D: Rural or Underserved areas of Hawai‘i, where UH JABSOM Medical School or GME program graduates practice.

Map showing the distribution of JABSOM graduates practicing in underserved areas of Hawai‘i, with annotations indicating specific regions and practice locations.