

Summary of NCWorks CCP Certification Application
Document edited to remove supporting documents
and references.

Career Pathways Title: *Healthcare in Nursing, Diagnostic & Technical, and Administrative.*

Sector: Healthcare

Prosperity Zone: Western Region

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Overview

The Mountain Area Workforce Development Board serves a 4 county area in the Western Prosperity Zone of North Carolina. The 4 counties served are: Madison, Buncombe, Henderson, and Transylvania. The region is home to the largest population centers in western North Carolina. Buncombe County is home to a large base of the regional medical provider ecosystem. Hospitals in the region are often the largest employer in the county in which they are located. The region's largest health care provider is Mission Health System based in Asheville. With over 10,000 employees, Mission Health is one of the largest private sector employers west of Charlotte. Mission Health serves the 18 westernmost counties of NC with hospitals in Franklin, Spruce Pine, Highlands, Marion and Brevard. Their flagship facility in Asheville is licensed for 763 acute care beds and is the only dedicated Level II trauma center in the region. Mission Health employs over 500 physicians and advanced practitioners. Mission Health includes post-acute care provider CarePartners, and an independent long-term acute care provider Asheville Specialty Hospital.

The other hospitals in the region including Charles A George Veterans Administration Medical Center (VAMC), Pardee- UNC Health Care, Park Ridge Health all have over 1,000 employees each.

The Charles A George VA Medical Center is a comprehensive hospital offering a full array of healthcare services, extended care and rehabilitation and community based outpatient clinics including outpatient clinics in Franklin (Macon County), Hickory (Catawba County) and Rutherford County.

Pardee UNG Healthcare primarily serves Henderson County and is managed with an agreement between Henderson County Government and UNC Health Care. Pardee UNC Health Care hospital is licensed for 222 acute care beds and has more than 230 physicians and specialists on the medical staff. Pardee UNC Health Care has affiliated physician practices throughout the region.

Park Ridge Health is part of the Adventist Health System and serves several counties in the region through their hospital in Fletcher as well as outpatient and affiliated physician practices throughout the region.

The region has an extensive number of physician primary care and specialty practices. Some of these practices are affiliated with a hospital but some remain independent.

The region also has an extensive number of long-term care facilities, assisted living and retirement communities. The largest retirement communities like Givens Estate, Deerfield, and Carolina Village are "Continuing Care Retirement Communities" that offer a range of living arrangements from independent living to skilled nursing facilities.

There are many other types of medical providers in the region including "Federally Qualified Health Centers" (FQHCs) like Hot Springs Health Program, Minnie Jones Health Clinic, Blue Ridge Community Health Services and the Dale Fell Health Center. Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC) is one of NC's AHECs serving the westernmost 15 counties of NC. MAHEC offers Family, OB-GYN and Dental services in addition to training physicians through an affiliation with the UNC Chapel Hill School of Medicine.

Our region is also a retirement destination that is often at the top of "Places to Retire" lists compiled by national publications. The region's population is older than the state and national averages. Because of an aging and growing population in Western North Carolina, there is an increasing need for healthcare workers. The Local Area currently has the lowest unemployment rate in NC and employers in most sectors are facing workforce challenges. Following what have become national trends, the local healthcare employers are facing a shortage of workers. This need is for entry level positions such as Certified Nursing Assistant and Certified Medical Technician. There is also a need for experienced Registered Nurses and other skilled technical positions.

The healthcare employers in our group also noted an increase in competition for food service and cleaning employees. The rapid growth of tourism in area, and the building of new hotels, increases competition for the same pool of candidates. The Local Area has worked to address this need with the creation of our Hospitality & Tourism NCWorks Certified Career Pathway.

In an effort to address the difficulties faced by the healthcare employers, the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board has brought together Educators, Healthcare Employers, and Workforce Partners to quantify the needs of the healthcare employers and develop a NCWorks Certified Career Pathway that will help to alleviate those needs.

The Mountain Area Workforce Development Board has convened meetings with representatives of all the partners over the past 18 months in an effort to determine the exact workforce needs of the healthcare employers and to map out a way to address these needs. We were able to attract participants from all of the regional hospital systems, these systems are among the largest employers in the Local Area. We had participation from the Long Term and Assisted Living sectors. At the first regional meeting a panel was seated with members chosen from local healthcare employers. The panel included representatives of Blue Ridge Bone & Joint, The Oaks at Sweeten Creek, Charles George VA Medical Center, Mission Health, Pardee UNC Healthcare, and

Park Ridge Health. The informative discussion revealed a need for all types of healthcare workers among the group from entry-level to physicians. The scope of the workforce needs by healthcare employers is overwhelming. Especially problematic is the shortage of Nurses, from CNA's to RN's. Many healthcare employers, especially long-term care employers, indicated that the shortage of CNAs was at a **crisis level**.

The vast majority of folks that receive CNA certification are on the first rung of a career ladder that requires this as an entry point, very few work long-term as CNA's. Many continue their education to earn their RN but many others end up working in occupations outside of healthcare. The loss of CNAs to other occupations beyond healthcare is attributed to relatively low-pay compared to other entry-level jobs in the local economy as well as the physically and emotionally stressful nature of working as a CNA. This has led to a pernicious shortage of caregivers for a demographic that is growing daily, namely the Baby Boomer generation. The aging of the Baby Boomers is the cause of a number of workforce challenges within the greater economy. Large swaths of the economy face labor shortages as this group ages out and retires. Caring for this large demographic presents a challenge to the society as a whole, and presents an opportunity for Workforce Development to develop potential solutions to the labor shortages we currently face.

Two additional follow-up regional meetings were held to define the need for the region's healthcare career pathways. As a result of the input received and at the direction and leadership of the healthcare employers in the region, based on employer survey results and healthcare workforce data, we are offering healthcare career pathways in the following focus areas: nursing, diagnostic & technical, and administration.

The proposed healthcare career pathway will benefit all of the job seeking customers that the Local Area currently serves, from the Youth that earns a CNA, to the Dislocated Worker that wants to change careers. The proposed healthcare career pathway will align the many healthcare education programs in the region with the needs of healthcare employers to better meet current and future healthcare workforce needs.

Demand Driven and Data Informed:

For data sources the healthcare pathway workgroups utilized the following: Local Area employer survey, EMSI, NC Commerce LEAD, and Star Job data. The results of our employer survey confirmed what had been central to the panel discussion in the strategy meeting on April 25, 2017 - that Local Area healthcare employers are facing an acute shortage of job candidates at all levels. We received 15 completed surveys from hospitals, long-term care facilities, assisted living, emergency care centers, rehabilitation centers, and physician's offices. Survey participants represent three of four counties in our Local Area. EMSI and government sourced data confirm current shortages and point to future growth in the healthcare field across multiple sectors.

Based upon the major hospital job boards in the local area, there are at least 1,500 openings at this time. In addition, there are 149 long-term care facilities in the four-county area that are in dire need of housekeepers, dietary aides, CNAs, LPNs and RNs. This need would probably equate to several hundred additional openings.

According to state and national news articles, the healthcare worker shortage is attributed to fewer students in programs, higher turnover and transitioning of workers into other sectors, aging facilities, longevity of individuals, and need for acute care as people live longer with multiple conditions.

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT:

Employer engagement is central to the development of the Mountain Area Healthcare Career Pathway. There has already been considerable effort on the part of the workforce and educational communities to engage employers prior to the Healthcare Career Pathway development work. In February 2016, Mountain Area Workforce Development Board formed a Healthcare Sector Workgroup which included individuals representing the following employers: Mission Health, Pardee UNC Healthcare, Park Ridge Health, and long-term care employers. Education and workforce partners included: Asheville City, Buncombe County, Henderson County, Madison County Schools, and Transylvania County Schools, Blue Ridge Community College, AB Tech, the Asheville NCWorks Career Center, the Literacy Council of Asheville and Buncombe County.

MAWDB held a Holiday Hackathon on November 29, 2016. The all-day event was comprised of five sector workgroups: Advanced Manufacturing, Hospitality/Tourism, Healthcare, Technology/IT, and Skilled Trades. The purpose of the Hackathon was to identify skills gaps and develop regional strategies for building an effective workforce pipeline. On April 21, 2016, the Healthcare Sector Work Group held a meeting to develop strategy for growing talent needed for the sector as a follow-up meeting to the Hackathon "Great Jobs WNC 2020".

Furthermore, cultivating and maintaining continuous relationship is key to meaningful employer engagement strategy. That said, industry has been a true driving force at every stage of the career pathway development. On April 25, 2017 a pre-meeting was held with our Education partners to advise them of our intentions to move ahead with meeting Employers and explore development of the Healthcare Pathway. At the outset, engaged dialogue took place at the first regional meeting on May 9th, 2017 with an industry panel discussion. The employers provided input on what type of skills, competencies, training and credentials are needed for the jobs that are most in demand in the region. In addition, the regional Healthcare Workforce Survey was conducted to determine occupational demand and identify gaps.

Again, strong relationships with employers are critical to the enhancement of career pathways through the inclusion of components such as career awareness and work-based learning. Mountain Area employers have embraced the Healthcare Career Pathway. They will continue to provide and in some cases, expand the opportunities for students to gain real world work experience through field trips, job shadowing, volunteer experiences and clinicals when possible.

Employers were given an opportunity to engage in the education and training components of the pathway by participating and contributing to workgroups or by providing their input at the employer panel discussion on May 9 and 25, 2017. From the employer-led discussion, as well as from the Healthcare Workforce Survey, it is clear that the main workforce challenge for the region is the lack of qualified applicants. In addition, many applicants not only lack the technical skills or competencies they needed to qualify for the jobs in demand, they also lack soft skills and professionalism. As a result, Education, Industry, and Workforce Development partners have to rethink how we provide soft skills/professionalism training to the students and job seekers at all levels; including K-12, community colleges and at the career centers. The soft skills teaching must be imbedded into the entire career pathway system.

A third meeting was held on June 8, 2017 to discuss the results of the Employer Survey and to talk about how we will move forward to develop the Healthcare Pathway. The good news from the Survey is that the majority of respondents are either sure they want to participate, or are open to the idea.

Finally, employer engagement is not short-term. Industry partners have expressed their long-term commitment to ongoing support as the pathway will be evaluated and modified by employers along with the workforce, educational, and community partners to meet changing needs of the healthcare industry. Several of the industry partners have also agreed to participate on a leadership team for the Healthcare Career Pathway implementation. Most importantly, employers intend to hire individuals that successfully exit the pathway. Letters of support from the industry partners also show employers' commitment from the region.

Collaborative:

Mountain Area Workforce Development Board have long standing relationships with the local school systems, community colleges, chambers of commerce, economic development and industry partners through continual collaborations. Extensive engagement between key stakeholders was required in order to achieve the goal of creating an effective regional talent development system for the healthcare industry. No agency can do this work alone. A genuine collaborative effort is essential to the success of career pathway. The K-12 local school systems, community colleges, 4-year universities, and other community partners are integral part of building a career pathway system that meet the regional workforce needs and in managing the talent pipeline.

Fortunately, the strategic planning and collaboration efforts were already in place prior to the regional team begin the process of developing a Certified Career Pathway. A total of four meetings took place between April 25, 2017 and June 8, 2017 during the course of the Mountain Area Healthcare Career Pathway development. The meetings included an asset mapping session with educational partners, an industry panel discussion, and a series of workgroup meetings. In order to tackle a variety of topics with engaged collaboration, the strategic planning members were divided into sub- committees, or "workgroups" that consisted of various stakeholders. Each work group comprised of employers, educators (K-16) plus key community partners. Consideration was taken into account as to what each participant had to offer and how their collaborative efforts in the workgroup would contribute to the creation of a viable career pathway system for the region.

The three workgroups included:

- (1) Employer Engagement, Collaboration and Career Awareness
- (2) Articulation & Coordination, Work-based Learning and Multiple points of Entry & Exit
- (3) Demand Driven & Data Informed and Evaluation

The collaboration continues with input, leadership and commitment from the following key stakeholders: Healthcare industry leaders, local LEA's, community colleges, four year universities, chamber of commerce's, the local Workforce development board, NCWorks career center managers and WIOA staff. All of these stakeholders participated in planning meetings as well as in the smaller workgroups. Work was passed from one workgroup to another as it was relevant to learn and share what was going on between organizations.

CAREER AWARENESS:

Making youth and adults aware of allied health and nursing career opportunities in the region is a first step in growing our own healthcare workforce. It is an integral part of the career pathway development. An effective career awareness strategy will give participants an edge by providing up-to-date information on opportunities in this area, including employment, educational/training requirements and work-based learning opportunities. Additionally, the career awareness strategy is designed to include participants at all levels, starting with middle school and high school students continuing through post-secondary students, adult population and dislocated workers.

Career guidance services are provided to high school Career and College Promise and CTE students, dislocated workers, incumbent workers, low-income individuals, the disabled, and veterans. Career guidance services can be accessed through K-12 and college career counselors, NCWorks Career Centers, libraries, Internet, and workforce partner agencies.

K-12 YOUTH CAREER AWARENESS

Career Awareness activities at the K-12 level provide students with a variety of experiences such as industry field trips, guest speakers, job shadowing, cooperative education, mentorship, and clinical. These programs are designed to give students the chance to gain knowledge and skills leading to better informed career choices. Across the region, CTE personnel and school guidance counselors educate students about their future career paths. Students sit down annually with their counselors to receive guidance about their coursework in relation to their future college and career goals. Several school districts have partnered with local Community Colleges to have a Career Coach on school campus to help the high school students make an easier transition to the workplace. Students are informed of the value of a Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), and of the ways they can use NCWorks Online. Students have the opportunity to be involved in Career-Technical Student Organizations where they develop their interests, skills and abilities in relation to their occupational choices. In addition, each year the local educational agencies conduct various career awareness and career exploration events, designed to inform students and parents regarding the career opportunities in healthcare.

One good example of a career awareness program is Mission Possible, a collaborative venture between Mission Hospital, Asheville City Schools, Buncombe County Schools and private schools located in Buncombe County. The program is designed to ensure student success by providing academic enrichment and career exploration opportunities in a healthcare setting for rising juniors and seniors. By collaborating with the local schools, Mission Possible helps ensure that students are aware of career opportunities in the region.

In an effort to increase diversity in the region's healthcare workforce, eligible students who are interested in the pursuit of a high-level health career can also participate in the Minority Medical Mentoring Program (MMMP). This opportunity is designed for under-represented minority high school seniors enrolled in Asheville City and Buncombe County schools that participate in school-sanctioned internships. By increasing the students' awareness and interest in healthcare careers, the region is working more effectively to meet future demands for healthcare professionals in our community.

Regarding K-12 students, career awareness is accomplished through career fairs, on-campus Career Coaches in the high schools, and related programs.

POST-SECONDARY - CAREER AWARENESS

Post-secondary education agencies in the Local Area use a comprehensive approach to providing career awareness activities and student career support services. A-B Tech and Blue Ridge Community College have programs in place to provide career awareness and work-based learning to students. For example, Blue Ridge Community College and the local NCWorks Career Center host a job fair in June for community members seeking employment. The community colleges in the area also offers Virtual Career Coach that provides 24/7 access to career services tools to students and job seekers who are unsure of their career path and want to explore careers. This latest tool offers current and up-to-date local data on job outlook, employment numbers, wages, job postings, related careers, and customized demographics with associated education requirements. Virtual Career Coach is free and available to the general public.

Annually in January, A-B Tech, the Economic Development Coalition and the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce partner with top companies to hold a Career Fair to promote career opportunities in advanced manufacturing, technology, healthcare, tourism, professional services and other growth industries in Western North Carolina. The event is free and open to the public. A-B tech also provides Allied Health outreach program to K-12 students in the region.

At the four-year university level, Wingate University staff visit area high schools on a regular basis to discuss healthcare career choices. The students also spend a day on the university's campus to learn about different programs and training options. The university is beginning to reach out to more elementary and middle schools for the purpose of conducting career awareness activities. Other colleges and universities in the area are conducting similar outreach programs as well.

NCWORKS CAREER CENTERS - YOUTH AND ADULTS DISLOCATED WORKERS

MAWDB's network of NCWorks Career Centers are heavily involved in providing career awareness activities. The frontline staff engage with everyone from students to adult and dislocated workers, promoting multiple programs such as the National Career Readiness Certificate and Human Resources Development classes. These services are available to the general public in the region.

During the development of this Certified Career Pathway, it has become apparent that the training of frontline career center staff is vital for the success of the Healthcare Career Pathway, and therefore is a primary focus of regional career awareness strategies. Career center staff will be given special training on nursing and healthcare professions and local training options so the information can be efficiently and effectively communicated to job seekers.

The MAWDB Healthcare brochure will help NCWorks Career Center staff properly inform job seekers on the following:

- Available healthcare careers in the Region
- Key regional healthcare employers
- Paid training options for dislocated workers
- Key contacts at the regional community colleges and other workforce partners

Finally, as part of continuous improvement strategy, additional opportunities for training and professional development will be provided to career advising staff in conjunction with the education partners as the career pathway system and the healthcare industry continue to change and evolve.

Articulation & Coordination

Articulation refers to the process of linking two or more educational systems. The alignment of curricula and agreement about basic competencies that occur during the designing of an articulation agreement ensure a seamless transition in course work for students progressing from a high school to a community college, as well as from a community college to state universities and private colleges.

Mountain Area has a series of articulation agreements between its educational institutions. Articulation agreements between the local schools and the community college system permits high school students to take a variety of healthcare classes and have their course work transfer seamlessly to local community colleges. The standard

statewide agreement between North Carolina's high schools and community colleges, is found here, and is in the final stages of being updated by the state.

In addition to the statewide articulation agreement, local articulation agreements can be developed to build strong partnerships between high schools and individual community colleges. There is a unique, regional articulation agreement between several school LEA's and the two community colleges within the Mountain Area Region. The *Regional Articulation for Career and Technical Education (RACE)* is a formal, regional articulation between the following schools:

- Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College
- Blue Ridge Community College
- Asheville City Schools
- Buncombe County Schools
- Henderson County Public Schools
- Madison County Schools
- Transylvania County Schools

An inventory of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Health Science programs offered by county is presented. All four county schools, as well as the City of Buncombe, offer Practical Nursing. Completers of the Nursing Assistant program qualify to be a CNA and meet the minimum requirements to apply for a community college based nursing degree program. Courses other than nursing are available within the county school systems: Pharmacy Tech courses are offered at Madison, Henderson & Transylvania LEAs respectively. LEA Career Clusters and Pathways are provided.

The Mountain Area is home to two Community Colleges: Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College and Blue Ridge Community College. In addition, the region has several private and state colleges and universities: Western Carolina University (State), University of North Carolina - Asheville, Wingate University - Hendersonville, Lenoir Rhyne University, and the South College. The two Mountain Area community colleges offer degree, as well as non-degree, course options. Non-degree classes lead to diplomas, certificates and/or valuable stackable credentials. Incumbent workers, unemployed adults, and the dislocated, in addition to youth populations, all have the opportunity to enroll and complete credit or non-credit courses.

At the same time the student applies for the AON program, they can apply for admission into the Regionally Increasing Baccalaureate Nursing (RIBN) Program. Blue Ridge Community College, has entered into a partnership with Western Carolina University to create a seamless transition from an associate degree to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing within four years.

A non-RIBN associate degree nurse who graduates from a North Carolina community college and wishes to transfer to a state university benefits from the state's Uniform Articulation Agreement between the University of North Carolina RN to BSN Programs and the North Carolina Community College System Associate Degree Nursing Program.

Allied healthcare students have the ability to transfer from the community college to state universities with the Standard State-wide Articulation Agreement between NC Universities and Community Colleges which allows students to seamlessly transfer credit courses between the two Mountain Area Community Colleges and nearby Western Carolina University, as well as other state universities.

In addition to the RIBN program, Western Carolina University, offers distance education options such as an online RN - BSN program.

Frank Castelblanco, the Director of Division of Regional Services from Mountain AHEC attended the Mountain Area's strategic planning committee meeting on April 25th. MAHEC covers the four counties in the Mountain Area: Transylvania, Henderson, Buncombe, and Madison. This non-profit, regional office is charged with creating career awareness opportunities for youth, as well as continuous education training for healthcare professionals in Western North Carolina. (Attachment 5-G) highlights a self-paced RN Refresher program that MAHEC coordinates for nurses that have inactive licenses but wish to return to nursing.

At the June 8th meeting, an engaging conversation on retention issues was held. As a result of this discussion, Vice Provost Alison Morrison Shetlar commented that she would like Western Carolina University to create one-off leadership workshops for healthcare employers in the Mountain Area. She felt this was something needed as a result of the discussion on how the work culture is a big contributor to high turnover.

Western Carolina is uniquely qualified to create and offer hospitals and long-term healthcare facilities mid- to upper-management leadership workshops that promote the development of positive work cultures. This was very exciting to hear how group collaboration ended up in an action item for an educational partner and it clearly exhibits that MAWDB educators are willing to be responsive to the needs of employers.

Work-Based Learning:

Work-Based Learning is both an educational as well as training strategy that provides pathway enrollees with real-life work experiences where they can apply academic theory with on-the-job training. It's a concept that has been in practice for many years and is an integral part of workforce development and creating a healthy employee pipeline. The Mountain Area Workforce Development Board strongly encourages and emphasizes On-the-Job Training Programs in addition to paid work experiences as a work-based learning training strategy for WIOA eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth.

Healthcare employers work very closely with the county schools, local colleges and universities in coordinating Work-Based Learning opportunities. Survey results healthcare employers show the WBL options available to students in the region.

LEA's and post-secondary institutions offering healthcare curriculum will typically have to build in to their programs clinical hours or structured internships as direct patient care is required by state law or national board qualifications for licensure and certifications in various healthcare professions. A list of LEAs and Colleges site agreements or informal affiliations with healthcare agencies to ensure students fulfill the required amount of hours needed per profession are listed in.

The NCWorks Career Centers located in the Mountain Area support healthcare professions by promoting CNA training programs offered at the two community colleges in the region. Career Center WIOA staff disseminate information and enroll interested Adult, Dislocated and Youth clients in the colleges' respective Nursing Aid certificate programs. Funds are available from WIOA and other federal grants to provide a small On the Job stipend for CNA training. In addition, there will be staff training to assist the Career Center staff to learn the "career ladders" and lateral 'jungle gym' approach in healthcare professions so that clients can begin to think 'career' versus merely a job. The opportunities to grow and earn more are there in these professions and Career Center clients need to see the entire picture.

At the Mountain Area's third healthcare planning meeting in June, employers mentioned how it is not as easy as educators are led to believe to enter into these formal or informal relationships with the schools. It is time consuming as well as burdensome on already understaffed departments. That said, the healthcare facilities understand the need to train students and do their best to come up with supervisory staff willing to oversee the students. Getting a perceived "good" internship or clinical site is now competitive at the different colleges offering healthcare programs. In addition, credentialing boards have established ratios that limit "students per proctor" in a given healthcare setting.

Multiple points of Entry and Exit:

The Mountain Area Healthcare Career Pathway partners developed a pathway which allows entrance from many points: whether a high school student, a high school graduate, some experience, from zero to several credentials, with a diploma, certificate, associates or bachelor's degree and/or with many years of experience. The pathway has entry and exit ramps for a wide variety of the population including everyone from youth to the unemployed, dislocated, as well as active duty or transitioning military service members and special populations (vocational rehabilitation clients).

Based on education and training offerings in the region, here are but a few occupations that prospective healthcare employees could find training within the Mountain Area four county region:

- Certified Nurse Assistant
- Medical Assistant
- Phlebotomist
- DentalAssistant
- Billing and Coding Specialist
- Pharmacist
- Radiologic Technician
- Medical Lab Technologist
- MRI Technologist
- Registered Nurse
- Health Services Director
- Plus many more...

By taking a series of non-degree classes and certification coursework, an adult enrollee could qualify as a semi-skilled employee in the healthcare setting in as little as six weeks. Should an enrollee decide at a later time to return to school, their successfully completed CNA program seamlessly is accepted by the Community College system, thus allowing the enrollee to be accepted into the nursing program. A high school senior can go from CNA to RN in as little as two years if they complete the Nursing Aide class by the end of their senior year.

Comments from the June 9th strategic working committee suggested it is challenging for the Adult CNA to make the leap to an RN, although it's a logical precursor to becoming a LPN or RN. The challenges start with the fact that CNA's earn just a little above minimum wage. The typical CNA more than likely needs to hold a full-time job. It's not unusual for a CNA to have a family or be the sole wage earner. The idea that they can stop working to become a full time student in a demanding RN degree program is not realistic. It was mentioned that some employers are flexible with CNA's and allow them a more flexible schedule to work so that they could further their education.

The "Jungle Gym" approach to traditional career pathway ladders would show how someone on the lower end of each ladder - be it nursing, clinical or administrative - could become dual certified or have multiple stackable credentials by taking earning several certificates. Employers are preferring employees with several credentials and pay them a higher amount. This could be the answer to the CNA question: while most of today's CNAs use their training as a stepping stone to quickly go from CNA to RN, the older CNA that might not have the time or desire to become an RN, may choose instead to go into Medical Billing & Coding or perhaps go into pharmacy tech or surgical tech.

Evaluation

The Healthcare Career Pathways in the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board region will be evaluated on a schedule to be determined by the partners, but at a minimum, yearly. Each partner will be responsible for providing data to the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board's Regional Business Services Coordinator for compilation and distribution. The Healthcare Career Pathways Advisory Committee will review the data and offer suggestions for improvement. Each workforce partner was consulted on what they could track.

The purpose of our region's Healthcare Career Pathways is as follows:

1. Healthcare employers in the region are able to hire and retain skilled employees to meet their workforce needs.
2. Students in local high schools, community colleges and universities, job seekers in any stage of their life, and incumbent workers will have adequate training opportunities to obtain the healthcare training at various points along the Healthcare Career Pathways to obtain employment in the healthcare field with self-sufficient and family-sustaining wages.
3. Educational institutions offering allied health training programs will be able to attract students to their healthcare training programs to meet local workforce needs from healthcare employers.

The demand for healthcare workers in the region is significant and growing. The region is older than the state and national averages and the demand for healthcare is rising as the population increases as well as ages. The population in the region is also less healthy, sicker, and less affluent than state and national averages. These trends are creating significant challenges for local healthcare employers.

The region's Healthcare Career Pathways will be evaluated on a regular basis with a focus on a continuous improvement process. Data will be collected and analyzed to determine if our region is making progress toward meeting the workforce needs of healthcare employers. For many of our region's allied health programs, they are very competitive with limited seats based on the available clinical training opportunities. Local healthcare employers and educators are constantly working to expand these training opportunities.

Evaluation Work Group Goals

Develop an evaluation and performance measurement system for the L. Area's

Healthcare Career Pathways. This plan includes:

1. Definition of success
2. Regular assessments
3. Continuous improvement process so the Healthcare Career Pathway will remain relevant to both employers and job seekers.

How will the region define success of Healthcare Career Pathways?

1. Meeting the workforce needs of Healthcare employers in the region by increasing the pipeline and improving retention of a highly skilled and qualified workforce.
2. Meeting the needs of students, job seekers, and incumbent workers by providing the appropriate training and employment opportunities along the pathway at all points of the continuum.
3. Evaluation plan will be data driven and informed to determine the progress toward meeting the goals. While it is not possible to graduate more students in programs that have capped enrollment, history and data suggests there will be an ongoing increase in healthcare training available in the region.

High School - Traditional CTE students and In-School and Out-of-School students

(2017-2020)

of CTE concentrators in a healthcare career pathway

of credentials earned

of work-based learning activities

of students that earn articulated credit

of articulated credits earned

Community College (2017 - 2020)

of students enrolled in Career & College Promise in a healthcare career pathway

of students enrolled in CE and CU programs

of students that complete CE and CU programs

of internships/co-ops in healthcare occupations

of job placements

of events promoting healthcare careers

University (2017 - 2020)

of students enrolled in a healthcare degree program

of students that complete a healthcare degree program

of internships/co-ops in healthcare occupations

of job placements

of events promoting healthcare careers

NCWorks Career Centers (2017 - 2020)

of job postings in healthcare by ONET Group

of referrals to healthcare employers including hospitals, physician offices, assisted living facilities, long-term care facilities, etc.

of services provided to healthcare employers

of WIOA sponsored short-term and long-term training participants

of OJTs in healthcare

of events promoting healthcare careers

of job orders by ONET Group

Mountain Area Workforce Development Board (2017-2020)

of local healthcare meetings (per county)

of regional meetings (4-county)

of employers participating in healthcare workforce activities of the Board

of customer surveys returned

of events promoting healthcare careers

Healthcare Employers (2017-2020)

of referrals and hires from programs of study (high school, community college and university)

of referrals and hires from NCWorks

of college internships, co-ops, and WBL opportunities (including clinical experiences)

of NCWorks registered apprenticeships

of work-based learning events for high school students (job shadowing, Students@Work, etc.)

of events promoting careers in healthcare (job fairs, tours, speakers in schools, social media outreach)

Goals for Evaluation/Improvement

There is significant demand for healthcare workers in the region based on survey results, employer panel, and projections from the NC Department of Commerce. Based on the six healthcare employers on the employer panel, there were over 1,500 job openings available immediately at their organizations. The demand for Nursing Assistants (CNAs) is especially high with survey results and projections indicating over 500 CNAs needed in the region as of now to meet workforce shortages. Retention is perhaps as great of a challenge as recruitment since with a very tight labor market, other employers in non-healthcare sectors are often offering higher wages with less stressful working conditions. This retention challenge is not limited to CNAs but other allied health occupations including RNs. Often healthcare employment is counter cyclical based on local economic conditions so when the economy is performing better, less individuals will continue to work in healthcare. When the economy is weaker, more individuals migrate back to healthcare. Work-based learning is a requirement for most certifications in the allied health field with clinical training. Capacity for clinical training is limited and many educational institutions are now having to pay fees for work-based learning opportunities in clinical settings.

Updating region's Healthcare Career Pathways

Data collection will take place on an annual basis and evaluation of the data will be conducted by the Healthcare Career Pathways work group. Goals will be modified based on the overall workforce needs of healthcare employers in the region. Survey data will continue to be collected from healthcare employers in the region to obtain better real-time data on the progress to meeting the overall goals.

Mountain Area Healthcare Career Pathways Timeline

July 12, 2010: Asheville Satellite campus of the UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy will begin enrolling students in the fall of 2011 based at the University of North Carolina at Asheville. Students will be able to earn a Doctor of Pharmacy degree in Asheville with a focus on rural health and disease management.

<https://pharmacy.unc.edu/news/2010/07/12/asheville-satellite-will-enroll-students-in-2011-almond-to-head-program/>

June 2011: Pardee Hospital Board of Directors approve affiliation agreement with UNC Health Care System. <http://news.unchealthcare.org/news/2011/june/pardee>

September 28, 2012: Western Carolina University consolidates undergraduate and graduate programs in the Asheville region at Biltmore Park. WCU's Biltmore Park Instructional Site offers many allied health programs including RIBN program, Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (ASSN), Clinical Mental Health Counseling (MS), Family Nurse Practitioner MS (N), Nurse Anesthesia MS (N), and Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP). http://www.wcu.edu/discover/locations/biltmore-park/degree_programs-asheville.aspx

April 10, 2013: Park Ridge Health breaks ground on the construction of a \$10 million, 25,000 square foot facility focused on outpatient and primary care. <http://www.blueridgenow.com/news/20130410/park-ridge-breaks-ground-for-south-asheville-facility>

May 9, 2014: First graduating class of the RIBN, "Regionally Increasing Baccalaureate Nurses Program." RIBN started as a partnership between WCU, AB Tech and the Foundation for Nursing Excellence. Now the program includes Blue Ridge Community College and Southwestern Community College. The first three years is hosted by the community college with online education through WCU. <http://news-prod.wcu.edu/2014/05/wcu-celebrates-first-graduates-of-statewide-ribn-program/>

September 18, 2015: Asheville Charles George Veteran's Administration (VA) Medical Center expanding to meet the mental health needs of veterans in the region. This project will serve the mental health needs of veterans on an outpatient basis by the creation of a new mental health and behavioral health campus. <http://wlos.com/news/local/va-medical-center-expansion>

Fall 2015: Henderson County Chamber of Commerce "Retirement Industry Group" comprised of many long-term care facilities and Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC) in Henderson County focuses on Nursing Assistant (CNA) workforce shortages and working on strategies to meet the workforce demand. <http://www.hendersoncountychamber.org/images/documents/Retirement-Industry2017.pdf>

December 1, 2015: AB Tech dedicates \$37.9 million Ferguson Center for Allied Health and Workforce Development that will house the college's allied health program and will allow for the expansion of those allied health programs. <http://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2015/11/30/new-379-million--b-tech-building-opens-january/76445198/>

December 19, 2016: Mars Hill University graduates first nursing school class at their new Judge-McRae School of Nursing with the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree. The nursing program is housed in the Ferguson Health Sciences Center which opened in the fall of 2016. <http://www.blueridgenow.com/news/20160225/speaker-tourism-vital-to-county-economy>

February 2016: Mountain Area Workforce Development Board's Healthcare sector work group is formed, includes individuals representing the following employers: Mission Health, Pardee UNC Healthcare, Park Ridge Health, and long-term care employers. Workforce partners included in the H&T sector work group include Asheville City Schools, Buncombe County Schools, Henderson County Schools, Madison County Schools, Transylvania County Schools, Blue Ridge Community College, AB Tech, Asheville NCWorks Career Center, Literacy Council of Asheville and Buncombe County.

March 23, 2016: All-day meeting of Healthcare Sector Work Group along with other community workforce partners at Western Carolina University's Biltmore Park Instructional Site.

April 21, 2016: Meeting of Healthcare Sector Work Group to develop strategy for growing talent needed for the sector, follow up meeting to the Hackathon "Great Jobs WNC 2020" all-day Healthcare sector meeting.

June 30, 2016: Blue Ridge Community College Health Sciences Building opens in Hendersonville. The Health Sciences Building is a collaboration of Blue Ridge Community College, Wingate University, and Pardee UNC Healthcare. The facility will house the college's allied health programs, Wingate University's Doctor of Pharmacy and Physician Assistant programs, and Pardee UNC Healthcare's Cancer Center. <http://wlos.com/news/local/new-health-sciences-building-opens-in-hendersonville-06-30-2016>

August 23, 2016: Mission Health begins construction for their \$400 million "Future Ready" project. The 12 story tower will include 220 patient rooms, 97 beds in a significant emergency department expansion, consolidated operating rooms, and interventional cardiology and radiology capabilities. <http://blog.mission-health.org/2016/08/18/mission-health-begin-rock-blasting-new-hospital-august-23/>

Fall 2016: Land of Sky Regional Council's Aging Long Term Care Ombudsman staff create task force to address CNA shortages.

September 14, 2016: Regional Work-Based Learning Summit held at Western Carolina University's Biltmore Park Instructional Site with several Healthcare employers attending to learn and discuss ways of expanding Work-Based Learning at employers in all sectors of our region's economy.

September 2016: AB Tech holds "CNA Crisis Summit" with long-term care employers on developing strategies to meeting their workforce needs.

November 29, 2016: Healthcare sector work group meets at the "Holiday Hackathon" to discuss the development of Healthcare career pathways in the region and to develop strategies to reach various populations for training for Healthcare careers.

January 2017: South College BSN program at the Asheville Learning Site initial accreditation was approved by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). [https://www.southcollegetn.edu/academics/academic-programs/bachelor-of-science-in-nursing\(accelerated\)](https://www.southcollegetn.edu/academics/academic-programs/bachelor-of-science-in-nursing(accelerated))

January 18, 2017: Mountain Area Workforce Development Board representatives from Land of Sky Regional Council and Mission Health attend the Region C Healthcare Career Pathways meeting at Isothermal Community College.

March 1, 2017: Meeting with the Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC) executive leadership and Mountain Area Workforce Development Board and Region C Workforce Development Board. MAHEC expansion of primary care and physician training and residency programs. UNC Chapel Hill School of Medicine third and fourth year students are being educated at MAHEC and planning has begun for the construction of the Western campus for the UNC Chapel Hill School of Medicine on the MAHEC campus.

April 25, 2017: Healthcare educators in the region at the K12, community college, and university level meet at Western Carolina University's Biltmore Park Instructional Site to inventory healthcare educational resources in the region and to assess current and future healthcare educational offerings.

May 9, 2017: Regional healthcare meeting at WCU's Biltmore Park Instructional Site features a panel of healthcare employers representing Charles George VA Medical Center, Park Ridge Health, Mission Health, Pardee UNC Healthcare, The Oaks at Sweeten Creek and Blue Ridge Bone & Joint. These employers had current job openings around 1,500 in total on the day of this discussion.

May 25, 2017: Regional healthcare meeting at WCU's Biltmore Park Instructional Site included future job projection data from NC Department of Commerce and workgroup discussion based on Career Pathways criteria.

May 31, 2017: Regional healthcare survey released.
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/analyze/luxVMK5XLV8cPc7X2F82By7yEHcyOH55AR0lt3KIPIVjg3D>

June 8, 2017: Mountain Area Workforce Development Board's Regional Business Services Coordinator made a presentation to the District 1 NC Healthcare Facilities Association (19 western most counties in NC). Members of the association include hospitals, assisted living and long-term care facilities. The discussion focused on workforce shortages, recruitment and retention strategies.

June 8, 2017: Regional healthcare meeting at WCU's Biltmore Park Instructional Site included survey results from 15 healthcare employers in the region based on their workforce needs. Healthcare employers responding to this survey reported hiring around 500 individuals annually.

June 12, 2017: State budget could bring more medical school students to WNC with \$21.4 million in funding to double the number of future physicians educated through a joint program at the Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC). The funding would start a branch campus of the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health at MAHEC and increase the capacity to train other health care professionals. This project has the potential of adding 130 employees at MAHEC. One of the goals of this effort is to encourage more health care professional to remain in rural communities.

<http://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2017/06/12/state-budget-could-bring-more-female-offenders-med-students-wnc/389464001/>

June 15, 2017: Mountain Area Workforce Development Board submits the region's healthcare career pathways application to the NC Department of Commerce.

HEALTHCARE CAREER PATHWAY

		NURSIN G	DIAGNOSTIC / TECHNICAL	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT
ADVANCED II	EDUCATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master's/Doctoral LOCAL SCHOOLS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Western Carolina University Wingate University 	NURSE PRACTITIONER NURSE ANESTHETIST CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST CLINICAL OPERATIONS DIRECTOR CLINICAL NURSE EDUCATOR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT Salary Range \$60,000 - \$137,000 Master's / Doctoral	PHARMACIST Salary Range \$110,500 - \$125,500	DATA ANALYSTS Salary Range \$69,000 - 114,000
	EDUCATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor's Degree LOCAL SCHOOLS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Western Carolina University Lenoir Rhyne University South College AB Tech Blue Ridge Community College UNC -Asheville 	NURSE MANAGER CLINICAL LEAD, RN NURSE CLINICIAN Hourly Rate \$19 - \$39	RADIOLOGIC SCIENCE EMERGENCY MED SVC & MGMT Hourly Rate \$20 - 40	ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGERS DEPARTMENTAL MANAGER PATIENT ADVOCATE Salary Range \$45,000 - \$60,000
INTERMEDIAT	EDUCATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associate's Degree Certificate/Technical Program Completer LOCAL SCHOOLS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AB Tech Blue Ridge Community College South College Western Carolina University 	REGISTERED NURSE Hourly Rate \$21 - \$37	SONOGRAPHY RADIOGRAPHY TECH ECOHOCARDIOGRAPHY COMPUTED TOMOGRAPHY DENTAL ASSISTANT SURGICAL TECH MEDICAL ASSISTING OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST ASS'T PT ASSISTANT MRI Hourly Rate \$15 - 38	DEPARTMENTAL SUPERVISOR CODING & BILLING SPECIALIST Salary Range \$25,000 - \$39,000
		CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT Hourly Rate \$10 - \$21		MEDICAL RECORDS TECH HEALTH INFO TECH CODING/ BILLING CLERK MEDICAL TRANSCRIPTIONISTS PATIENT ACCOUNT REP OUTPATIENT SERVICE REP Hourly Rate \$10 - 17
		PHLEBOTOMIST MEDICATION AIDE DENTAL HYGENIST PHARM TECH MEDICAL ASSISTANT EKG TECH EMT OPHTHALMIC MED ASST Hourly Rate \$11 - 20		
ENTR	EDUCATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High School /GED On-the-Job Training LOCAL SCHOOLS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Schools Community Colleges 	PERSONAL CARE AIDES HOME HEALTH AIDES Hourly Rate \$9 - \$12		RECEPTIONI ST SECRETARY CLERK Hourly Rate \$9 - \$12

