

11/15/2024

Governor Mike DeWine  
Riffe Center, 30<sup>th</sup> Floor  
77 S. High St.  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Governor DeWine:

As Ohio's population continues to age, the need for high quality medical care is in demand more than ever. In addition, many Ohio physicians are also reaching retirement age with over 30% of practicing physicians in the state now being over the age of 60. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), there is a projected shortage of up to 86,000 physicians nationwide by 2036. If action is not taken soon to increase the supply of physicians, this problem is bound to only get worse.

In Ohio, we are well-positioned to tackle this issue, with seven medical schools (soon to be 8 with the addition of Xavier) located in our state. These schools are an excellent pipeline to replace the current physician workforce. Also fortunately, enrollment in these schools is also on the rise. From the years 2010 to 2020, there was an increase of 7.6% in M.D. programs and a 106% increase in D.O. programs. Naturally, due to the increase in enrollment, Ohio has the potential to soon be infused with plenty of new, young physicians; however, there is a huge obstacle we absolutely must address to fully realize that potential.

After students complete medical school, they are required to complete a residency program as part of their training. This residency training usually takes about 3 to 5 years. An overwhelming majority of residents tend to stay and practice in the state where they complete their residency. Unfortunately, there are currently more medical school graduates than available residency slots in Ohio. Ohio's quantity of slots has mostly remained unchanged for decades, meaning it is unable to meet the demand. The majority of our medical students leave Ohio to do their residencies outside of the state, and most do not return once their training is complete.

It is extremely important that Ohio prioritize training as many physicians in residency as possible here, giving them a better chance to stay and serve our communities. The number of residency slots is largely controlled at the federal level, but states, including Ohio, can add additional slots by funding those slots through the state's budget.

Our organizations are seeking an additional ten million dollars over the biennium in addition to what the state already spends on Graduate medical education (GME) in the upcoming state budget. The additional money would fund approximately 30 additional residency slots focusing on physician specialty shortages areas determined by the AAMC, and the inclusion of a potential renewal clause to account for most medical residencies lasting between 3 and 5 years.

In order to create the necessary opportunities Ohio medical students need to complete their training and care for our state's patients, it is imperative that the state fund these additional slots. This funding will help to meet a crucial need for our state and ensure Ohioans continue to have access to the medical care they need in the years to come.

Thank you for your consideration, and please contact us with any additional questions.

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