



Overview of the Iron Range Resources Rural Healthcare Taskforce

Richard Walsh, Iron Range Resources

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Healthcare

- Key industry in economic growth in northeastern Minnesota
- National expenditure for healthcare
2001= 1.3 trillion 2006=2.6 trillion
- Healthcare jobs roughly two –thirds professional and technical positions
- 94,000 jobs created in state 1993-2002
- 32,000 new jobs projected 2003-2010
- Economic Impact per year in northeastern Minnesota is \$1.8 billion
- Northeastern Minnesota employment: 18,302
- Approximately 4500 new jobs by 2010
- Over \$240 million in healthcare construction projects in the next 4-5 years



Iron Range Resources History with the Healthcare Industry

- Early 1990s did a healthcare capital improvement program
 - Criteria: Job creation, leverage and primary care
 - 8.4 million in grants
 - 12:1 leverage, \$100 million in total improvement
 - 300-350 jobs created
- 1994 – Northeast Primary Care Fund
 - Scholarship program
 - Nineteen physicians, physician assistants or nurse practitioners recruited
 - Rural Health Resource Center worked with UMD Center of Medicine
 - Require physicians to practice in area for four years
 - Health care facility pays back 50% of scholarship to fund
 - Survey completed in 2001 – 18 still in area



Healthcare Taskforce

- Established March 2002
- All volunteer taskforce
- Close to 130 members from healthcare, education, economic development, state and local officials
- Subcommittees 10-12 members



State Partners

- Rural Health Resource Center, MN Center for Rural Health
- Healthcare Education Industry Partnership/MN State Colleges & Universities
- Office of Rural Health and Primary Care, MN Department of Health
- MN Hospital Association
- MN Area Health Education Centers/U of MN
- MN Department of Employment and Economic Development
- MN Rural Partners
- MN Department of Education



Healthcare Forums

- Meet three times a year
- Purpose
 - Networking
 - Communication
 - Accountability



Discussion Points of First Forum

- What are the key health care issues for the region?
- What are the top 3 priorities that the taskforce could help address?
- Identify strategies or tools that could help address these priorities.
- Who are the key partners in the Region to help solve health care issues?



High Priority Issues of Taskforce

- Workforce Issues
- Capital Improvements
- Connecting Community and Healthcare Providers and Increasing Shared Services
- Integrated Senior Services
- Reimbursement
- Health and Wellness Approach vs. Symptom Reduction



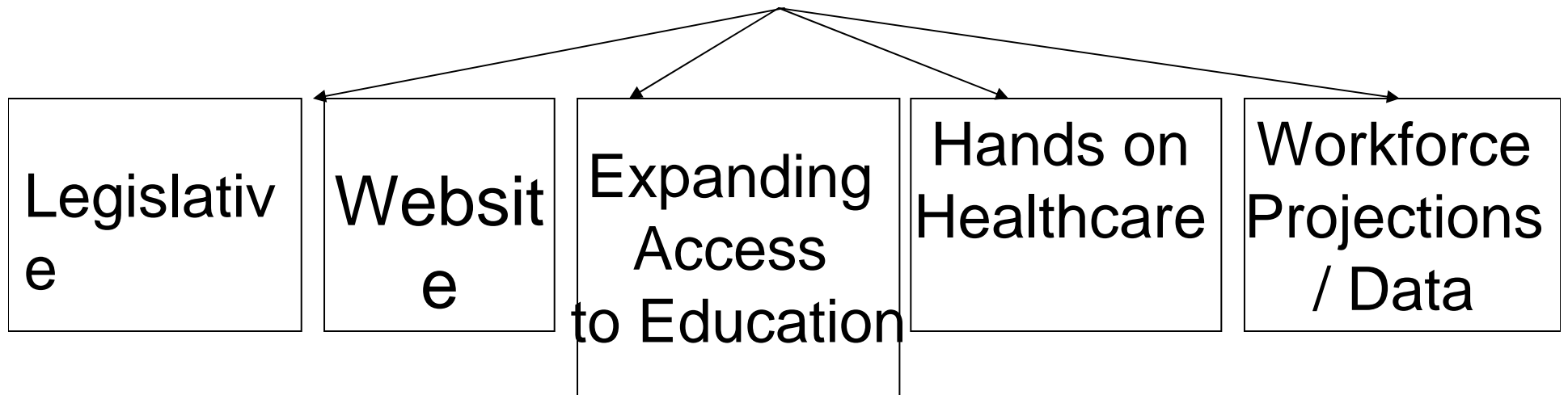
Strategic Goals for the subcommittees

- Identify groups or people as partners to assist the committees with their tasks
- Determine project timelines
- Identify resources needed to accomplish strategies (partnerships, technology, funding, data, etc.)
- Work with Hands on Healthcare Committee for fundraising



Key Healthcare Issue: Workforce Shortages

Strategies





Hands on Health Care Subcommittee

Tiffany Anderson, Eveleth EDA

- Developed and provided a questionnaire to youth in Grand Rapids, Hibbing, Virginia and Ely area
 - What kids think about Health Care
 - What kids know about Health Care
 - What Health Care courses, program and activities should be offered in the area
 - Web site development questions
- Met with local career counselors, teachers on promotion of health care careers in area high schools
- Working with Northeast Area Health Education Center to research, identify and analyze programs to link kids to health care careers
- Working in K-12 system to promote health care careers



Web Site Subcommittee

Richard Walsh, Iron Range Resources

- Developed and maintains the learntocare.org web site
- Distributed promotional materials to over 24 high schools
- Working with Hands on Health Care Subcommittee to promote health care careers
- Updated web site and distribution of promotional material for this year



Expanding Access to Education Subcommittee

Sue Hyndman, Hibbing Community College

- Working to expand nursing programs at local community colleges.
- Established distant learning sites in Bigfork, Cook, Ely and International Falls.
- Working with local community colleges to expand 2-year RN programs.



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Regional Healthcare Forums

- March 15, 2002
 - 30 healthcare representatives and educators attended
 - Overview of national, state, and regional info and data provided by rural healthcare representatives
 - Discussed current and future rural healthcare issues, prioritized the issues, established a taskforce
- June 2, 2002
 - 50 participants including educators, economic developers, elected officials, and healthcare providers
 - Statewide and regional healthcare workforce initiatives presented
 - Four workgroups created: Hands-on, web site, education and data



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Regional Healthcare Forums

- February 28, 2003
 - 55 healthcare representatives and educators attended
 - TTRA Rural Healthcare Taskforce Web site introduced: learntocare.org
 - High school focus groups and on-line survey exploring interest in health careers presented
 - H1-B Grant – *Bridging Distances in Healthcare* reported RN educational expansion in Bigfork, Cook and Ely, Minnesota
 - Legislative initiatives for the healthcare industry and higher education presented



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Regional Healthcare Forums

- June 27, 2003
 - 36 healthcare representatives, elected officials, economic developers, and educators attended
 - Regional Healthcare Professional Demand presented by Rural Health Resource Center, MN Center for Rural Health
 - Minnesota Area Health Education Center introduced by University of Minnesota Academic Health Center
 - Minnesota Rural Health Policy Update provided by MDH, Office of Rural Health and Primary Care
 - Updates from Healthcare Taskforce Committees



Iron Range Resources Regional Healthcare Forums

- November 14, 2003
 - 40 healthcare representation, elected officials, economic developers and educators attended.
 - Dianne Mandernach, Commissioner Department of Health spoke on health care workforce issues and access to health care
 - MN Area Health Education Center (AHEC) update
 - Updates from Health form Health Care Taskforce committee.



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Regional Healthcare Forums

- March 5, 2004

- Economic Impact of health care in northeastern MN = \$1.8 billion; 21,568 employees; growth industry; 4,500 new jobs by 2010
- MN Citizens Forum on Health Care Cost – Ray Christenson, MD
- High School Health Care Curriculum; Proctor and Mt. Iron
- Update from Taskforce Committees



What's Next?

■ Hands-on Healthcare Subcommittee

- Working with Area Health Education Center (AHEC) to research, identify and analyze programs to link kids to health care careers
 - Curriculum
 - Job shadowing, internships
 - Career awareness (career fairs, guest speakers, field trips, development programs)
 - Service learning
- Identify gaps and make suggestions to close the gaps
- Perfect in-school process with questionnaire



What's Next?

- Web Site Subcommittee

- Re-establish the Northeast Primary Care Fund Scholarship Program

- Administered by Rural Health Resource Center in affiliation with UMD School of Medicine

- Include physician, physician assistants and nurse practitioners

- Add dentist, pharmacist, lab and x-ray

- Up to 30,000 scholarships

- Four-year commitment to practice in rural area

- Applicants selected advisory committee

- Recipient health care facility reimburses 50% of funds



What's Next?

- Education Subcommittee

- Expand distance learning to additional sites and have increased numbers
- Community colleges are participating in a program to promote a career ladder approach to nursing education through use of online courses and preceptors in rural areas.



Keys to Success

- Diverse taskforce
- Local commitment
- Local focus
- Local results
- Statewide affiliation
- Excellent guidance by Rural Health Resource Center



Regional Workforce Strategies

- Iron Range Resources Health Care Taskforce and Forums
- Northland Healthcare Workforce Consortium developed by the Duluth Workforce Council
- Rural H1-B grant project to educate rural nurses in Bigfork, Cloquet and Cook
- Northeast Minnesota Area Health Education Center
- MN Hospital Association: healthcare career website – myfirstday.org