

An Initiative of the California Workforce Development Board

The Health Workforce Council’s (HWC) goal is to increase opportunities for Santa Cruz County residents to advance in health professions and align and expand education and training through pipeline programs, work-based learning, and continued professional development. The HWC will result in an increased health workforce to serve underserved and under-resourced communities, as well as students enrolled in local health training programs. Local hire pipelines will provide quality jobs that include family-sustaining wages, pensions, and health benefits, and outline career pathways for workers to train locally and in customized training that prioritizes racial equity practices.

The HWC will address the health workforce challenges identified during an intensive 3-month listening tour engaging employer and worker voices in 2022 and promote the six workforce tracks: behavioral health and health social workers, nurses, medical assistants, community health workers, physicians including pediatricians and family medicine, and surgical technicians. This project will build on the needs identified by stakeholders in ensuring equity in healthcare careers, including the need for broader outreach and career exploration, more inclusive recruitment, designing education and training programs to meet the needs of the local community, community building and support for workforce affinity groups, and addressing challenges in hiring and retaining bilingual/bicultural staff.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Convene 13 Health Workforce Council quarterly meetings over 3 years.
- Complete Health Improvement Partnership Santa Cruz County Health Workforce Council: 2023 Workforce Report and Recommendations.
- Host three annual community forums inviting Health Workforce Council partners.
- Conduct 2nd listening tour with key stakeholders and produce a report of listening tour findings that includes the following:
 - Findings on the effectiveness of the Health Workforce Council.
 - Needs analysis on Health Workforce Council continuation.
 - Sustainability or discontinuation plan.

KEY PARTNERS

- Cabrillo College
 - Dignity Health Dominican Hospital
 - Hospital Council of Northern and Central California
 - Janus of Santa Cruz
 - Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance
 - Santa Cruz County Health Service Agency
 - UC Santa Cruz – Global and Community Health Program
 - Santa Cruz County Office of Education
 - Santa Cruz County Workforce Development Board
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