



State of Wisconsin
2025 - 2026 LEGISLATURE

LRB-1603/P2
ARG:cdc&skw

DOA:.....Kirschbaum, BB0360 - Health Professions Loan Assistance Program-Rural Physician Loan Assistance Program

FOR 2025-2027 BUDGET -- NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION

AN ACT ...; relating to: the budget.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

EDUCATION

HIGHER EDUCATION

Health care provider loan assistance program

This bill makes two new types of health care providers eligible for the Health Care Provider Loan Assistance program: behavioral health providers and substance abuse treatment providers.

Under current law, the Board of Regents of the UW System administers the HCPLA program under which it may repay, on behalf of a health care provider, up to \$25,000 in loans over three years for education related to the health care provider's field of practice. The health care providers eligible for the program are dental therapists, dental hygienists, physician assistants, nurse-midwives, and nurse practitioners. To participate in the program, a health care provider must agree to practice at least 32 clinic hours per week for three years in one or more eligible practice areas in Wisconsin or in a rural area. An "eligible practice area" is defined as a free or charitable clinic, a primary care shortage area, a mental health shortage area, an American Indian reservation or trust lands of an American Indian tribe, or, for a dental hygienist, a dental health shortage area or a free or charitable clinic.

This bill adds behavioral health providers and substance abuse treatment providers as health care providers who are eligible for loan repayment under the HCPLA program. The bill also clarifies that an "eligible practice area" for a dental therapist is a dental health shortage area or a free or charitable clinic.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. 36.61 (1) (ab) of the statutes is created to read:

36.61 (1) (ab) "Behavioral health provider" means an individual who, under

BILL

SECTION 1

ch. 457, is certified as a social worker or licensed as a clinical social worker, a marriage and family therapist, or a professional counselor.

SECTION 2. 36.61 (1) (f) of the statutes is created to read:

36.61 (1) (f) “Substance abuse treatment provider” means an individual who is certified as a substance abuse counselor, clinical supervisor, or prevention specialist under s. 440.88.

(END)