

**135.177 Physician assistant mental health fellowship program — repeal.**

1. The department, in cooperation with the college student aid commission, shall establish a physician assistant mental health fellowship program in accordance with this section. Funding for the program may be provided through the health care workforce shortage fund or the physician assistant mental health fellowship program account created in section 135.175. The purpose of the program is to determine the effect of specialized training and support for physician assistants in providing mental health services on addressing Iowa's shortage of mental health professionals.

2. The program shall provide for all of the following:

a. Collaboration with a hospital serving a thirteen-county area in central Iowa that provides a clinic at the Iowa veterans home, a private nonprofit agency headquartered in a city with a population of more than one hundred ninety thousand that operates a freestanding psychiatric medical institution for children, a private university with a medical school educating osteopathic physicians located in a city with a population of more than one hundred ninety thousand, the Iowa veterans home, and any other clinical partner designated for the program. Population figures used in this paragraph refer to the most recent certified federal census. The clinical partners shall provide supervision, clinical experience, training, and other support for the program and physician assistant students participating in the program.

b. Elderly, youth, and general population clinical experiences.

c. A fellowship of twelve months for three physician assistant students, annually.

d. Supervision of students participating in the program provided by the university and the other clinical partners participating in the program.

e. A student participating in the program shall be eligible for a stipend of not more than fifty thousand dollars for the twelve months of the fellowship plus related fringe benefits. In addition, a student who completes the program and practices in Iowa in a mental health professional shortage area, as defined in section 135.180, shall be eligible for up to twenty thousand dollars in loan forgiveness. The stipend and loan forgiveness provisions shall be determined by the department and the college student aid commission, in consultation with the clinical partners.

f. The state and private entity clinical partners shall regularly evaluate and document their experiences with the approaches utilized and outcomes achieved by the program to identify an optimal model for operating the program. The evaluation process shall include but is not limited to identifying ways the program's clinical and training components could be modified to facilitate other student and practicing physician assistants specializing as mental health professionals.

3. This section is repealed June 30, 2014.

2009 Acts, ch 118, §47, 54; 2011 Acts, ch 25, §129

Referred to in §135.175

[SP] Implementation of section conditioned upon availability of funding; 2009 Acts, ch 118, §54