

CSWE's Public Policy Initiative

Update on Federal Advocacy Activities and Trends



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Wendy Naus, Lewis-Burke Associates LLC
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The Changing Political Landscape

- Last year – All about health care/insurance reform
- This year – All about jobs and the economy
- Mid-term elections looming
 - Is there enough time left to do anything else?
 - Majorities and priorities could shift
- American public divided on health reform; approval ratings dropping
- Major issues still waiting in the wings – Financial reform, No Child Left Behind, climate and energy legislation, appropriations

Social Work Education in Health Care Reform



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Social Work Education Provisions included in Health Care Reform

On March 23, 2010, President Obama signed into law comprehensive health care reform legislation. In addition to ensuring coverage for more Americans, ending insurance discrimination based on preexisting conditions, and closing the Medicare prescription gap, the new law also creates new and expands existing programs aimed at enhancing the social work profession through educational training and financial assistance. CSWE has worked diligently over the last year as Congress debated health care reform legislation to ensure that these provisions were enacted. CSWE government relations staff are very pleased to report that the programs pertaining to social work education described below have now been enacted into law. It is important to note that while getting these programs enacted is a major success for CSWE and the social work community, this language simply "authorizes" these programs to exist; it does not provide actual funding. Ongoing advocacy and support is now needed to ensure that these programs receive funding via the annual appropriations bills that Congress passes each year. Without funding from Congress, the programs below will not be able to award the grants and loan repayment described.

Mental and Behavioral Health Education and Training Grants – If funded, this new program would award grants to institutions of higher education to support the recruitment of students into baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degree programs of social work as well as the development of faculty in social work. In addition, grants would be made to institutions of higher education or accredited professional training programs that are establishing or expanding internships or other field placement programs in child and adolescent mental health in social work, school social work, substance abuse prevention and treatment, and other fields. With respect to the grants to social work programs, the law states that priority shall be given to programs that "are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education." The law authorizes up to \$8 million for Fiscal Years (FY) 2010 through FY 2013 specifically for the grants to social work programs and \$10 million for programs dealing with child and adolescent mental health.

Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program – Under this new program, health professionals, including social workers with specialized training or clinical experience, would be required to provide child and adolescent mental and behavioral health care in areas with shortages of health professionals, and in exchange the federal government would provide payment on the principal and interest of undergraduate and graduate loans up to \$35,000 per year for 3 years. The new law authorizes up to \$20 million each year for FY 2010 through FY 2013 to implement this program.

Geriatric Workforce Fellowship Program – The Geriatric Education Centers (GECs) administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) are expanded to allow GECs to use their funds to offer short term intensive courses, or "fellowships," that focus on geriatrics, chronic care management, and long term care. These fellowships would include supplemental training for faculty members in social work and other health professions schools and would be open to current faculty and appropriately credentialed volunteer faculty and practitioners who do not currently have formal training in geriatrics. In addition, the fellowship can be offered at the sponsoring GECs, in collaboration with GECs, or at other health professions schools, including schools of social work, thereby significantly opening up the program. Up to \$10.8 million is authorized for FY 2011 through FY 2014 for this and other geriatric training programs.

- Education and Training Grants
- Loan Repayment
- Fellowship Programs
- Career Awards

****These are all contingent on funding***

Mental and Behavioral Health Education and Training Grants

- Grants to institutions of higher education:
 - Recruitment of students into baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degree programs of social work
 - Development of faculty in social work
 - Establishment or expansion of internships/field placement programs in child and adolescent mental health in social work, school social work, and substance abuse prevention and treatment
- Priority given to programs that “are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education” (H.R. 3590, page 509)
- \$8 million for grants to social work programs and \$10 million for programs dealing with child and adolescent mental health (FY10-13)

Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program

- Social workers with specialized training or clinical experience provide child and adolescent mental and behavioral health care in areas with shortages of health professionals
- In exchange, the federal government pays up to \$35,000 per year (up to 3 years) on principal and interest of undergraduate and graduate loans
- \$20 million each year (FY10-13)

Geriatric Fellowships and Career Awards

- Geriatric Education Centers (GECs) – Expanded to allow funds to be used for short term intensive courses (“fellowships”) focused on geriatrics
 - Provide supplemental training for current social work faculty and appropriately credentialed volunteer faculty and practioners who do not have formal training in geriatrics
 - \$10.8 million (FY 11-14)
- Geriatric Career Incentive Awards – Grants to clinical social workers to foster greater interest in entering geriatrics, long term care, and chronic care management
 - Recipient agrees to teach or practice in geriatrics, long term care, or chronic care management for 5 years
 - \$10 million (FY 11-13)
- Geriatric Academic Career Awards – Expanded to broaden eligibility
 - Eligible applicants include individuals who have completed required training and are employed in an accredited health professions school, have completed an approved fellowship program in geriatrics or specialty training, and hold non-tenured faculty appointments at an accredited school of social work

Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (SAFRA)

■ What's in the bill:

- \$27.6 billion for the Pell Grant
- \$2 billion for community colleges with eligible two year programs for workforce training
- Funding to expand the Income Based Repayment (IBR) program

■ What's not in the bill:

- \$10 billion for the American Graduation Initiative (AGI)
- Administration priorities – Funding for early childhood education, student financial aid form simplification, and a new Perkins Loan Program

American Graduation Initiative

- Announced by President Obama in 2009
- House-passed SAFRA would have provided \$10 billion to community colleges and partners (e.g. 4-year institutions) to develop new and improved community college programs and services
- Other legislative vehicles: Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Other Legislative Activities

- CSWE Legislative Fellowship Program
- VA Scholarships
- Environmental Justice/Climate Change
- Appropriations – Minority Fellowship Programs, loan forgiveness, new health care programs

FY 2011 Appropriations

- President's FY 2011 Budget Request released February 1
- Proposed "freeze" on non-defense domestic discretionary funding, but:

Dept. of Ed	+7.5%
NIH	+3.2%
SAMHSA	+3.2%
IHS	+7.1%
AOA	+7.1%
HRSA	+<1%
ACF	+<1%

FY 2011 Appropriations

- House and Senate Appropriations Committees work throughout the spring/summer to craft and pass FY 2011 funding bills; next fiscal year starts Oct. 1
- CSWE cares about the:
 - Labor-HHS-Education bill – Funds Dept. of Ed and HHS programs, including NIH, SAMHSA, HRSA, etc.
 - Interior and Environment bill – Funds IHS
 - Military Construction and VA bill – Funds Veterans Health Administration
- Written testimony and community advocacy in support of proposed increases and funding for new programs

Non-Legislative Things to Think About

- Sustainability/Environmental Justice/Public Health
- JOBS – Linking with community colleges
- Indian Health/Rural Health, particularly mental health and substance abuse
- Comparative Effectiveness Research/Patient-Centered Health Research
- Integration of behavioral health initiatives into primary health care systems
- Federally-Funded Research
 - Interdisciplinary/community-based participatory teams
 - Behavioral economics
 - Data driven

Questions?

Wendy Naus

wendy@lewis-burke.com