

For Immediate Release:



NoVaHealthFORCE

**Critical Shortage of Health Care Workers
Exists and is Growing in Northern Virginia;
Area Leaders Issue Report
With “Action Plan”**

- *Original Research is First Real Substantiation of the Crisis*
- *Community Leaders Endorse the \$22.3M Plan and Announce Major Initiatives To Position Northern Virginia As National Model; Governor Warner Says He Will Be Engaged*
- *Web Site Launched: www.NoVaHealthFORCE.com*

Northern Virginia, June 23, 2005 – There is a critical shortage of health care professionals in Northern Virginia that will increase dramatically to more than 16,000 unfilled positions by 2020, just as the aging population and the region's ongoing population growth are placing greater demands on the health care system. This assessment was announced today by a group of community leaders that came together voluntarily to define the shortage and propose solutions. That group, known as The Northern Virginia Health Care Workforce Alliance, released a research report that is the first definitive quantitative analysis of the shortage, and also issued an “Action Plan” of specific recommendations to slow the growth of the shortage and eventually resolve the issue. The Action Plan anticipates a budget of \$22.3 million raised from state, health care, business, and philanthropic entities. A key component of the program is to increase the region's capacity to produce nursing, allied health and ancillary support workers, which was among the several initiatives announced today by a series of well-known community leaders who spoke at a news conference orchestrated by the Alliance.

The research was conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and financed by INOVA Health System, Northern Virginia Community College, Potomac Hospital, Prince William Hospital, Reston Hospital Center, The SkillSource

Group/Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board, and Virginia Hospital Center-Arlington. The Alliance, chaired by Dr. Robert Templin, president of Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC), includes leaders from the business, academic and health care communities of Northern Virginia. With today's announcement, the group will begin to oversee execution of the Action Plan, and will re-brand itself as "NoVa HealthFORCE." "Our goal is to solve Northern Virginia's critical health care workforce shortage and become a model for other communities large and small around the nation that are confronting the same crisis," Templin said. "The shortage of health care workers is a major problem in virtually every community in the nation, often at crisis level, usually growing, and very often ignored. In Northern Virginia; we have taken the initiative to define the problem at a very high degree of accuracy, propose specific actions to remedy the shortage, and actually get many of those actions in motion." Templin said that a web site being launched today, www.NoVaHealthFORCE.com was designed not only to be a resource for information and a center of interactivity to build support and momentum that can lead to a quicker local resolution, but also "we want our web site to become a visible and accessible model that other communities can emulate as they address their own uniquely local situations," he said.

Governor Mark Warner issued a statement commending the work of the Alliance, saying it "has done an outstanding job. " He also said that "I have reviewed the report with interest and look forward to working with the Alliance to discuss its findings and recommendations."

The study, concluded in January 2005, surveyed the majority of health care service providers in Northern Virginia to develop a breakdown of needs of 24 different health care job categories in the Nursing, Allied Health and Ancillary health care career fields. **According to the survey, there is a current shortage of 2,763 health care workers in Northern Virginia that is expected to grow to 7,791 by 2010 and to 16,595 by 2020, but that the shortfall can be averted if the recommended action plan is implemented.** In this study "Northern Virginia" was defined as being comprised of Arlington County, Fairfax County, Loudoun County, Prince William County, City of Alexandria, City of Fairfax, City of Falls Church, City of Manassas and the City of Manassas Park. Taken together, these Northern Virginia counties are growing at a projected growth rate (2004-2020) of 33.5% compared to 16.5% for the United States.

"The work to resolve this situation must begin sooner rather than later because the more we delay action the worse the problem will grow and the harder it will be to overcome," Templin said. "That is why the immediate support of our Action Plan by key organizations is so vital, and why we are elated at the support being shown today. We are confident this groundswell of support will grow." Supporters who spoke on behalf of the Action Plan at today's press conference included Alan Merten, president of George Mason University; E. Knox Singleton, CEO of INOVA Health System, James Cole, CEO of Virginia Hospital Center, Dr.

Jack Dale, superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools; Vince Callahan, Delegate and chairman of the House Appropriations Committee of the Virginia General Assembly; Bobbie Kilberg, CEO of the Northern Virginia Technology Council; Bob Rogers, Chairman of the Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board; Bill Lecos, CEO of the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce and Dr. Philip S. Carney Jr., President and Medical Director Kaiser Permanente Mid-Atlantic Permanente Medical Group.

The Alliance's recommendations are segmented into three broad segments: 1) increase capacity within the health care education and training system, 2) develop and sustain an ongoing supply of persons interested in health care careers, and 3) nurture innovation. The recommendations were crafted after the Alliance analyzed the research report and organized eight workgroups that met with subject matter experts from health care, higher education, proprietary schools, public school districts, local county governments, federal government, social service agencies, workforce development authorities, civic organizations, businesses, economic development authorities, philanthropic organizations and the technology community.

The recommendations specified for increasing the capacity for health care education and training are designed to increase the number of annual graduates in nursing and allied health areas in Northern Virginia by more than 600 by 2009. A HealthFORCE Alliance Education Consortium including the region's colleges, universities, and schools will be created to expand the region's health care training and educational capacity as a system and develop educational innovations designed to increase the number of nursing and health care workers in the region.

To build the pipeline of future health care workers, the Alliance has specified a series of outreach programs aimed at students in secondary and middle schools, including "New American" and minority communities. As part of this initiative, Dr. Jack Dale, superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools, is inviting all area superintendents to meet to discuss the prospects and plans for creating one or more magnet high schools in health care and life sciences.

To address the goal of creating innovative solutions, the Northern Virginia Technology Council (NVTC) announced that it will: 1) appoint a task force/work group to work with the Northern Virginia HealthFORCE Alliance to identify technologies that have the potential for improving health care worker productivity and/or improvements in health care services, 2) create a technology-related event with the HealthFORCE Alliance to showcase existing technologies and/or address issues related to the widespread adoption and use of healthcare technology in Northern Virginia, and 3) appoint an advisory group to work with George Mason University, Northern Virginia Community College and other participating institutions of higher education regarding the development of training programs, colleges courses, and research in health information systems.

The Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce will team with NoVa HealthFORCE to lend its advocacy capacity to support the Action Plan in Richmond and with local governments.

“Much attention has been placed on the increasing cost and complexity of our nation’s health care system, but our Alliance came together to address an even more serious issue: the very access to high quality health care by large numbers of our population whose future needs may not be served due to the simple fact that there are too few people to provide that service,” Templin said. “From the very start of our efforts in 2004, we determined that this issue was so critical that we would do a serious disservice by simply issuing ‘another report.’ We set out to put forth an accurate definition of the problem and a real plan to address it,” Templin said. “The range and depth of our research and recommendations bear witness to that commitment, and we hope that we have established the credentials and traction to see our warnings and solutions taken seriously. We recognize that many of the problems are regional in nature and need regional solutions, but we concluded that a fast and successful start to this effort would be made much more possible if we focused on one segment of that region: Northern Virginia. Now that we have an effort underway, we invite and encourage our neighbors in suburban Maryland and Washington, DC to broaden our effort,” Templin said on behalf of the Alliance.

Please see attachments with details:

- [PricewaterhouseCoopers Executive Summary](#)
- [NVHCWA Call to Action](#)
- [NVHCWA Action Plan](#)

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