

WORKFORCE ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN RESULTS

2023

 **COLORADO
RURAL HEALTH
CENTER**

The State Office of Rural Health

Report Summary



41

Respondents



5 Regions

Eastern plains (32%), Southwest (29%), Mountain west (18%), Resort West (18%), & Northwest (4%).

Key focus areas:

- Staffing shortages
- Housing
- Bonus structure
- Loan repayment

Background

The Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC) was awarded a grant through the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) via the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to support and improve recruitment and retention of Community Health Workers (CHWs) and other necessary providers, public health professionals, and other healthcare professionals in rural communities.

A workforce-based environmental scan from various rural regions of the state was conducted to showcase realistic benefits and challenges of rural healthcare practice. The responses collected from the environmental scan will serve as part of the blueprint for CRHCs development of a retention strategy for healthcare employers to support the sustainability of a stable rural workforce. The strategy will highlight examples of successful retention policies in addition to recommendations and suggestions that providers can pull from.

METHODS

Environmental Scan survey questions were developed in response to evidence-based factors impacting recruitment and retention of healthcare professionals in rural communities. A convenience sample, including Critical Access Hospitals, Provider-Based Clinics, Local Public Health Agencies, Private Practices, and Rural Hospitals throughout rural Colorado was collected from August through November 2023. Sampling strategies, to assure broad participation around the state from a variety of healthcare facilities, were influenced by a number of factors including strong relationships between rural facilities and CRHC, various outreach methods including email campaigns, individual communication, and promotion during events and educational webinars. To further help increase participation, an incentive of a \$25 gift card was raffled off to respondents.

DEMOGRAPHICS

12.5% Age 26-35

31.3% Age 36-45

15.6% Age 46-55

28.1% Age 56-64

12.5% Age 65+

84%

identified as heterosexual

91%

identified as non-hispanic, White

Providers/Clinical Staff 58.9%

Leadership (e.g. CEO, CMO etc.) 19.6%

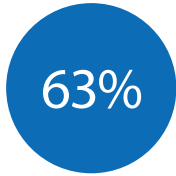
Admin, Office Manager, or Other 14.2%

Human Resources 7.1%



CHECK OUT OUR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGY AT WWW.CORURALHEALTH.ORG

BENEFITS

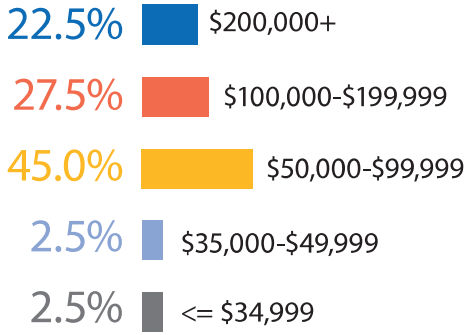


felt their benefits package met the needs of employees, which is a decrease from 73% in 2022



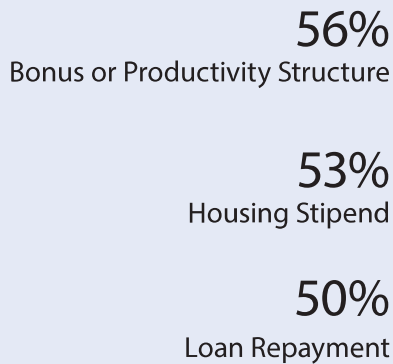
felt their organization understood employee needs enough to make necessary changes

CURRENT SALARY



"Affordable housing is not available in this area, especially for the pay that is offered anywhere."

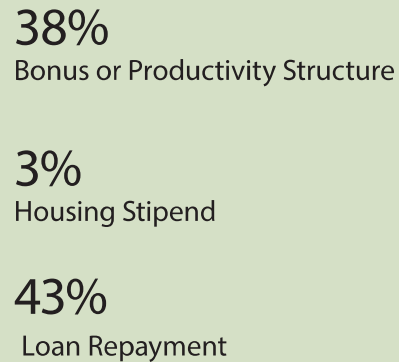
TOP THREE DESIRED BENEFITS



VS



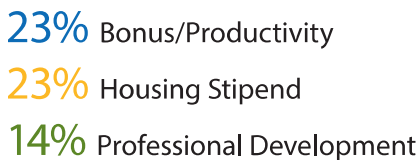
FACILITIES CURRENTLY OFFERING



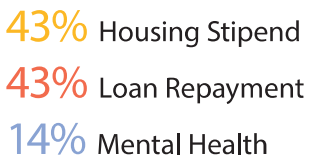
*These were also the top three themes found for desired benefits in 2022

SUMMARY OF DESIRED BENEFITS BY REGION

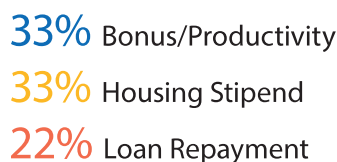
Eastern Plains



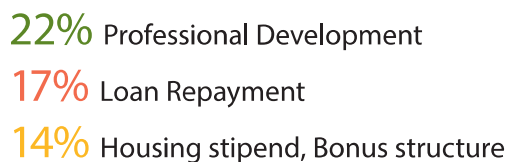
Northwest



Resort West

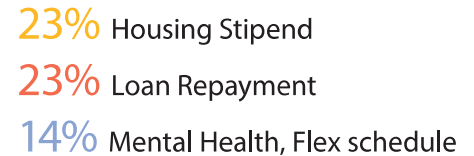


Southwest



Eastern Plains was the only region that reported offering a housing stipend!

Mountain West



HIRING PROCESS

WHEN ASKED TO RANKED CONSIDERATIONS FOR HIRING PROCESS, RESPONDENTS RANKED THEM AS FOLLOWS:

1. Fitting into current work environment
2. Ability to produce quality outcomes
3. Education
4. Passion/enthusiasm for working with rural
5. Lived experience
6. Passion for pursuing professional development



1 in 4 facilities put "a lot" of weight on lived experience during hiring process salary negotiation.

ONBOARDING



Nearly a third reported creating an onboarding process/experience that creates a sense of belonging is most important to them



While only a margin of facilities reported creating a sense of belonging was actually prioritized in onboarding



The majority (47%) of facilities prioritized creating a **welcoming environment** for new hires



37% of facilities prioritized **understanding mission, culture, goals** for new hires

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION



82% prioritize recruiting and retaining for diversity



92% had a scope of practice and services providers are interested in providing



Mental Health was the main service providers felt was missing and impacting retention in rural








RANKED BY IMPORTANCE IN RETENTION

1. Community supports the facilities needs/sustainability
2. Facility responds to community needs
3. Staff welcomed you into facility
4. K-12 school systems and childcare choices
5. Facility helped integrate you and family into community

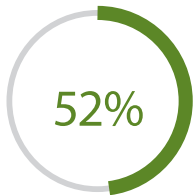
Only 1 mental health provider for every 1,282 residents in rural Colorado versus 1 mental health provider for every 755 residents in urban

TOP FACTORS THAT IMPACT BURNOUT

-  A lack of support staff
-  EMR
-  Not enough routine staff
-  Barriers to practicing at top of ability
-  Lack of development opportunities



For Regional level results, checkout the CRHC Retention and Recruitment Strategy!



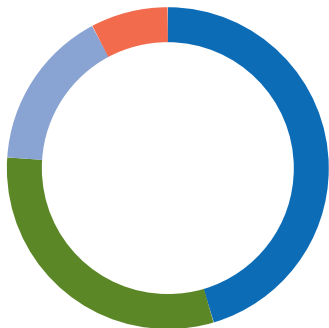
felt having leadership included in the recruitment team was the most important factor in recruitment that influences retention



“Including leadership helps with welcoming the employees as they are all more likely to be onboard with hiring that individual.”

RURAL PRACTICE

REWARDS

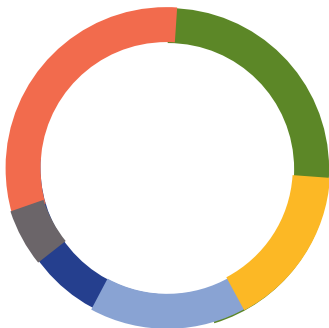


- 45.7% Connection to community
- 28.5% Impact on community
- 5.7% Scope of practice
- 20.0% All of the above



42% of renters are spending 35% or more of their income on rent

CHALLENGES



- 34.3% Staff shortages
- 17.2% Housing
- 17.2% Lack of resources
- 5.7% Workload
- 2.8% Access to amenities
- 22.8% All of the above

“All above, especially housing- focus is typically not on helping providers, but instead on low income based or support staff. (There is) Resistance from admin, staff and community towards supporting providers with housing”

“Staffing shortages (results in a higher workload) and housing, staff can’t afford to live here.”