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NEVADA STATE HEALTH DIVISION NEWS RELEASE

The Health Division Announces Additional Mental Health Professional Shortage Area Designations *Washoe County and Carson City added*

Carson City –Nevada’s efforts to increase access to health care have just gotten a big boost. All of northern Nevada has recently been designated as a mental health shortage area, which supports a range of federal resources, including loan repayment and scholar programs under the National Health Service Corps.

Mental health professionals from psychiatrists and psychologists, to marriage and family therapists, psychiatric nurse specialists, and licensed clinical social workers can get up to \$60,000 to pay off student loans in exchange for two years of service in designated areas. Continued service options are available until all loans are paid off. Approved sites can also recruit scholars who commit to two years of service once they are graduated and licensed.

“This is a great recruitment tool for public and private employers participating in the health care safety net.” said Richard Whitley, Administrator for the Health Division and the Division of Mental Health and Developmental Services.

Twelve rural mental health clinics in northern Nevada are currently certified to participate in these programs; new sites in Carson City and Washoe County are now eligible to apply for certification.

“We are excited that our graduates will have job and loan repayment opportunities and be able to serve in much needed areas,” said Dr. Thomas L. Schwenk, vice president for the Division of Health Sciences and dean of the University of Nevada School of Medicine. “Mental health professionals are sorely needed in our state.”

For more information please contact the Primary Care Office in the Nevada State Health Division, at (775) 684-4047.

For more information, please go to the following websites: <http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/>, <http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/loanrepayment/index.html>, <http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/scholarships/index.html>, and <http://nhscjobs.hrsa.gov/external/search/index.seam>.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Whitley".

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