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# UND SMHS Strategic Plan Individual Unit Report for 2021

## GOAL 8 for **Medical Lab Science**

### LEARNING

**UND SMHS Strategic Plan Goal 8: *The SMHS will enhance its purposes of education, service, and discovery by focusing additional efforts toward achieving the broad goals stated in the School's Healthcare Workforce Initiative.***

#### 1. Describe if/how your unit has addressed this goal.

The Department of MLS has continued working toward addressing the HWI goal of: *Retain more healthcare [MLS] graduates for North Dakota.* Specifically, we have been gathering feedback from students/alumni to identify reasons why graduates stay or leave North Dakota after graduation, and if there are any steps we could take to help enhance the reasons for staying, and/or minimize the reasons for leaving. We have been facilitating career fair experiences between students and regional employers, continuing to utilize available in-state clinical sites that meet our requirements for student training, and seeking out opportunities for marketing/program development to in-state students and entities. We have also started work on coordination of a Rural Lab Workforce meeting to elicit feedback and brainstorm solutions for the current critical lab workforce shortage.

#### 2. Describe how your efforts are being assessed.

Questions asking about reasons for staying/leaving North Dakota after graduation are asked on the student exit survey and post-graduation survey. The percentage of students from ND and the region (ND & MN) that stay in ND and the region is monitored (from responses to post-graduation and/or placement surveys). Clinical site placement rates for North Dakota clinical sites are analyzed on an annual basis.

#### 3. Describe how your unit analyzed these data and what assessments were determined.

Student exit survey and post-graduation survey responses suggest that reasons for staying/leaving the region are varied and multifaceted. Some of the top reasons have to do with being 'closer to home' and the work environment. As a result, we are in the process of examining our clinical placement process to see how the 'closer to home' piece fits in with student requests and placements, as well as sharing data with sites related to student work environment preferences.

Based on data from respondents of our most recent finalized cohort survey (2019-2020), the percentage of students from ND or ND/MN staying to work in ND or ND/MN was 90% and 100%, respectively. Assessment of clinical site placement rates for North Dakota sites suggest that utilization of sites that meet curricular requirements is optimal, but smaller sites that can only offer portions of training are not able to be utilized as often. In conjunction with feedback gathered from the Rural Lab Workforce meeting, we will continue to explore options for program routes targeted to these sites.

#### 4. Describe how your unit will implement any further changes and what barriers may exist.

Current efforts will continue, with potential for growth once new MLS undergraduate curriculum is fully implemented. We also hope to identify additional program options related to rural lab workforce issues.

As far as barriers - we have had difficulties tracking the number of MLS graduates working in the state, but will be working with the ND Board of Clinical Laboratory Practice to try to gain a better grasp of these numbers.

**PROVIDE A RATING OF YOUR PROGRESS ON THIS GOAL:**  On Track;  Delayed;  Behind

*(additional space for text is provided on page 3 if needed)*