

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

This bill modifies the health professional education loan forgiveness program to allow dental therapists to participate in the program, changes eligibility requirements for the loan forgiveness program, modifies nursing facility employee scholarship costs, directs the commissioner of employment and economic development to review existing workforce development programs in order to further the advancement of long-term care careers in Minnesota, and appropriates an unspecified amount for the health professional education loan forgiveness program and nursing facility employee scholarship costs.

Section

- 1** **Definitions.** Amends § 144.1501, subd. 1. Adds definition of “dental therapist.”
- 2** **Creation of account.** Amends § 144.1501, subd. 2. Adds a new category of health professionals that may receive a grant through the health professional education loan forgiveness program. The new category includes professionals agreeing to practice in a nursing home or intermediate care facility for persons with a developmental disability. Professionals included in this new category include dental therapists or other health care technicians that work in a field where the need is the greatest, as determined by the commissioner of health.

Section

- 3 **Eligibility.** Amends § 144.1501, subd. 3. Requires that an individual not be a recipient of the nursing facility employee scholarship program in order to be eligible for the loan forgiveness program.
- 4 **Employee scholarship costs and training in English as a second language.** Amends § 256B.431, subd. 36. Modifies nursing facility employee scholarship costs for the period between October 1, 2015, and September 30, 2017, by reducing the average hours of work per week required to be eligible, expanding the professions eligible, and expanding the eligible costs. Specifies that the rate increase for scholarship costs is an optional add-on that a facility must request from the commissioner and use for scholarships as specified. Allows nursing facilities that close beds during a rate year to request to have their scholarship adjustment recalculated by the commissioner for the remainder of the rate year to reflect the reduction in resident days compared to the cost report year.
- 5 **Direction to commissioner; long-term care workforce development.** Directs the commissioner of employment and economic development, in consultation with the commissioner of health, to review existing workforce development programs in order to further the advancement of long-term care careers in Minnesota. Requires the commissioner to report recommendations regarding training, retaining, and connecting employees to long-term care facilities in rural Minnesota to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over long-term care and workforce development by February 1, 2016.
- 6 **Appropriations.** Appropriates an unspecified amount in fiscal years 2016 and 2017 from the general fund to the commissioners of health and human services for the health professional education loan forgiveness program and nursing facility employee scholarship costs.