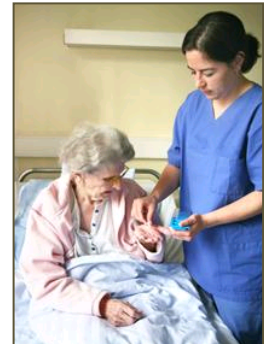


# Evaluation of HRSA's Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program and the Nursing Scholarship Program

Client: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration

## Project Overview

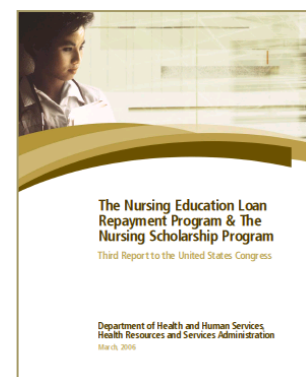
Insight conducted a 5-year evaluation of 2 Health Resources and Services (HRSA) programs—the Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program (NELRP) and the Nursing Scholarship Program (NSP)—to assess the impact of these programs on critical shortage facilities and the communities they serve. Together, these programs are designed to encourage nurses to choose careers in underserved areas to reduce the nursing shortage and address the need for nurses in critical shortage facilities. These are the only Federal programs designed to provide financial incentives directly to nurses in exchange for service in health care facilities experiencing a critical shortage of nurses.



The research design contained both qualitative and quantitative components. For this evaluation, Insight was tasked with the following:

- Design logic models and performance measures (including the number of nurse graduates and those working in critical shortage areas).
- Acquire, edit, and tabulate administrative data to monitor yearly trends (including the number of applicants, defaulters, awards, and funds obligated by demographics of program participants and shortage facility characteristics).
- Conduct nationally representative surveys of nursing employers in underserved areas to measure the retention rate of nurse awardees in critical shortage facilities over time.
- Conduct discussion groups with both nurse awardees and health facility administrators to explore the factors related to the successful placement and retention of nurses.
- Design a cost-benefit analysis to determine the cost effectiveness of providing scholarships and loan repayment to students. This analysis also quantified the number of additional years that nurses must serve for the program to be considered cost beneficial.

As mandated by the Nurse Reinvestment Act (NRA), Insight submitted an annual report to HRSA and Congress detailing the evaluation findings and resultant recommendations. Specifically, these reports addressed 1) changes in the programs' awardees over time, 2) the programs' effectiveness in increasing the number of nurses serving in critical shortage facilities and improving the supply and distribution of nurses, and 3) the overall costs and benefits of these programs.



## Core Activities

Program Evaluation; Literature Reviews and Environmental Scans; Survey Design and Implementation; Qualitative Research; Secondary Data Analysis and Simulations; Performance Measurement and Monitoring; Policy Analysis and Assessment; Report Development and Presentation

## Products

The most recent report is entitled "HRSA Responds to the Nursing Shortage: Results From the Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program and the Nursing Scholarship Program." (June 2006)