

Medicare-Supported graduate medical education residency slots

Key Messages

Primary Message

- CMS has announced the distribution of 400 new Medicare-supported graduate medical education (GME) residency slots, marking a significant milestone in expanding health care access and the physician workforce across communities nationwide.
- This distribution represents another tangible, positive impact on both rural and urban communities, including traditionally underserved areas.
- For decades, AAMC has persistently advocated to improve access to care for patients while expanding the physician workforce, and we know that these new slots will benefit patients in every corner of the nation. We look forward to continuing to work with Congress to expand Medicare-supported GME and improve health care access for all communities.

Supporting Messages

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) announced the distribution of 400 GME residency slots. These slots are crucial to helping America's academic health systems and teaching hospitals invest in more physician training, increase access to care, and better serve patients nationwide.

- These were the first expansions of federal support for GME in over two decades, with Congress providing 1,000 slots in the CAA, 2021, and then another 200 in the CAA, 2023. Teaching hospitals lead this effort, providing advanced specialty care (trauma, NICU, burn units) while training physicians in both hospital and community-based settings.
- The AAMC, our members, and our partners in the GME Advocacy Coalition have worked tirelessly for the past nearly 25 years to increase the number of Medicare-supported GME positions to address the persistent physician shortage and improve health for patients nationwide.
- CMS has identified that approximately 62% of the newly awarded positions will go to primary care and psychiatry residency programs.
- Overall, 135 hospitals in 37 states received new residency positions. Increasing the number of physicians in the workforce will have a huge impact on access to care for patients across the country. This represents a tangible, positive impact on communities across the country and will help grow the physician workforce in every corner of the nation.
- Slots from the previous distributions are already in use, with promising new physicians in numerous primary care and specialty training programs across the country.

- The U.S. faces a dire physician shortage that is projected to reach up to 86,000 physicians by 2036.
- The groups in the AAMC's GME Advocacy Coalition work across specialties, regions, and health care industries to inform Congress about the impacts of the physician shortage on the communities that they represent, and advocate for additional Medicare-supported GME slots to help alleviate the physician shortage.

This is progress toward working to alleviate the growing national physician shortage, and more Medicare-supported GME slots are needed to ensure we have qualified physicians to meet the growing and ever-changing health care needs of patients everywhere.

- We urge Congress to build on their investments in 2021 and 2023 by passing the Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2023 (H.R. 4731/ S. 2439), legislation that would gradually increase the number of Medicare-supported GME slots by 14,000 over 7 years – a crucial step toward growing a sustainable physician workforce to meet patient needs.
- The legislation prioritizes a wide range of categories of hospitals with the goal of ensuring new slots are distributed to hospitals with different patient populations and needs.