



Montana University System

MRPIP

Montana Rural Physician Incentive Program

PROGRAM FACTS

Since the inception of MRPIP, nearly 130 doctors have participated.

MRPIP relies on revenue from WICHE/WWAMI student surcharge assessments and eliminated physician tax credit proceeds.

Participants must have a doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathic medicine degree, and be eligible for licensure in the State of Montana.

The Office of Commissioner of Higher Education administers the program.

Over 40 Communities served by MRPIP

Anaconda	Havre
Big Timber	Lewistown
Billings CHC	Libby
Butte CHC	Lincoln
Chester	Livingston
Chinook	Miles City
Columbia Falls	Plains
Columbus	Plentywood
Conrad	Polson
Corvallis	Red Lodge
Culbertson	Ronan
Cut Bank	Scobey
Deer Lodge	Seeley Lake
Dillon	Shelby
Ennis	Sidney
Florence	Stevensville
Forsyth	St. Ignatius
Glasgow	Superior
Glendive	Thompson
Hamilton	Falls
Hardin	Townsend
Harlowton	

Program Summary

In 1991, the Montana Legislature authorized the creation of The Montana Rural Physician Incentive Program (MRPIP) in order to encourage primary care physicians to practice in rural and medically underserved areas of Montana. The MRPIP Trust Fund was established to facilitate repayment of qualified educational debts of rural physicians who serve communities or populations where there is a demonstrated need for medical services. The trust is funded by fees assessed to all Montana allopathic and osteopathic medical students participating in the WICHE and WWAMI programs.

Benefits and Obligations

- The program provides up to \$100,000 in medical education loan repayment (prior to July 2009, repayment cap was \$45,000)
- One- to five-year periods of service are required in approved rural or underserved locations
- Graduated payments based on length of service are disbursed directly to verified lending institutions

Characteristics of Qualifying Locations and Populations

The program is based on legislation designed to provide assistance for medically underserved populations and rural communities in Montana that have difficulty attracting and maintaining adequate numbers of physicians. Traditionally, such communities have populations of fewer than 8,000 and hospitals with fewer than 50 beds or have demonstrated shortages of physicians serving specific populations. Many of these areas have been designated by the United States government as health professional shortage areas (HPSA). Hospitals and other community organizations in these areas must document their inability to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of physicians.

Selection Process

Applications are reviewed for program eligibility by an advisory committee appointed by the Commissioner of Higher Education. Qualified applications are prioritized for participation based upon community needs and the availability of funds. The following preferences may be applied:

- MT WWAMI TRUST graduate physicians.
- MT WICHE and WWAMI graduate physicians who contributed to the MRPIP trust fund.
- Physicians who practice in remote rural locations or in locations having difficulty attracting physicians.
- Primary care physicians.

All advisory committee nominations of physicians to receive awards are submitted to the Montana Board of Regents for final approval.

