



Background

The Scholars for a Healthy Oregon Initiative was established in 2013 by the State of Oregon to address two critical challenges that exist when educating health providers for the state of Oregon: the high cost of tuition for students and the mal-distribution of providers throughout the state.

Student tuition rates have reached a level that is creating extraordinary challenges for students who graduate with large debt burdens and wish to pursue primary care or rural practice after graduation. Some students may not even apply to OHSU because they perceive that the amount of debt after graduation will make the opportunity out of reach.

In addition, the mal-distribution of providers (whether dentists, nurses, physician assistants, nurse practitioners or physicians) is a serious issue for a large portion of Oregon. It is increasingly difficult to recruit and retain providers in the more rural areas of the state.

To address the issues related to high tuition and the shortage of healthcare professionals in Oregon's rural and underserved communities, key legislative officials partnered with OHSU to create the Oregon Healthy Scholars Initiative.

The Oregon Legislature allocated \$2,500,000 to be used to cover tuition and fees for a limited number of eligible students entering specific clinical degree programs during the 2014-15 academic year who also agree to practice as a health care practitioner in an OHSU approved Oregon designated service site for one year longer than the number of years for which the student received funding. The Scholars for a Healthy Oregon Initiative funding is awarded annually, effective for one academic year with annual renewal if the student maintains good academic standing. The funding provides for payment of full OHSU tuition and required fees, but does not provide a living allowance.

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for funding under the Scholars for a Healthy Oregon Initiative, students must be admitted to OHSU for the 2014-15 academic year in one of the following clinical degree programs:

- Doctor of Medicine (MD)
- Doctor of Dental Medicine (DMD)
- Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS)

- Master of Nursing (MN) in:
 - Nurse Anesthesia
 - Family Nurse Practitioner
 - Nurse Midwifery
 - Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

All students in qualifying programs may apply for funding from the Scholars for a Healthy Oregon Initiative; however, priority will be given to those considered of Oregon Heritage under OHSU’s admission guidelines. In addition, further priority consideration will be given to applicants who are:

- Students who lived and/or graduated high school in a rural location or underserved community or who graduated from one of the four regional Oregon University System institutions (Eastern Oregon University, Oregon Institute of Technology, Southern Oregon University or Western Oregon University)
- First generation college students
- Individuals from a diverse or underrepresented community

Application Requirements

Applications will be accepted from admitted students who meet the eligibility requirements in the preceding section. Applicants must complete a Scholars for a Healthy Oregon Initiative funding application. If an applicant is selected to receive funding under the Scholars for a Healthy Oregon Initiative, subsequent years funding will be automatically provided as long as the student remains in good academic standing as provided by the academic program.

A selection committee tasked with authorizing funding to selected applicants will be appointed by the OHSU Provost. The selection committee is composed of OHSU faculty, staff and administration. The committee will require a written application and may require a personal interview with applicants. The committee may consider the applicants commitment to and aptitude for care to underserved populations as part of its eligibility determination process.

Service Agreement

Upon being awarded funding under the Scholars for a Healthy Oregon Initiative, the recipient will execute a Service Agreement with the following stipulations:

- Student must remain enrolled and in good academic standing in their planned degree program at OHSU,
- Student must complete the planned degree program within the normal time to degree completion as specified by the academic program. For example, a medical student would need to complete the MD degree within four years.

- Upon completion of the planned degree program, including residency training if required for the professional degree, the funding recipient agrees to:
 - Practice, beginning within 3 months of completing their training, full-time as a healthcare practitioner, in a designated service site in Oregon that has been approved by OHSU, for one year longer than the number of years for which the student received funding under the Scholars for a Healthy Oregon Initiative. For example, a student receiving funding for a four year degree program would be subject to a service commitment of five years.
 - Practice sites may include certified rural health clinics, rural critical access hospitals, federally qualified health centers, or any geographic area, population or facility in Oregon designated by Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the United States Department of Health and Human Services as a health professional shortage area, a medically underserved area or a medically underserved population. Practice site designations must be pre-approved by OHSU and the Oregon Office of Rural Health.
 - While practicing at the designated service site, the practitioner must see all patients without regard for their insurance status or ability to pay for services.

Satisfying the Service Commitment

The service commitment will be satisfied when one of the following conditions is met:

- the funding recipient completes the years in full time health care provider practice at an approved designated service site as specified in the service agreement
- the funding recipient dies
- the funding recipient is unable to practice their profession due to documented total permanent disability

Repayment/Failure to Satisfy the Service Commitment

If the funding recipient withdraws or is dismissed prior to completion of their planned degree program, the full amount of funding received must be repaid immediately, with no penalty, beginning from the time the funding recipient withdraws or is dismissed.

If the funding recipient elects not to fulfill the conditions of the service agreement at the time of their graduation or program completion, the entire amount of funding received must be repaid in addition to a 25% penalty. This entire amount must be repaid within 3 months, beginning from the time the commitment would have commenced. Alternatively the entire amount can be repaid over a period of time one year longer than the number of years for which

the student received funding under the Scholars for a Healthy Oregon Initiative. If this option is chosen, an additional annual interest payment will be assessed for each year the repayment takes. The annual interest rate shall equal that assessed on Federal college loans for the level of degree taken at OHSU.

If the funding recipient begins, but does not complete, the health care practice obligation, they shall repay the entire loan amount plus 25% penalty. This entire amount must be repaid within 3 months, beginning from the time the commitment would have commenced. Alternatively the entire amount can be repaid over a period of time one year longer than the number of years for which the student received funding under the Scholars for a Healthy Oregon Initiative. If this option is chosen, an additional annual interest payment will be assessed for each year the repayment takes. The annual interest rate shall equal that assessed on Federal college loans for the level of degree taken at OHSU.

The total amount to be repaid will be reduced for every full year that the practitioner complied with the service agreement on a pro-rata basis, as computed by the total number of years agreed to in the service agreement. A partial year of completed service will not count as a year of service.