MORE OR FEWER

Two forces that will affect the future demand for health care are a growth in the number of individuals in the U.S. who possess insurance coverage and a steady increase in the aged portion of the population with multiple morbidities. Consequently, health education programs in academic institutions will be involved in determining if an adequate supply of competently prepared practitioners can be produced to meet the demand for health services.

As situations change in the overall environment, deans and directors are in a position to consider whether some academic programs should be reduced in size or perhaps even be eliminated, while also being able to contemplate whether it is warranted to explore the expansion of some existing programs or even the creation of new offerings. Regarding the latter, an undertaking that involves programmatic growth often hinges upon developing satisfactory responses to some of the following kinds of fundamental questions:

Are there sufficient resources to increase what will be offered? If a new program is created, will there be enough students to apply for admission? Once they fulfill all academic requirements, will they have opportunities in the job market? Is there an adequate supply of faculty to recruit and bring on board? How essential will it be for new faculty to be able to conduct research that attracts external funding?

Increasingly, genetics is playing a more prominent role in the health domain. It is expected that efforts will continue to screen the general population for preventable monogenic conditions. Downstream clinical consequences of false positive and false negative test results are a concern. Genetic counselors will be needed to guide the public both in understanding the ramifications of findings from tests and deciding what follow-up action might be taken. An expansion of the number of genetic counseling graduate programs might represent an attractive option to pursue. Articles by Roche et al in the August 2016 issue and by Pan et al published online January 7, 2016 in the journal Genetics in Medicine may provide some useful food for thought.

ASAHP AWARD NOMINATIONS

Nominations are sought for awards that will be made in the following categories at the Awards Dinner on October 19 during the Annual Conference. With the exception of the Fellows Program Award, only one recipient is chosen.

Distinguished Service and Achievement Award
Its purpose is to recognize a former or inactive member of the Association who has achieved professional success beyond the scope of allied health.

Outstanding Member Award
Its purpose is to recognize a member who has contributed significantly to ASAHP during the previous year. Nominees must have held continuous membership in ASAHP for five years.

Cultural Pluralism Award
Its purpose is to recognize either an individual member or a department at a member institution involved in furthering the principle of cultural pluralism in the academic setting by demonstrating leadership in promoting it.

Fellows Program Award
Nominees must be members of ASAHP for five years and be actively involved in allied health. They will be selected by a committee of current Fellows.

Members who wish to nominate their colleagues for any of these awards are requested to do so by September 15, 2016. A statement justifying why anybody should receive an award must accompany each nomination. Please send this information by e-mail to Jacoby Lawrence at jacyob@asahp.org.

Names of nominees will be forwarded to members of the ASAHP Board of Directors, a group involved in the selection process. The names of students who will receive scholarships from the Scholarship of Excellence Fund will be included on the program at the Awards Dinner. Each recipient will receive both a certificate and a check for $1,000, while students who were not selected will be given a certificate. These items will be mailed to deans and directors.
2016 ANNUAL CONFERENCE
The Association’s 2016 Annual Conference will be held at the Royal Sonesta Hotel in New Orleans, LA on October 19-21. Readers of the ASAHP UPDATE are encouraged to attend. Along with networking opportunities, the event will include a series of presentations both in concurrent sessions and at a poster session. Plenary session addresses will be made by:

Cheryl Dowd
Director, WCET/State Authorization Network (SAN)

Charlie Mahtesian
Senior Politics Editor, Politico

Freeman A. Hrabowski, III, President, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Christine M. MacDonell, Managing Director, Medical Rehabilitation and International Aging Services/Medical Rehabilitation, CARF International

Patricia A. Cuff, Director, Global Forum on Innovation in Health Professional Education, Health and Medicine Division, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

Marianne Boeke, Senior Associate, National Center for Higher Education Management Systems

Rooming rates for this year’s 2016 Annual Conference will start at $209 per night. Attendees may book within the room block through Monday, September 26, 2016. The special room rate will be available until the group block is sold out. Booking information and other details about the conference can be accessed at http://www.cvent.com/events/2016-asahp-annual-conference/event-summary-5c505444a1b44186b592e3eb4a6bca.aspx.

EDUCATION CONDITIONS
A report from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) profiles current conditions and recent trends in the education of students by racial and ethnic group. It summarizes data on topics such as demographics; preprimary, elementary, and secondary participation; student achievement; student behaviors and persistence in education, postsecondary education, and outcomes of education.


FUNDING OPPORTUNITY
Funding is available for an NIH Big Data to Knowledge Enhancing Diversity in Biomedical Data Science Program. This R25 offering supports research educational activities that complement other formal training programs in the mission areas of the NIH Institutes and Centers. The over-arching goal is to support educational activities that enhance the capacity of institutions to develop a diverse biomedical, behavioral, and clinical research workforce in the area of Big Data science. Funding will focus on:

Research Experiences: For undergraduate students to provide hands-on exposure to Big Data research experiences and for faculty to extend their Big Data knowledge research skills, experiences, and knowledge base through research experiences.

Curriculum or Methods Development: To develop and disseminate Big Data curricula and novel instructional approaches appropriate for undergraduates in biomedical research courses and related research education activities that will be incorporated into an institution’s course offerings.


THE HIDDEN WORKFORCE
Prior to being renamed the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, what then was called the Institute of Medicine hosted a workshop on May 9-10, 2011 in Washington, DC to examine the current allied health care workforce and consider how it can contribute to improving health care access, quality, and effectiveness. Susan Chapman of the University of California, San Francisco was Chairperson of the event’s planning committee. Some of her recent thoughts about allied health can be accessed at http://healthforce.ucsf.edu/news/qa-hidden-health-workforce?utm_source=Aug2016Newsletter.SM.OL&utm_campaign=08-18Newsletter OL&utm_medium=email.

ALLIED HEALTH WEEK
Allied Health Professions Week in 2016 will be celebrated November 6-12 to honor the work of educators and practitioners. Examples of activities will be in the next ASAHP UPDATE issue.