



Montana University System

MR. PIP

Montana Rural Physician Incentive Program

PROGRAM FACTS

Since the inception of MR PIP nearly 100 doctors have participated. Of those receiving loan repayment funds, 78% continued their practice in Montana.

MR PIP relies on revenue from surcharge assessments (16%) on WICHE/WWAMI student tuition.

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.

38 Communities served by MR PIP (over the past 10 years)

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

Program Summary

In 1991, the Montana Legislature authorized the creation of The Montana Rural Physician Incentive Program (MR PIP) in order to encourage primary care physicians to practice in rural and medically underserved areas of Montana. The MR PIP 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 less 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:

- Physicians who contributed to the trust fund during their participation in the WICHE or WWAMI programs.
- 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.