



Governor's Office of Health Strategy and Coordination

Grant Thomas

Director

Healthcare Workforce Commission Presentation

July 20, 2022



Creation of OHSC

- The Office of Health Strategy and Coordination (OHSC) was established after passage of House Bill 186 (2019 Session).
- OHSC operates as a division of the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget.
- Governor Kemp appointed a Director in June 2021 and OHSC now consists of four full time staff.
- **Mission:** to break down the silos between government agencies, health care providers, and health care consumers and to promote health care policies that increase access and quality.



Powers and Duties

- Strengthen and support the health care infrastructure of the state through interconnecting health functions and sharing resources across multiple state agencies and overcoming barriers to the coordination of health functions.
- Facilitate collaboration and coordination between state agencies, coordinating state health functions and programs, serving as a forum for identifying Georgia's specific health issues of greatest concern, and promoting cooperation from both public and private agencies to test new and innovative ideas.
- Advise the Governor's Office on all healthcare policy issues—***all of which are interconnected with workforce.***



Mental Health Parity Act (HB 1013)/Behavioral Health Reform Innovation Commission (BHRIC)

- *HB 1013 codifies the recommendations from the Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission (BHRIC) as part of the effort to overhaul current behavioral and mental health processes in the State of Georgia and create alignment with federal mental health parity laws.*
- *Revamps multiple aspects of the mental and behavioral health continuum of care and create much needed parity in state mental health care.*
- **Workforce Specific:**
 - Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce tasked with the creation of a behavioral health care workforce database – this will help inform policy decisions that could address the shortage in rural areas.
 - Loan repayment options for licensed professionals are currently being explored this interim.



- *Nursing workforce shortage issues exacerbated in part by the pandemic. Some potential solutions include re-examining degree program and supervisory requirements, loan repayment options, and college and career academy pathways to improve the pipeline.*
- **Collection and Reporting of Data**
 - OHSC also received funding in the FY2023 budget to support the collection and reporting of nursing data.
 - working with the Board of Nursing and the Secretary of State's Office to determine what data is already collected through surveys administered as part of the licensing process.
- **Pipeline/Certified Nursing Assistant Program Pathway**



- **Georgia Composite Medical Board**
 - discussed opportunities for short-term licensure of clinicians and licensing of locum tenens
 - a practitioner who is licensed in another state that is also a member of the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact can already apply for a full license in Georgia through that agreement
 - options for providing temporary or conditional licenses for practitioners licensed in states who are not members of the Compact



Behavioral Health; Autism Spectrum Disorders

- Working with DCH and the Georgia Board for Health Care Workforce to identify new provider types or licensures that could increase the number of mental health practitioners in the state, such as DCH moving to add Qualified Applied Behavioral Analysts (QABAs) to the list of providers that can bill Medicaid
- This in turn would aid in diagnosing and treating autism spectrum disorders and increasing access to ABA therapy.



Thank You!

Questions & Comments
