



## Kaiser Permanente's approach: Leading with our values

### The challenge

#### Health care workforce needs

To meet the health care needs of the future, the nation needs more health care workers and a diverse workforce with the right experiences, skills, cultural diversity, and linguistic capabilities to meet the needs of communities throughout the country.



Researchers at the U.S. Census Bureau predict that the nation's population will grow by almost 80 million people over the next 4 decades. The percentage of older adults is rising, and by 2030 more than one in five people will be age 65 and older.<sup>1</sup> The nation also is becoming increasingly racially and ethnically diverse.<sup>2</sup>

These trends will result in greater need for health care professionals overall, and a growing need for diverse health care professionals who can serve our nation's increasingly diverse communities. The U.S. is facing a shortage of nurses,<sup>3</sup> physicians,<sup>4</sup> and behavioral health practitioners.<sup>5</sup> Researchers project that health care jobs will grow at triple the pace of the rest of the economy in the coming years.<sup>6</sup>

#### Economic health, community health, and health equity

When communities have little economic opportunity, people's prospects for upward social mobility are diminished. Researchers have found that limited job opportunities and low incomes can result in higher stress, worse health behaviors, poorer health, and higher mortality rates.<sup>7</sup> As a result of multiple historical and current policies,<sup>8</sup> communities of color face racial inequities in both income<sup>9</sup> and wealth,<sup>10</sup> and this contributes to health inequities.

Equitable career pathways, whether in the health sector or other sectors, increase economic security, socioeconomic mobility, racial equity, and health equity, and this improves individual and community health.<sup>11</sup> As a place-based, mission-driven organization committed to leveraging our assets to improve health, Kaiser Permanente's health care and community-focused workforce programs help us promote total health for our employees, our members, and our communities.

#### Health care workforce development programs

Kaiser Permanente's health care workforce development programs increase access to education, exposure to skill development and job experiences, and employment opportunities. We are a partner in the largest, longest-running private [Labor Management Partnership](#) in the country, jointly leading organizational change, creating an environment of continuous learning and improvement, and involving the workforce in decision-making. Several of our health care workforce development programs are joint initiatives with our labor partners. Through these programs, we strengthen workforce pipelines, and we provide opportunities for people already in the health care workforce to grow and advance in their careers.

#### Education, exposure, experience, and employment

- The Kaiser Permanente [Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine](#), launched in 2020, is preparing diverse groups of future **physicians** to become collaborative, transformative leaders committed to prevention, fluent in data-driven care, and adept at addressing the needs of underserved patients and communities. The school uses a case-based, interactive, small-group approach with an emphasis on social and environmental factors that impact health, cutting-edge technology, and extensive advising and mentorship.

- We invest in Graduate Medical Education through **physician** residency programs, fellowships, and elective rotations that provide academic and clinical training. Through these programs, we trained more than 6,000 residents over the past year.
- [Futuro Health](#), launched in partnership with SEIU United Health Workers West, is a nonprofit community-based organization in California that offers training programs and scholarships, provides wrap-around support, and connects graduates to job opportunities in **allied health careers** like **medical assistants, vocational nurses, community health workers, phlebotomists, pharmacy technicians, lab technicians, care coordinators, data analysts, project managers, and help desk support specialists**.
- The [Kaiser Permanente School of Allied Health](#) is an accredited, degree-granting post-secondary institution in Northern California that provides academic and clinical training and assistance with job placements in **behavioral/mental health counseling, radiology, nuclear medicine, ultrasound technology, medical assisting, and phlebotomy**. Similarly, our [Mental Health Training Program](#) provides comprehensive training to over 200 **mental health trainees** per year to prepare for roles as practicing licensed professionals.



- [The Kaiser Permanente Mental Health Scholars Academy](#) is a new \$30 million initiative in California to build a pipeline for additional **mental health professionals** and increase diversity and representation in the workforce by helping existing Kaiser Permanente employees transition into these roles. Qualifying employees pursuing masters and doctoral degrees in mental health receive tuition support, mentoring, and networking assistance for training placements, and current mental health professionals can also access continuing education opportunities.
- The [Ben Hudnall Memorial Trust](#) and [SEIU-UHW Joint Employer Education Fund](#) provide tools and resources to help **frontline employees** gain new skills and advance in their careers through coaching, training and apprenticeship programs, scholarships and tuition reimbursement for degree and certification programs, and computers and mobile hotspot devices for qualifying students.



### Opportunities for employees

- [The Kaiser Permanente Nurse Scholars Academy](#) supports **nurse leaders** at all levels of the organization to achieve their highest potential by offering tuition support for qualified nurses to pursue advanced degrees, national certification, and professional development opportunities while they work. The program includes a focus on building a health care workforce that increasingly matches the communities being served

### Partnerships and Policy

Kaiser Permanente also promotes workforce development and economic security through partnerships and public policy. We focus on both clinical and nonclinical opportunities that provide educational support, exposure, work experience, and employment for adults and young people of color, people with low incomes facing barriers to employment, and other underrepresented groups.

- Kaiser Permanente is partnering with Goodwill Industries and other community-based organizations in Southern California to provide opportunities for people with employment barriers, including veterans, youth, people with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness, and recently incarcerated populations. More than 500 people have been hired through the program into positions with low barriers to entry, such as **food and nutrition services, environmental services, and call centers**.

- Through a partnership with [Year Up](#), Kaiser Permanente has hosted 364 interns in California, Georgia, and the Mid-Atlantic region in **help desk/desktop support, project management, customer service, quality assurance, data analytics, and cyber security**. Almost half were hired by Kaiser Permanente after their placements.
- As an impact investor, through the Thriving Communities Fund, we are prioritizing job creation and job quality with the Local Initiatives Support Corporation. The [Inclusive Economic Development Partnership](#) program has created 844 **jobs** and provided **financing** to more than 60 businesses and 2 commercial corridors in underinvested communities of color. The [Good Jobs Loan Fund](#) has created 265 good quality **jobs** by investing in small and medium-sized businesses with diverse leadership and staff.
- Kaiser Permanente's [Community Health](#) program is supporting **education** and providing **career exposure** through our Hispanic Scholarship Fund and United Negro College Fund [Health Equity Scholars Program](#), the American Public Health Association [Community Health Leadership Program](#), and other programs.

- Kaiser Permanente also is addressing workforce development through **public policy**. As a founding member of the [Healthcare Anchor Network](#), Kaiser Permanente has joined with other health system leaders to highlight the need for expanded federal support and financing for workforce development programs.

Inclusive economic growth and expanded access to jobs within, and outside, the health care sector support the total health of individuals and communities and advance racial and health equity. Jobs help people improve their economic circumstances, provide a sense of purpose, and support improved health through greater economic security.

As a large, influential institution in our communities, Kaiser Permanente recognizes that we can change the way we do business to support economic opportunity more intentionally by how we hire, build, and partner with communities.

### References

Full citations for this document can be found at: [kpihp.org/references-ics](https://kpihp.org/references-ics).

