Hospitals and Health Care: Working for Kansas

Although the connections between health care services and local economic development are often overlooked, there are at least three important linkages to be recognized. A strong health care system can help attract and maintain business and industry growth, attract and retain retirees, and create jobs in the local area. A vigorous and sustainable health care system is essential not only for the health and welfare of community residents, but to enhance economic opportunity as well.

According to a report from the Office of Local Government, K-State Research and Extension, Kansas hospitals employ 97,000 people, or 4.8 percent of all job holders in the state. The entire health sector in Kansas employs 240,000 people, or 12 percent of all job holders in the state. The report calculated economic multipliers (ripple effects) and estimated hospitals account for 88,143 additional jobs throughout all businesses and industries in the state.

As hospitals expand, they provide additional opportunities for employment and generate economic activity and income in other sectors of the economy. The report found that Kansas hospitals generate approximately $7.1 billion in direct total income to the Kansas economy each year. For every $1 of income generated by hospitals, another 60 cents was generated in other business and industry. Thus, hospitals had an estimated total impact on income throughout all business and industry of nearly $11.4 billion.

Kansas hospitals believe that supporting increased investment in areas of our economy that are poised for growth is a smart move. Increasing demand for health care services will require new health care infrastructure and additional education and training for more health care workers. Specific professions in demand and poised for growth in Kansas include registered nurses; medical records and health information technicians; physical, occupational and respiratory therapists; laboratory, radiologic and surgical technologists; pharmacists and pharmacy technicians; and physician assistants.

There’s never been a better time for educators, health care providers, technology developers and community leaders in Kansas to collaborate to strengthen employment opportunities in the state’s health care system. Many jobs are available for qualified applicants, and more will be available as demand for health care services increases. In turn, hospitals depend upon a reliable and predictable sources of funding from public programs in order to continue to make such a valuable economic impact.

Action Needed

Kansas hospitals and the health care sector benefit the financial health of our state. Policymakers should reject cuts that would harm the health care sector of the economy, a sector that is creating thousands of jobs.

More Information

Contact your Kansas hospital or Chad Austin or Cindy Samuelson at the Kansas Hospital Association to learn more.

(785) 233-7436
caustin@kha-net.org
csamuelson@kha-net.org