

TO: Program Planning & Development

DATE: 11/30/05

FROM: WIB Staff

For Action

For Information

For Discussion

SUBJECT: Medical Assistant Career Lattice Project

PROPOSED MOTION (S): Information only.

DISCUSSION: The Merced County Department of Workforce Investment (WI) has been awarded Governor's Discretionary funds to address issues related to training, retention and an educational lattice for Medical Assistants. WI has completed extensive research, data collection, and analysis for the Medical Assistant Career Lattice project. The groundwork has clearly been established and documented on the issues and challenges facing the medical assistants, employers and training providers. Career lattices are a recommended and proposed solution, but have not been fully developed for this field. The following events have occurred:

1. On 7/27/05, staff hosted a four-county action-planning meeting between Santa Cruz, San Mateo, Stanislaus and Merced County to discuss conducting a regional study that can be used both locally and statewide to address the feasibility of consistency in medical assistant training and building a lattice to the nursing program.
2. WI has completed a comparison of medical assistants from each of the four regional counties based on the 2005 California Labor Market Department surveys. The similarities between the counties were in the areas of job description, career options and sources available for additional information while the differences centered on working locations, salaries, benefits, and job outlook.
3. In September, WIB staff attended the Frontline Workforce Development: Promoting Partnerships and Emerging Practices in Health and Health Care workshop held in Foster City sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). The workshop materials and related RWJF study have been posted on-line at www.rwjf.org for review and grant funding options.
4. In October, a meeting was held with the Center of Public Policy Studies (CPPS) at California State University Stanislaus to discuss their assistance in conducting the medical assistant surveys. A proposal has been submitted by CPPS and has been reviewed for funding consideration. A meeting has been scheduled with WI and CPPS to further discuss the survey proposal and to negotiate a counter proposal.
5. The project management guidelines have been completed by Merced County with a work statement developed for each county to identify the steps in the project flow and process.
6. The time lines are to conduct the medical assistant surveys from January to June 2006, share the data with the county groups before the focus group sessions are conducted with the employers and training providers, and then conduct the focus groups by September 2006. The findings and recommend actions report will be completed by February 2007.

ATTACHMENT (S): N/A