



Project Description

Project Name:

Assistance to South Texas College Nursing and Allied Health Healthcare Professionals Program

Project Number:

ARPA-24-110-349

Program Name:

The Assistance to South Texas College Nursing and Allied Health Healthcare Professionals Program will be part of the Hidalgo County American Rescue Plan Act Healthcare Professionals Program

Department Name:

Hidalgo County Judge's Office

ARPA Expenditure Category:

1: Public Health

ARPA Eligibility Category:

1.14: Other Public Health Services

Project Description:

Longstanding concerns over nursing and allied health professional shortages existed prior to the pandemic, but COVID-19 further exacerbated the need for qualified nurses and respiratory therapists. According to the 2023 Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies, it is projected that by the year 2032, Texas will have a deficit of nearly 60,000 registered nurses.¹ The Rio Grande Valley (RGV) region, in particular, is an area that has historically faced healthcare workforce shortages and has been designated as a medically underserved area, making the situation even more critical. This disparity highlights the need for more locally trained healthcare workers to serve in our region. To that end, South Texas College is committed to increasing the number of nursing and respiratory therapists by increasing STC's capacity of qualified faculty to better serve more students and respond to the region's growing need for healthcare professionals. South Texas College, in collaboration with the County of Hidalgo, will implement the South Texas College Healthcare Professionals Program to ensure that residents have access to timely, high-quality primary health care services thereby improving quality of life by increasing faculty and student enrollment in the areas of nursing and respiratory therapy.

Recognizing the broad range of services and programming needed to contain COVID-19, the interim final rule provided an extensive list of enumerated eligible uses to prevent and mitigate COVID-19 and made clear that the public health response to the virus is expected to continue to

¹ <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/texas-center-nursing-workforce-studies/nursing-supply-demand-projections>

evolve over time, necessitating different uses of funds. Enumerated eligible uses of funds include other public health responses. These enumerated uses are consistent with guidance from public health authorities, including the CDC. ²

Fiscal Impact:

Estimated Budget: \$ 1,913,748.00

² Department of the Treasury. (2022). Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. *Federal Register*, 87(18), p. 4352-4353