

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING
WWAMI (Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho) Medical Education
Program Report
From the College of Health Sciences
1 OCTOBER 2016

[Pursuant to W.S. 21-17-109 (e) and (f)]

To the Joint Labor, Health and Social Services Interim Committee and the Joint Appropriations
Interim Committee

Program update

In 1997, Wyoming entered into a cooperative program with the University of Washington School of Medicine (UWSOM) along with the states of Montana, Idaho and Alaska, resulting in “WWAMI”, the acronym for the partner states. WWAMI’s goal is to make medical education accessible to students in northwestern states that do not have independent medical schools, and to help meet physician workforce needs for each of the states. The State of Wyoming provides a loan to students covering the bulk of the cost of attendance. Currently, the first year of medical school is taught on the University of Wyoming campus for Wyoming students. Beginning with the entering class of 2019, students will remain in Laramie for the first 18 months of the curriculum. Students sign a contract agreeing to practice medicine in Wyoming for three years upon completion of their medical education and training. The program is authorized under W.S. 21-17-109.

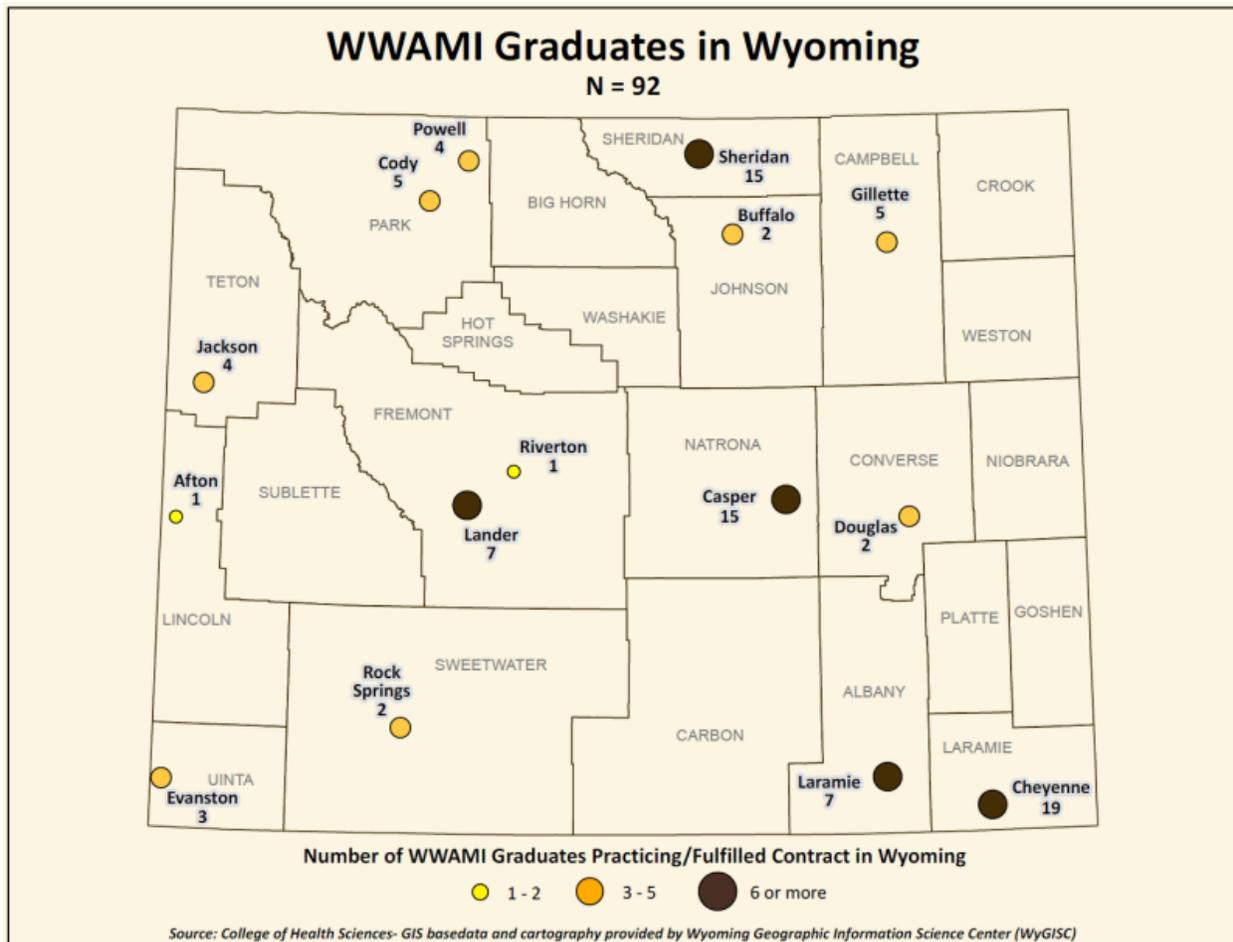
If the WWAMI medical student does not return to Wyoming to practice, they are required to repay the funds expended by the state. Loan repayment does not begin until the physician has completed residency training, which can last from 3 to 8 years, or more. 283 Wyoming students will have entered the WWAMI program as of August, 2016. The program has been successful:

- 191 Wyoming students have graduated from the UWSOM as of June 2016
- 114 Wyoming-WWAMI students have completed their residency and are now practicing medicine
- Return Rate: 83 out of 114 Wyoming-WWAMI graduates (72.8%) have completed residency and returned to Wyoming to practice medicine as of August 2016.
- Non-Wyoming WWAMI in Wyoming: Even though Wyoming does not spend money on non-Wyoming WWAMI students, a benefit of the program is that WWAMI students from other states have an opportunity to do clinical rotations in Wyoming, thus exposing them to Wyoming communities. To date, 9 WWAMI students from other states practice in Wyoming, meaning that 92 WWAMI graduates are or have practiced in Wyoming.
- Primary Care Practice Rate: of the 83 Wyoming returnees, 71 remain in Wyoming practicing medicine as of August 2016. Of those 71 currently practicing in Wyoming, 37

(52.1%) are in family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics or OB/GYN as of August, 2016.

- Twelve of the 83 Wyoming returnees have served the 3 years required of their contract and have since left the state (those twelve practiced in Lander, Casper, Laramie, Cheyenne, Gillette and Riverton).

The figure below provides the geographical distribution of WWAMI graduates who are/have practiced in Wyoming:



During the 2004 Special Session, legislation was enacted to expand the size of the WWAMI program by two students each year until the WWAMI class size reached 16 students, which occurred in 2007.

During the 2010 Special Session, legislation was enacted to expand the size of the WWAMI class by four students bringing the total number of students to 20. As a result, the WWAMI entering classes since 2011 have consisted of 20 entering students.

**Per Session Laws of Wyoming, 2015 Ch. 142 Section 167 UW-Medical Education, for the period beginning April 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2016 up to \$801,800 in payments made by current WWAMI students shall not be deposited in the Medical School Student Fund under the former version of W.S. 21-17-109(e) but shall be directed to the University of Wyoming for support of the WWAMI medical education curriculum, including compensation for part-time positions. For the period ending June 30, 2016 \$717,300 in payments made by current WWAMI students were directed to the University of Wyoming for support of the WWAMI medical education curriculum.

Allowable expenditures from medical contract repayment account

| | | |
|--|--------------|------------------|
| Payment of USMLE Exams/Step III (9) | In residency | \$745/student |
| Payment of USMLE Exams/Travel stipend to Part IICS: | Third year | \$2175/student |
| Payment of USMLE Exam/Step I | Second year | \$ 535/student |
| Payment of USMLE PASS registration | | \$ 9,450/student |
| Dislocation allowance for 1 st year relocation to Laramie | | \$1000/student |
| Dislocation allowance for transition to Seattle: | | \$1000/student |
| Dislocation allowance for clinical rotations | Third year | \$1000/student |
| | Fourth year | \$1000/student |
| Dislocation allowance for moving to WY to practice | | \$7500/student |
| Dislocation allowance for enrolling in residency program in Wyoming | | \$1000/student |
| Wyoming rural clinical rotation track | Third year | \$2000/student |
| Wyoming WWAMI Rural Integrated Training Experience (WRITE) program (3) | | |
| | Third year | \$4000/student |
| On-line and other educational/instructional materials for test prep | | \$ 500/student |
| ACLS Registration | | \$ 215/student |

In addition, assistance is offered to graduating WWAMI students to interview and relocate (if accepted) to one of the UW family medicine residency programs in Cheyenne or Casper and to set up a practice in Wyoming irrespective of where the student completed his/her residency. Financial assistance is also offered to WWAMI students entering and completing the newly developed Wyoming rural clinical rotation track, which consists of four rotations in Wyoming with only one permitted in either Cheyenne or Casper, and for the WWAMI Rural Integrated Training Experience (WRITE) program. There are WRITE sites in Douglas, Powell, and Lander where 20+ weeks of rural integrated clerkship training in the third year of the WWAMI Program is provided.