INTRODUCTION

Historically, health care job growth in New York State has outpaced all other employment sectors since 2000. Regardless, New York State continues to face local provider shortages in multiple health care settings. Fluctuations in population, including declining rural populations as well as a diversifying patient population, changes in local opportunities for health care education, and the current COVID-19 pandemic have potentially impacted the need for both the current and the future health care workforce. Examining workforce trends by setting and anticipated employment opportunities provides important data to decision makers involved in workforce planning. Regional analysis of employment by setting may also shed light on regional settings that are experiencing unexpected workforce fluctuations.

METHODS

• Using North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes, employment opportunities were tracked for hospitals, home health care, ambulatory care (excluding home care), and nursing and residential care facilities (nursing homes) statewide and by New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) regions.

• Data from the 2017–2018 NYSDOL Quarterly Census of Wages and Employment Report were used to describe regional changes in health care employment by setting.

• The annual Center for Health Workforce Studies (CHWS) survey of directors and human resource administrators of New York State hospitals, home health care agencies, nursing and residential facilities, and federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) provided data regarding recruitment issues facing healthcare settings from both a statewide and regional perspective.

• Occupational survey data was aggregated into occupational categories along similar job titles, except for home health care settings due to too few occupational titles for aggregation:
  - Survey responses indicating a specific occupational title was not difficult to recruit were not included in the percentages assessing levels of recruitment difficulty.

RESULTS

• There were nearly 1.2 million jobs in health care settings in New York State in 2018, which is an increase of slightly more than 3% between 2017 and 2018. Since 2000, jobs in health care settings have increased by nearly 39%, compared to only 8% for jobs in other employment sectors.

• In 2018, hospitals had 38% of health care jobs, compared to 29% in ambulatory care settings, 20% in home health care, and 1% in nursing homes in New York State. Statewide employment in ambulatory care increased between 2014 and 2018 by 7.2%. Regional health care employment opportunities fluctuated but the overall trend points toward more demand for community- and/or home-based care.

• The Center for Health Workforce Studies (CHWS) survey data indicated a shortage of qualified workers and non-competitive salaries among the reasons all health care settings have difficulty meeting demand.

• For hospitals in New York State, mid-level practitioners, physicians of all specialties, and medical personnel are the most difficult to recruit due to a shortage of workers.

• Regional fluctuations in health care employment may impact some settings.

• Recruiting qualified workers in certain occupational titles in many health care settings will be challenging.

• The COVID-19 pandemic has created an atmosphere of uncertainty in terms of both supply and demand for existing health care workers, as well as the educational pipelines of many future health care workers.