Public Sector Health Workforce

- Usual Suspects
  - MDs, RNs, APRNs, DMDs,
  - Some less than usual suspects
    - Laboratory personnel
    - Therapy professions

- Unusual settings
  - Greater legal and budget constraints
  - Public expectations
  - Heavier Behavioral Health Focus
  - More difficult “patients”
Context: Extensive Shortages

Georgia struggles with health workforce

- **Growth in demand:**
- Rapid growth in Population
- Aging of population
- Increases in capabilities of workforce

- **Supply concerns:**
- Aging workforce
- Historic short supply of key professions
- Declines in production from academic pipeline (under correction)

- **Shortages exist at national level**
Context: Public vs. Private Sector

- Public Sector competes with private settings for trained health Workforce personnel
  - Shortages of Personnel mean **Seller’s market**
  - Salary, benefits, scheduling.... Issues at work
  - Challenges of work in public sector contribute to difficulties
  - Challenges of work in public sector at work
  - Public sector agencies also compete with each other
Aspects of Public Sector can inhibit growth

- Unique aspects
  - Service oriented
  - Personnel heavy
- Budget disconnect
  - Size of budget not reflective of service demands
  - Budgeting driven by external considerations
- Inelastic expectations
  - Provide services as demanded regardless of budget.....

- Perverse Response
  - Cut staffing
  - Downgrade credentials
  - Staff-up on lower skilled personnel
  - Push duties down the professional network
  - Pray nothing goes wrong
Unique aspects of the Health Workforce

- Elements of health profession legal, academic and practice constructs can restrict access to these professionals
  - Licensure requirements
  - Practice constraints
  - Education
- However, these can also provide unique ways to connect
Results in Workforce Problems

- General shortages of personnel and challenges of public sector employment have produces major shortages in public sector
- Corrections:
  - Worsening Staffing Ratios in key behavioral Health Professions - Psychology
- Mental Health:
  - Heavy reliance on low skilled workforce
- Public Health
  - Oral health and laboratory personnel shortages
- K-12 Education
  - High impact of early health interventions difficult to access (DOE not necessarily employer)
    - Therapy personnel
    - Pediatric subspecialties
    - Vision and oral healthcare
- Nurses in short supply across the public sector
Goal for Public Sector

- The right professionals
- Doing the right job
- For the right people
- With the right needs
Solutions: How to get there

- This is **not** simply an HR problem
- Many issues at work
  - Employer concerns exist – benefits, salary
  - Sector problems Exist – Constraints of public sector and personnel shortages
  - Pipeline Problems exist
  - Peculiarities of healthcare personnel exist
  - Scope of Practice problems exist
Solutions

- Build internal DBHDD workforce knowledge
- Strengthen the education pipeline:
  - Create more education programs as needed (or enlarge existing ones)
  - Establish high quality clinical education experiences for students
  - Establish residency/internship/post doctoral programs/experiences for medicine, nursing, psychology and others
- Develop existing workers into needed professionals
  - Establish career pathways
  - Enhance supports (salary, stipend and supervisory) for students engaged in supervised clinical practice prior to full licensure
Solutions

- Increase appeal of work in the public sector
  - Appropriately reduce work burden placed on clinical professionals
  - Maximize appropriate substitutions of work/professionals across the system. Apply training and workforce education efforts to this endeavor as needed.
  - Establish systems that attract needed clinicians to public sector

- Improve the efficacy of the workforce
  - Properly align state law/rules governing workforce to align with public sector needs
  - Modernize knowledge and skills of existing clinical professionals through continuing education systems
  - Establish/enhance training pathways that target newer skills/professions that align with state of the art practices