



### Invest in Primary Care Residency Training Programs

The most effective way to increase the number of primary care physicians practicing in our communities is to train them right here in Texas. Our state's 29 family medicine residency programs are the lifeblood of the state's primary care physician workforce, preparing more than 200 new family physicians each year. More than 70% of family doctors completing residency in Texas remain in the state.

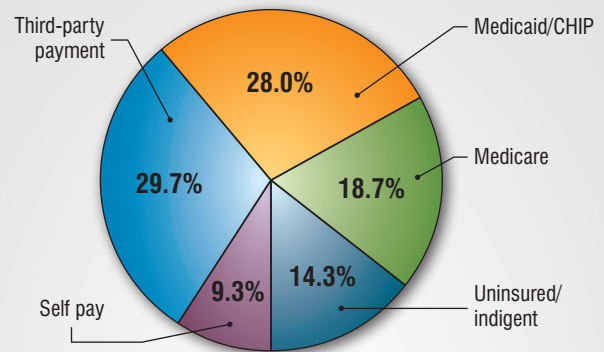
Primary care residency programs manage clinics that deliver well-coordinated, cost-effective care to communities that need it. A significant portion of the care they provide is for Medicaid and CHIP patients, Medicare patients, and the uninsured.

As patient-centered medical homes, heavy users of health information technology, and early adopters of computerized simulation for training, these programs are laboratories for innovation.

*Even so, they operate at dangerously narrow margins, often teetering on the brink of closure.*

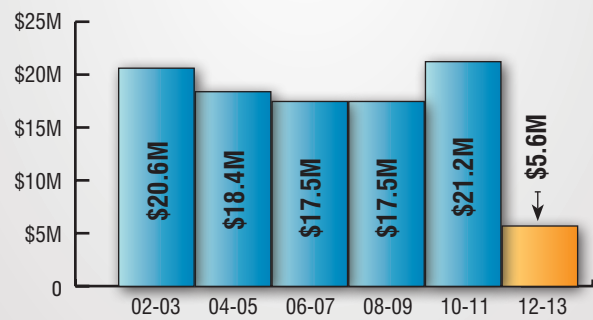
- From 2000 to 2012, the number of first-year family medicine residency training positions in Texas offered through the National Residency Matching Program dropped by 14.6%, from 247 to 211.
- The Kelsey-Seybold Family Medicine Residency Program announced its closure in 2009 due to financial instability. It was considered a model for training new physicians in a team-based, multispecialty environment.
- In 2002, the Christus St. Elizabeth Family Medicine Residency Program in Beaumont was forced to close because of a lack of financial support. Of the 74 graduates from the program practicing medicine in 2005, 88% practiced in health professional shortage areas.
- In 2008, the Texas Tech University Rural Program in Abilene closed its doors for financial reasons.

#### PATIENT MIX AT TEXAS FAMILY MEDICINE RESIDENCY PROGRAMS



Source: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

#### THECB ARTICLE III FUNDING FOR FAMILY MEDICINE RESIDENCY PROGRAMS



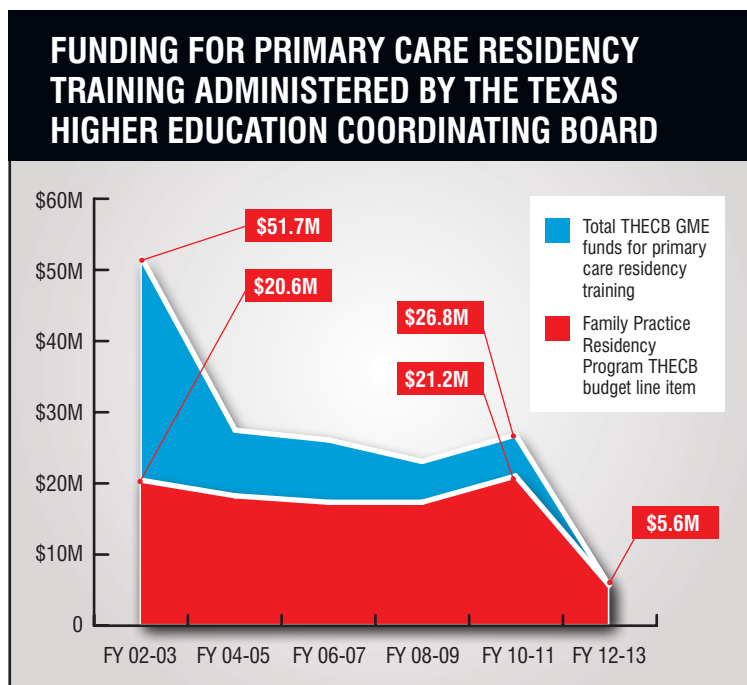
## ***THECB residency funding: A targeted investment in primary care***

For decades, the Legislature has valued our state's primary care residency programs, providing support through the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Although many of these programs receive some benefit from GME formula appropriations for Texas' health-related institutions, dedicated coordinating board funds are the only direct state support these programs receive. They depend on this funding for their financial stability.

Last session, the Legislature cut THECB funds for family medicine residency programs by almost 75%, and two other line items for residency training were eliminated. The measure saved the state just \$21.2 million for the biennium, but it will likely cost much more as it erodes our primary care infrastructure.

As these programs wither from a lack of institutional and state support, they will be forced to train fewer residents or to close their doors for good.

- By 2016, Texas will produce 180 more medical school graduates than the amount of first-year residency positions available.
- Each medical school graduate costs Texas \$168,000, so when they leave to find training programs, Texas will lose an investment of more than \$30 million in that one year alone.



## ***The Statewide Primary Care Preceptorship Program: Building our future workforce***

One of the most successful state initiatives at introducing medical students to the joy and fulfillment of practicing primary care was the Statewide Primary Care Preceptorship Program, which was also funded through the coordinating board. This program placed more than 6,000 medical students in primary care clinics for four-week internships since 1995, with remarkable results.

- A comprehensive nine-year study showed that students who participated in a family medicine preceptorship were almost twice as likely to pursue a career in family medicine.
- Of the 238 medical students who completed family medicine preceptorships in 2009, 93% said the experience made them more receptive to primary care as a career.

Last session, the Legislature eliminated funding for the program, saving the state less than \$1 million for the biennium, and severely damaging the program's ability to attract medical students to primary care.



**Restoring funding to primary care residency training programs and to the Statewide Primary Care Preceptorship Program represents a small investment for Texas that will result in huge dividends by strengthening the foundation of the state's health care delivery system, its primary care physician workforce.**