

## Armijo, Alicia, HED

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**From:** Julia Ruetten <jruetten@NMHSC.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 21, 2023 11:18 AM  
**To:** Info, HigherEd, HED  
**Cc:** tclark@nmhsc.com  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] HPLRP proposed rule comment letter from NMHA  
**Attachments:** 5.7.3 NMAC HPLRP Comment Letter\_NMHA\_Final\_July 2023.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

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Good morning,

On behalf of the New Mexico Hospital Association, and its President and CEO, Troy Clark, please find attached our comment letter regarding the proposed rule changes to 5.7.3 NMAC – Health Professional Loan Repayment Program.

If there are any questions regarding our comments please reach out to Troy or me.

Thank you,  
Julia

**Julia Ruetten**  
Director of Government Regulation & Reimbursement Policy  
New Mexico Hospital Association  
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**SENT VIA EMAIL**

July 21, 2023

New Mexico Higher Education Department  
2044 Galisteo Street, Suite 4  
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Sent to [HigherEd.Info@hed.nm.gov](mailto:HigherEd.Info@hed.nm.gov)

***RE: Proposed Amendments – 5.7.3 NMAC – New Mexico Health Professional Loan Repayment Program***

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of our 47 New Mexico hospital members and the thousands of dedicated New Mexicans they employ, the New Mexico Hospital Association submits for your consideration the following comments regarding the proposed amendments (“proposed amendments”) to 5.7.3 NMAC – New Mexico Health Professional Loan Repayment Program (HPLRP) as noticed in Volume XXXIV, Issue 12 of the New Mexico Register.

We fully support the proposed amendments to implement House Bill 209. The New Mexico Legislature and Governor Lujan Grisham should be commended for updating eligibility for the HPLRP and significantly increasing the investment in the program to \$10 million in the most recent legislative session. This program is one tool used by our members to recruit and retain healthcare providers in underserved communities across our state and we are hopeful that the additional funding will lead to substantially more awards being made this fiscal year.

New Mexicans in all regions of our state feel the physician shortage and deal with its impacts by waiting considerable amounts of time for appointments, traveling to other communities or states to access care, if they are able or, unfortunately and dangerously, forgoing care. Legislative and administrative actions that bolster the efforts of our members to recruit and retain physicians and other healthcare practitioners in our state are essential – and we consider these proposed amendments to be one of those important actions.

In addition to the eligible providers listed in the statute and rule, we urge the Health Professions Advisory Committee to allow a full range of behavioral health providers (psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical social workers, counselors, and therapists) to be eligible for the program under their authority to approve other specialties for participation. It is no secret

that our state desperately needs more behavioral health providers and anything we can do to incentivize practice in our state is a step in the right direction.

We appreciate the efforts of the Department to draft these proposed amendments and the opportunity to share our comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions at [tclark@nmhsc.com](mailto:tclark@nmhsc.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Troy Clark', is positioned above the typed name.

Troy Clark  
President and CEO