



Introducing the Sector

The Health and Caregiving Sector in the Redwood Region is foundational in addressing **persistent workforce shortages, inadequate infrastructure, and deep inequities in care access**, which disproportionately affect rural, Tribal, and underserved communities. Each year, poor health reduces global GDP by 15% (Remes et al., 2020), underscoring that investment in health and caregiving is a strategic lever for improving the social and economic prosperity of communities.

To address these urgent challenges, the North Coast Health Improvement and Information Network (NCHIIN) is leading a strategic effort to **build a more equitable and resilient system**. This initiative, coordinated by Jessica Osborne-Stafsnes, Tina Schaible, and Taffy Stockton, aims to ensure all residents have access to quality care and health-supportive services.

The strategy is outlined in an Activation Plan grounded in three core pillars: **expanding access, building capacity, and innovating policy**. Key tactics include investing in workforce pipelines, adopting telehealth, developing centralized Health Hubs, and upgrading facilities. This work also focuses on strengthening data-driven planning and rural advocacy to secure long-term funding and systemic improvements. Through **cross-sector collaboration** with educational institutions, employers, Tribal health entities, and community organizations, the plan seeks to **embed equity and community voice** into a sustainable framework for the region's health and caregiving ecosystem.

Redwood Region RISE's Health and Caregiving Sector is committed to working with the diverse and dedicated voices in our communities to create a 10-year plan that will align with our core values and diverse regional needs by:

1. Treating health and caregiving as **essential infrastructure for economic prosperity**
2. Addressing the acute shortages of personnel and a need for **diversified labor force** in health and caregiving fields, with both long- and short-term workforce pipeline strategies
3. Recommending economic **investments** that **improve health equity and social determinants of health outcomes** which will lead to a healthier region
4. Looking at **cross-sector opportunities** that will provide essential foundations for economic prosperity and improved health outcomes

Major Employers

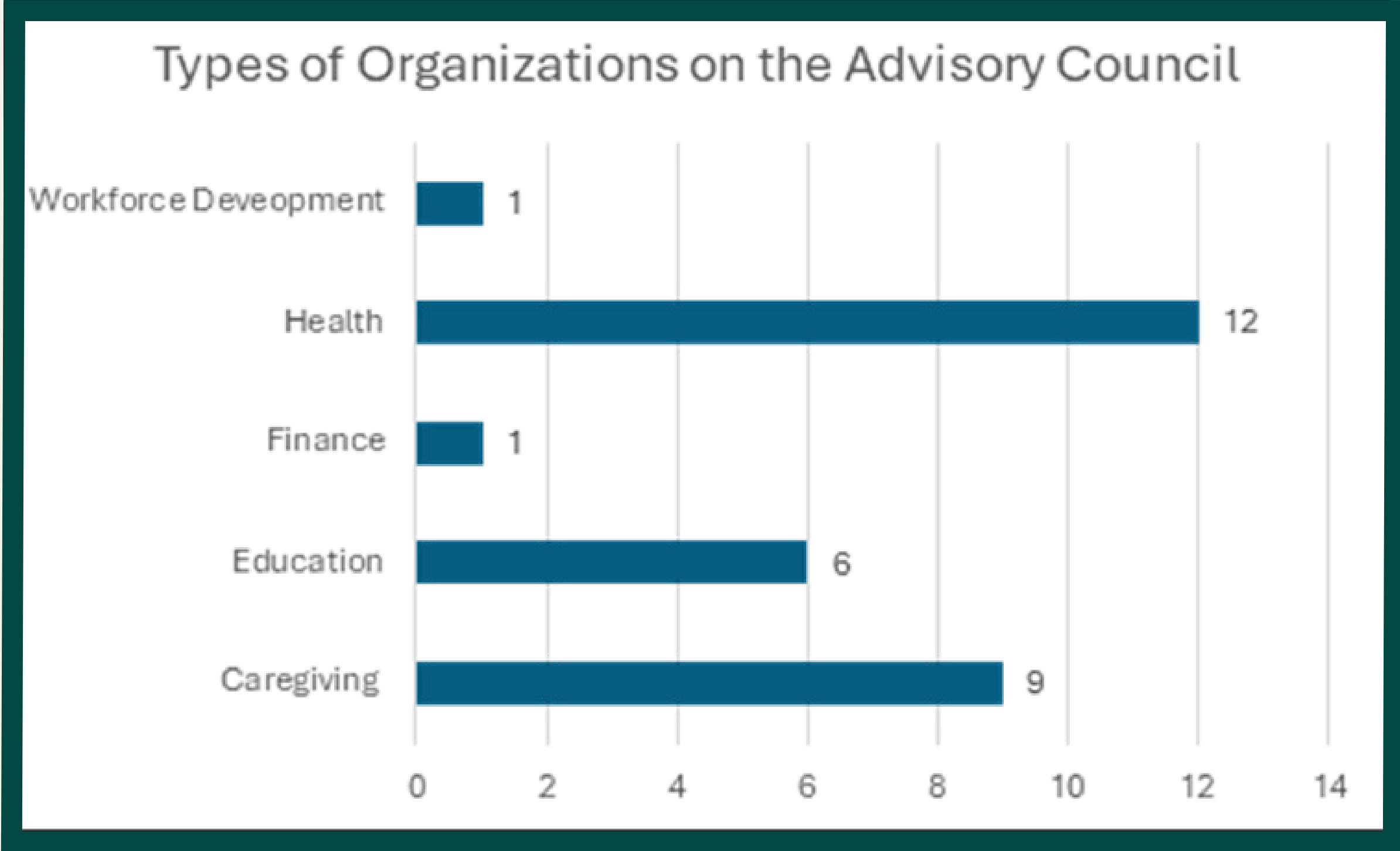
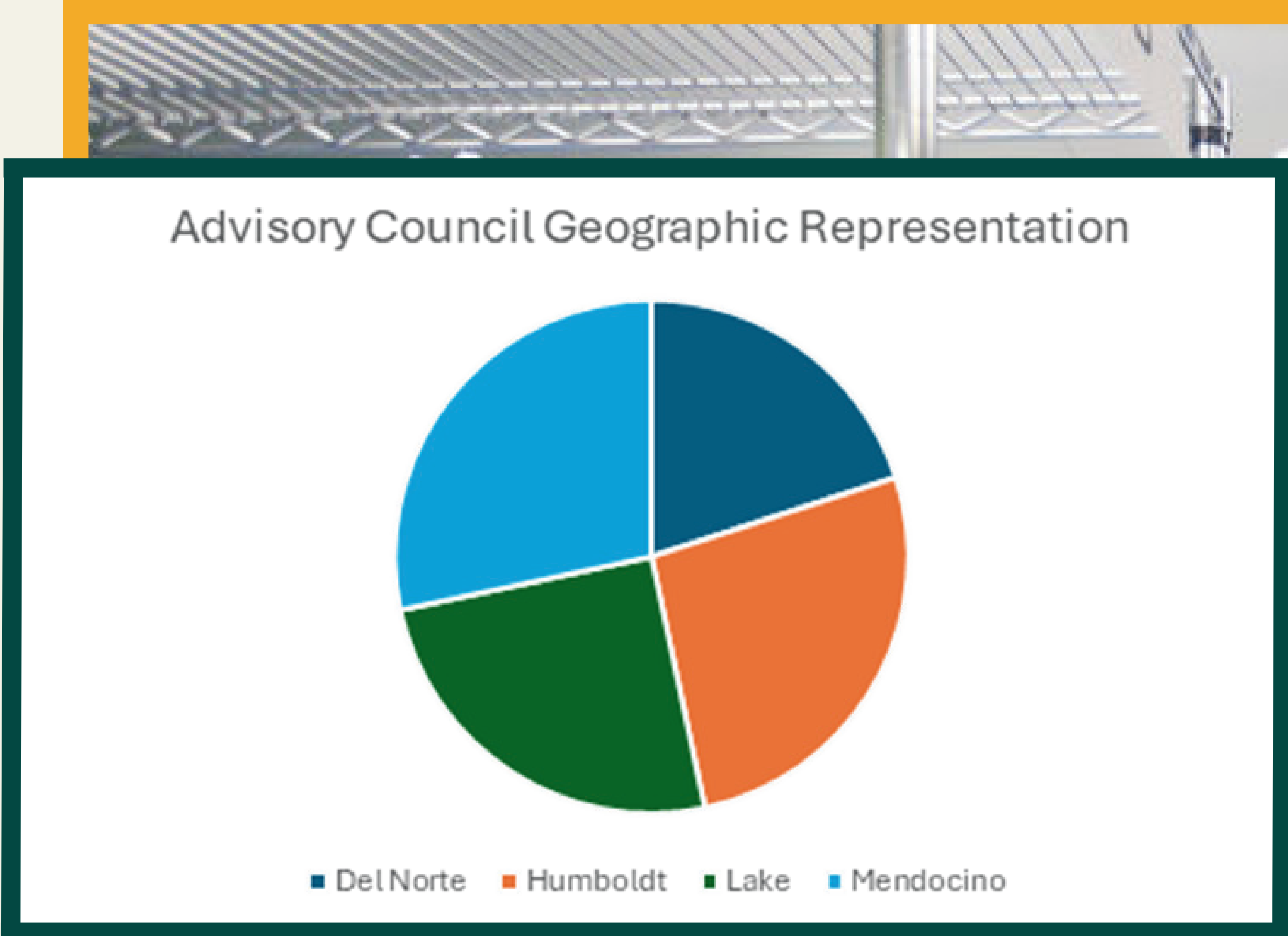
Health: Adventist Health (Howard Memorial, Ukiah Valley, Mendocino Coast & Clear Lake), Sutter Health (Coast & Lakeside), Providence Health System, Mendocino Community Health Centers, Open Door Community Health Centers, Mad River Community Hospital, Pelican Bay Prison, United Indian Health Services

Caregiving: Changing Tides, Redwood Coast Regional Center, North Coast Opportunities, First 5, North Coast Children's Services, County In-Home Supportive Services, Area Agency on Aging, Senior Resource Centers



Regional Partners

- Adventist Health NorCal
- Alliance for Rural Community Health
- Blue Lake Rancheria
- CA State Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Cal Poly Humboldt
- Changing Tides Family Services
- College of the Redwoods
- Del Norte Childcare Council
- First 5 (Mendocino)
- Humboldt County Economic Development-GoHumCo
- Humboldt Workforce Coalition
- K'ima:w Medical Center
- Kno'Qoti Native Wellness, Inc.
- Lake County Economic Development Corporation
- Mendocino Community Health Centers
- Mendocino College
- North Coast Health Improvement & Information Network
- North Coast Clinics Network
- North Coast Opportunities
- Open Door Community Health Centers
- Partnership Health Plan
- Redwood Caregiver Resource Center
- Redwood Coast K-16 Education Collaborative
- Redwood Coast Regional Center
- Regional Government Services
- Sutter Coast Hospital
- Tri-County Independent Living
- Ukiah Adult School
- United Indian Health Services





Workforce and Training

Meeting Demand for Living-Wage, High-Growth Careers

A key focus of RRRISE's Health and Caregiving work is assessing the **demand for healthcare and caregiving occupations against the projected workforce supply**. The reports below—developed with support from the Redwood Coast K-16 Collaborative using California's Open Data Long-Term Occupational Employment Projections—highlight several critical trends.

Physical Therapy Assistants, Medical Services Managers, Nurse Practitioners, and Physician Assistants are all projected to grow by over 20% from 2022–2032. In total openings, **Registered Nurses** lead with more than 1,000 projected positions, followed by **Medical and Health Services Managers** with 420. **Behavioral Health** roles are also in high demand, with 310 projected openings for **Substance Use and Mental Health Counselors** and 230 for **Social Workers**.

Among high-growth, lower-wage occupations, **Home Health and Personal Care Aides** stand out with over 11,000 anticipated openings by 2032, followed by nearly 900 for **Medical Assistants**. In caregiving, demand for **Childcare Workers** and **Preschool Teachers** remains strong, with 470 and 430 openings projected regionwide, respectively.

It's also important to consider **workforce demographics**. According to recent HCAI data, racial and ethnic disparities persist—particularly among nurses, where Hispanic workers make up 10.7% of the workforce compared to 20% of the overall population.



Health and Caregiving Project (California Jobs First)



Lake County Healthcare Education and Regional Training Hub – Redwood Region RISE Catalyst Project

The Lake County Healthcare Education and Regional Training Hub (HEART Hub) will enhance healthcare education through three initiatives: the SPARK Program introducing 4,500–6,000 elementary/ middle school students to healthcare careers annually, Healthcare Workforce Development providing certifications and training for high school students and adults, and Community Outreach offering health literacy and safety training.

This comprehensive approach addresses workforce shortages while promoting community wellness and health equity in Lake County.

Major Strategies and Tactics

- **Access Expansion:** Workforce pipeline investments, telehealth adoption, and coordinated community-based care delivery.
- **Capacity Building:** Development of Health Hubs, integration into large-scale economic development, and upgraded facilities for both healthcare and caregiving.
- **Policy and Systems Innovation:** Strengthening data-driven planning and rural advocacy to secure long-term funding and regulatory improvements.

Activation Plan - Recent Tactic Ranking





Additional RRRISE-Aligned Investment Projects

The **College of the Redwoods** is expanding their **registered nursing program** from 60 slots per cohort to 100 slots per cohort in Humboldt and Del Norte starting this year. Although this expansion will help to meet the current and ever-growing need for RNs, this will put additional strain on the already over-burdened healthcare providers, who are now tasked with being the clinical training resource for these RN students.

To prevent and combat these issues, the RRRISE Health & Caregiving Advisory Council has brainstormed strategies that we could implement if there were sufficient funding and resources:

Regional Clinical Placement Consortium focused initially on Nursing to meet the needs of educators & employers that includes:

- An assessment of training activities & capacity for clinical sites,
- Feasibility for utility of a clinical placement software,
- Financial support for preceptors,
- Analysis & support for retention of students from regional academic programs, and
- Collaborative development of degrees, courses & curriculum to optimize the workforce and skillsets needed by employers.



Other Health & Caregiving Projects:

- Culturally Responsive Workforce Development Programs including programs such as Trauma Informed Care trainings and expansion of the Indigenous Wellness Initiatives and Maternal Health Education, Residency and Training Programs.
- Launch & Expansion of regional recruitment and retention collaboratives, such as Incubate and Home in Humboldt and the Childcare Stabilization Fund recruitment and retention bonuses.
- Development of a Rural Health & Caregiving Policy Platform & corresponding advocacy activities to address major barriers and challenges of the sector (Ex: wages, Medicaid, telehealth, zoning, employer-sponsored childcare)

New projects are always emerging, and we're poised to be responsive to regional needs.