



**Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor**  
**David R. Scrase, M.D., Secretary**

**For Immediate Release**  
Friday, April 5, 2019

**Burrell College Media Contact:** Nadia Whitehead, 915-276-6803, [nwhitehead@bcomnm.org](mailto:nwhitehead@bcomnm.org)  
**HSD Media Contact:** Jodi McGinnis Porter, 505-476-6803, [jodi.mcginis-porter@state.nm.us](mailto:jodi.mcginis-porter@state.nm.us)

## **Graduate Medical Education Expansion Bill Gets the Green Light in New Mexico**

*Thanks to legislation signed into law Tuesday, April 2, New Mexico will have the opportunity to add new residency positions for physicians to better address the state's doctor shortage.*

Santa Fe, N.M. - New Mexico Governor Michelle Grisham signed [House Bill 480](#), Tuesday, April 2, which was passed unanimously by both the House and Senate. This legislation expands physician residency slots in the state. The bill was strongly supported by leadership at the [Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine](#) (BCOM), New Mexico's newest medical school, and other health care collaborators.

"BCOM is proud to be part of the team that helped promote and pass this bill," says John Hummer, president of BCOM, and Don Peska, DO, BCOM's Dean and Chief Academic Officer. "This was a team effort and we are ready to do our part in creating more opportunities to retain more physicians here in our state. BCOM's future graduates, and the patients they will care for, are the beneficiaries of this legislation"

Through the bill, New Mexico will establish a new grant funding program for graduate medical education (GME). Qualifying hospitals and health centers can apply for funding that creates new GME programs and residency positions or supports ongoing GME programs with plans to establish new residency positions.

"The expansion of GME programs into rural areas is a very important part of our program to expand our primary care access in rural members. Evidence shows that doctors who complete their residency training in rural programs stay in that same community 55 to 75 percent of the time," said David Scrase, M.D., cabinet secretary for New Mexico Human Services Department.

The state will give special priority to applications that: develop residency programs at facilities that have not previously offered GME programs; offer physician specialty positions that have shortages in the state, such as primary care and psychiatry; or propose positions in medically underserved regions.

"The Human Services Department currently spends over \$20 million in support of graduate medical education training programs, and we believe that this bill will afford us the opportunity to develop a statewide strategy to expand rural training," said Dr. Scrase.

The grant program's annual funding will be appropriated by New Mexico legislature. \$300,000 has been appropriated for the first round of GME funding; the funds are eligible for federal and private matching.

[Thirty-two of New Mexico's 33 counties](#) are currently designated as primary care health professional shortage areas (HPSA) according to the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration. The shortage affects more than [one million New Mexicans](#).

“On behalf of BCOM and our future graduates, BCOM would like to thank the governor for her leadership, her staff, the bill sponsors representatives Doreen Gallegos and Nathan Small, the many legislators who took an active supporting role, and our state’s secretary of human services, David Scrase, for his advice and promoting the need for a substantive GME program in New Mexico,” Hummer and Dr. Peska say.

Other key stakeholders included the University of New Mexico, the New Mexico Hospital Association, the New Mexico Medical Society, New Mexico Osteopathic Medical Association, the New Mexico Primary Care Association, Lovelace Health System in New Mexico, New Mexico Primary Care Training Consortium and BCOM’s Student Osteopathic Medical Association.

Legislators involved in the early phases of the bill include legislative sponsors State Representatives Doreen Gallegos and Nathan Small and Senators Mary K. Papen and John Arthur Smith.

**About the Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine:**

Located in Las Cruces, New Mexico, the Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine (BCOM) was established in 2013 to improve the health of the Southwestern U.S. and Northern Mexico. The four-year, private osteopathic medical school is student-centered, utilizing the latest medical education technologies and methods to ensure student success in all fields of medicine — from primary care to subspecialties like surgery, anesthesiology and emergency medicine. BCOM is a freestanding college located on the New Mexico State University campus. Learn more at [bcomNM.org](http://bcomNM.org).