

# The Kansas Bridging Plan

## Keeping primary care physicians in rural Kansas



The University of Kansas Medical Center administers the Kansas Bridging Plan (KBP), a loan forgiveness program designed to encourage primary care physicians to remain in rural Kansas upon completion of residency training.

Participants who enroll in the KBP agree to practice medicine in a designated rural community for 36 months upon completion of their residency program. In return, the State of Kansas and the rural community provide a combined incentive of up to \$26,000.

The KBP has a remarkable record of success since its creation in 1991. Of the physicians who completed their three-year service obligation, **82 percent** have stayed in Kansas, including **74 percent** who've stayed in rural Kansas communities. Clearly, the program works.

In addition, there's a great demand to expand the program: **100 percent** of KBP slots have been filled each year since the program was created.

### Addressing a crucial shortage

The KBP is an important way KU and the State of Kansas, together, are addressing the crucial shortage of physicians in Kansas.

The KU School of Medicine is the only medical school in Kansas and a premier institution for training primary care and rural physicians. KU-trained physicians practice in 87 percent of Kansas counties and make up half of all Kansas doctors. In 2011, the school opened a new Salina campus and expanded its Wichita campus to a full four-year program.

Despite these efforts, the state doesn't have enough physicians, and medical education facilities in Kansas City are at capacity. To meet this crucial workforce need, KU will continue pursuing our Health Education Initiative, which seeks to expand our health education facilities in Kansas City in order to train more doctors.

### What comes next?

The State of Kansas currently allocates \$70,000 per year for the KBP, enough to fund seven physicians per year. In his Budget Proposal, Governor Brownback recommends doubling state support to \$140,000, which would **double the number of doctors** the program could support each year.

281

Medical residents enrolled in the Kansas Bridging Plan program since 1991

82%

Percentage of KBP physicians who've stayed in Kansas after their service obligation

74%

Percentage of KBP physicians who've stayed in rural Kansas after their service obligation

100%

Percentage of available KBP program slots filled each year since the program's inception

7

Doctors the KBP can enroll annually given current state funding of \$70,000

14

Doctors the KBP could enroll annually with the additional \$70,000 in the Governor's Budget Proposal