

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Maine AHEC Network Report to the State of Maine June 30, 2013

Purpose

The Maine Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Network works to alleviate shortages of health professionals in Maine's rural and underserved areas by actively engaging with academic and community partners to:

- Encourage Maine youth and mid-career professionals to explore health careers creating the pipeline to target those Maine residents with the most likelihood of staying within Maine to live and work.
- Provide rural, community-based clinical training experiences for medical and other health professions students.
- Support practicing health professionals with continuing education and distance learning opportunities to train and to retain Maine health professionals within the State of Maine.

The Maine AHEC Network consists of the following entities:

- *Eastern Maine AHEC*, Penobscot Community Health Care, Bangor serving Penobscot, Piscataquis, Waldo and Hancock Counties
- *Northern Maine AHEC*, Northern Maine Community College, Presque Isle serving Aroostook and Washington Counties
- *Western Maine AHEC*, Franklin Memorial Hospital, Farmington serving Androscoggin, Franklin, Kennebec, Oxford and Somerset Counties
- *AHEC Program Office*, School of Community and Population Health, University of New England, Portland (administrative oversight, coordination and program development)

Program Funding

In FY2013, the Maine AHEC Network received the following funding:

- **Fund for A Healthy Maine (FHM):** A portion of the Fund for A Healthy Maine administered by the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) is allocated to AHEC each year. This contribution demonstrates to HRSA the State's commitment to alleviating health professions shortages in the most underserved areas of the State. The FY13 allocation of \$100,472 constitutes 17% of the AHEC Network budget.
- **Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA):** The Network's FY13 HRSA funding of \$274,490 provides 49% the total annual budget.
- **University of New England (UNE):** UNE contributes the cash match required to secure HRSA funding. The FY13 contribution at \$191,334 constitutes 34% of the overall budget.

Maine AHEC Network Advisory Committee

Jackie Cawley, DO, *MaineHealth*, Matt Chandler, *MaineCDC*, Harry Colt, MD, *MaineGeneral Health Care*, Jane Ham, *Maine Hospital Association*, Karen Rogers, *University of Maine Augusta*, Cynthia Robertson, MD, *Sebasticook Family Practice*, Carl Toney, PA (*retired*), Sally Sutton, *Maine Health Workforce Forum*, Lorri Brown, *Western Maine AHEC*, Sarah Dubay, *Eastern Maine AHEC*, Leah Buck, *Northern Maine AHEC*, Mary Frances Smith, *Program Office*, Karen O'Rourke, *Program Office*.

Program Highlights

Clinical Rotations

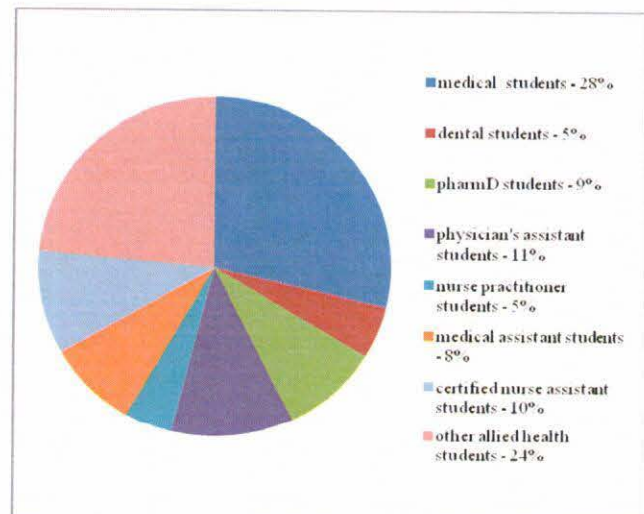
During July 2012 to June 2013, the Maine AHEC Network arranged 345 clinical rotations in Maine for medical, dental, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, and nursing students from over 50 colleges, universities, and training programs in Maine and nationally (Appendix A). These students were placed in medically underserved areas and rural areas.

In comparison to the prior year, the number of overall clinical rotations has decreased. However, the average length of a rotation has increased 28%.

Changes in funding priorities and medical school policies have resulted in fewer placements of medical students in the most rural areas of the state. In the 2012-13 academic year, 88 medical students were placed in rural areas in Maine for their Community Health Rotation. That number is down from 137 the previous year (36% decrease).

The Maine AHEC Network and its Advisory Committee members will be developing recommendations over the next year for increasing student participation in rural sites.

Innovative strategies and incentives to get students interested in rural practice and make the experience positive and rewarding will be explored by an ad hoc work group. This is a priority for AHEC because best practice evidence shows that students are more likely to practice in communities where they trained.



2012-2013 Clinical Rotations by Discipline

Continuing Education

The Maine AHEC Network provided *continuing education programs for over 4,600* attendees, an increase of 11% over last year. These continuing education programs serve as valuable retention tools and enable health care professionals to enhance their skills, stay updated on best practices and meet licensure and recertification requirements.

| | 2011-2012 Continuing Education Participants | 2012-2013 Continuing Education Participants |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Physicians | 134 | 115 |
| Physician Assistants | 50 | 70 |
| Dental | 42 | 81 |
| Nurse Practitioners | 87 | 154 |
| Nurses | 943 | 836 |
| CNAs | 93 | 87 |
| EMTs | 120 | 102 |
| Mental Health Practitioners | 46 | 78 |
| Allied Health Professionals | 1069 | 561 |
| Other / Unreported | 1582 | 2488 |

Eastern Maine AHEC (EMAHEC)

- Ten students (up from 6 the previous year) from grades 9-12 attended the Fourth Annual Penobscot Community Health Care's Dental Academy. This is a 3-day experience held at PCHC's Dental Clinic in Bangor. The Dental Academy is designed to introduce students to a variety of dental health professions and experience to promote the dental professions. As one student said: *"When you get behind this chair and you see firsthand what's happening ... I honestly think it's amazing to see an extraction or root canal. It's a really great opportunity to see if this is what you really want to do."*
- 14 undergraduate students participated in health career activities.
- Job shadows increased this year with on-site experiences for 52 individuals shadowing physicians, physician assistants and medical assistants at their practice sites.
- UNE Physician Assistant's Intensive Program is in its second year with 5 students continuing in their community clinical rotations at Bangor local clinics and hospitals.
- EMAHEC arranged and coordinated over 185 clinical rotations for medical students, physician assistant students, nurse practitioner students, pharmacy students and oral health/dental students.
- During the last year, EMAHEC has been collaborating with Tufts University's College of Dental Medicine to develop interprofessional education rotations for dental externs.
- Over half (288 of 522 total) of EMAHEC's continuing education program participants attended for health profession recertification/relicensing purposes.

Northern Maine AHEC (NMAHEC)

- NMAHEC's continuing education programs engaged 480 health professionals in programs that allowed 300 to attain recertification and/or relicensing.
- One of the highlights of the Maine summer programs aimed at high school students is Survivor Aroostook. This was the 10th Annual Survivor Aroostook Camp where students can explore health careers and have hands-on health care experiences such as suturing. This year 53 students participated.

- NMAHEC participated in the Tribal Health Expo II along with the AHEC Program Office in May 2013. Northern Maine Community College's health professions courses were discussed with the high school students and a local Presque Isle dentist instructed the students eager for hands-on experiences with the dental clinical simulator (Appendix B).
- NMAHEC jobs' fairs attract large crowds with over 450 attendees at traditional-style fairs and another 110 for a Totally Trades fair. A huge percentage of these attendees are adult learners.
- One of the jobs' fairs was collaboration with On Course for College and Women Unlimited programs developed for middle school and high school students in Aroostook and Washington counties. Totally Trades had 110 girls participating from both Aroostook and Washington counties.

Western Maine AHEC (WMAHEC)

- WMAHEC provided over 470 course offerings ranging in topics from environmental health to interprofessional education training to best practices that were attended by over 3,250 health professionals. Over a third of these health professionals were seeking recertification and relicensing credits with the remaining participants seeking professional development experiences.
- Western Maine's Summer Scrubs Club gives a unique experience to 8th to 10th secondary students to learn about health careers as well as have hands-on experiences within a hospital-setting with both health professionals and health profession students. This year's camp was expanded to include splinting and cast making as well as a session on what the term "public health" means.
- Students attending Summer Scrubs Club were from Franklin, Androscoggin, Somerset, Oxford and Kennebec Counties this year.
- Job shadowing programs had over 35 participants this year with one very notable participant. This was a 600-hour intern student from the University of Maine-Farmington who was accepted into USM's BSN program. This student was a Native American whose ambition is to return to the tribe to deliver healthcare.
- WMAHEC has been instrumental in implementing a statewide nursing "clinical placement" software system at Franklin Community Health Network (FCHN) that will allow for more effective and efficient placement of student nurse rotation placements. Kennebec Valley Community College, University of Maine/Augusta, Central Maine Community College and University of Maine/Fort Kent have directly used this program with FCHN.

Program Office

- The Program Office held a Veterans Mental Health training program for local health professionals. Seventy-nine (79) participants attended this 4-hour program with presentations on military culture, behavioral health issues, VA system, Tri-Care health system and transitioning from military to civilian life. A video of the entire program can be viewed on AHEC's website: <http://www.une.edu/ahec/>
- UNE's Interprofessional Education (IPE) Collaborative, in collaboration with the Program Office, held a seminar with speakers from St. Louis University Center for Interprofessional Education and Research for health professionals in Maine to learn about their innovative IPE courses and how to translate IPE academic learning to clinical practice environments.
- In May 2013 the Tribal Career Expo II was held which extended this year's Expo's invitation to all tribes and was attend by more than 100 students. This expo presents a variety of hands-on health career explorations for middle and high school tribal students. The AHEC booth highlighted hands-on dental activities designed to explore dental health professions and oral health practices via the use of a clinical dental simulator (Appendix B). Plans are already starting for Tribal Career Expo III!
- The Program Office has received a clinical dental simulator on permanent loan from the College of Dental Medicine. This device is a robotic simulation of a patient in a dental chair and provides AHECs with a great hands-on experience for students. The chair set-up allows for students to

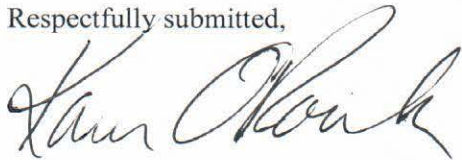
drill and fill teeth with actual dental instruments. This simulator was used at the Tribal Career Expo II and at the Western Maine AHEC's Scrubs Club.

- AHEC has supported the expansion of Maine Medical Center's Department of Family Medicine Doc4aDay Program. This year there were over 45 high school participants enrolled at the Doc4aDay project for Deering High School in Portland, Bonney Eagle High School in Standish, and Portland High School. This program held at Maine Medical Center's Clinical Simulation Unit gave students the opportunity to participate in clinical simulated experiences with residents and medical students and then to debrief as they watched a video of the experience.
- The Program Office also arranged and coordinated over 60 clinical rotations in Maine for UNECOM third and fourth year medical students.
- In April 2013 the Centers and Program Office attended one of our National AHEC Organization's On The Hill policy days in Washington DC. We met with staff of State Senators King and Snowe as well as State Representatives Michaud and Collins to discuss AHEC's current goals and objectives (Appendix C).

Final Remarks

The Maine AHEC Network is now entering its second year of its five-year HRSA-funded grant. This first year we have strengthened our infrastructure to enable us to fulfill our strategic plan effectively and efficiently in the coming years. Our staff now includes an evaluator as well as part-time administrative staff. We have an engaged Advisory Committee representing organizations with an interest in improving the health workforce and ensuring Mainers, especially those in rural and underserved areas, have access to high quality health care. A broad array of health educators, community partners and other interested parties contribute to our ability to do our job in a meaningful and effective way. We are confident that the work of the Maine AHEC Network will continue to contribute substantially to strengthening the health professions workforce and improving the health status of the people of Maine.

Respectfully submitted,

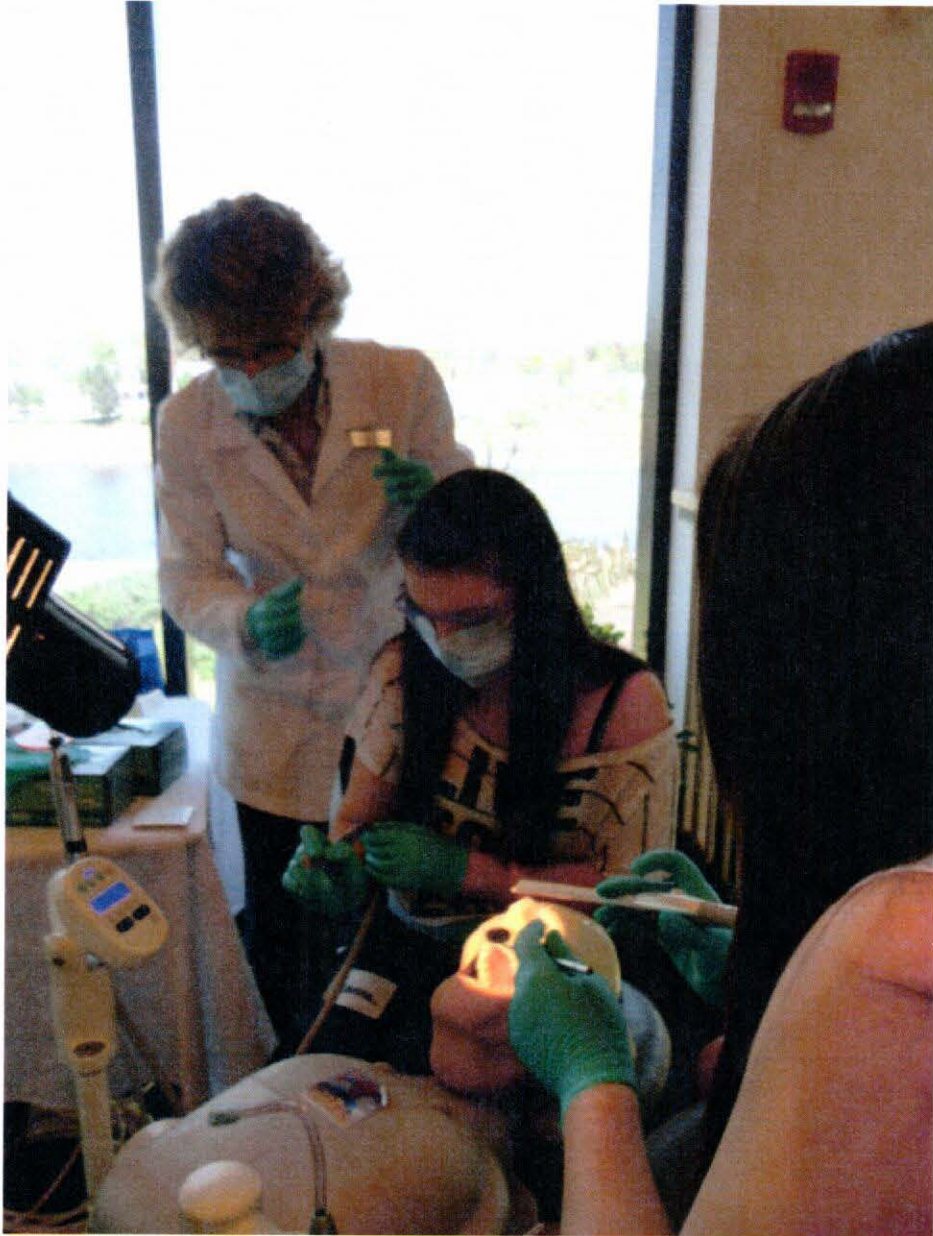


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Appendix A
Universities and Colleges with Maine AHEC Network Affiliations

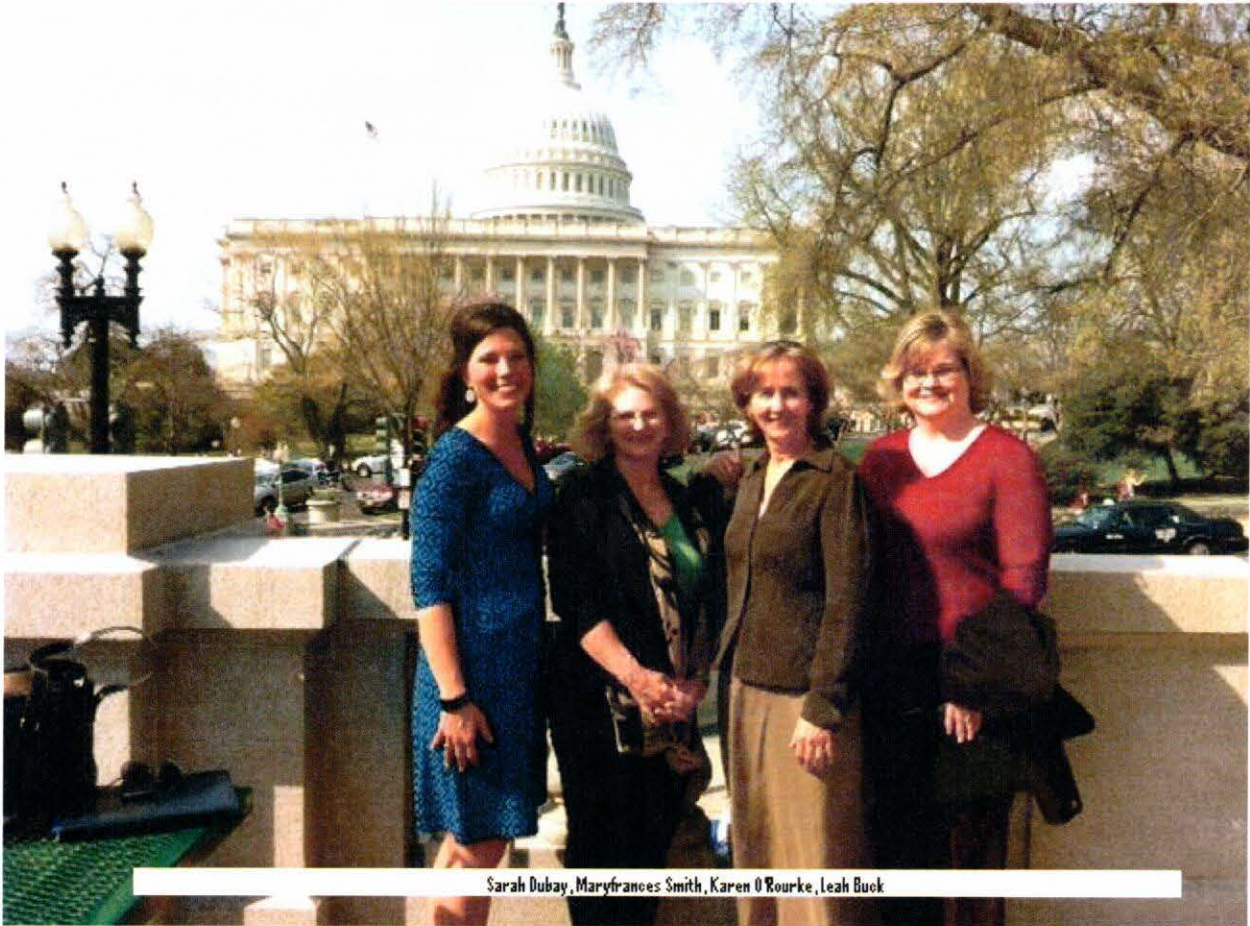
1. American University
2. Atlantic Partners EMS
3. Bates College
4. Beal College
5. Boston University
6. Boston University School of Medicine
7. Boston University Goldman School of Dentistry
8. Bowdoin College
9. Central Maine College of Nursing and Health Professions
10. Central Maine Community College
11. City College (Florida)
12. Dartmouth Medical School
13. Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine
14. Eastern Maine Community College
15. Foster Technology (Farmington)
16. Franklin Pierce
17. Husson University
18. Johns Hopkins University
19. Kaplan University (aka Andover College)
20. Kennebec Valley Community College
21. Kent State
22. Lewiston Regional Technical Center
23. Liberty University
24. Maine College of Pharmacy/Health Services
25. Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
26. National College of Technical Instruction
27. Northeast Technical Institute
28. Pinnacle Career Institute
29. Skidmore College
30. Southern New Hampshire University
31. St. Joseph's University
32. SUNY Plattsburgh
33. Tufts University School of Medicine
34. Tufts University School of Dental Medicine
35. United Technologies Center (Bangor)
36. University of Florida
37. University of Iowa School of Dentistry
38. University of Maine
39. University of Maine at Augusta
40. University of Maine at Augusta - Bangor
41. University of Maine at Farmington
42. University of Maine at Fort Kent
43. University of Maryland
44. University of Massachusetts
45. University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine
46. University of New England School of Dental Medicine
47. University of New England School of Pharmacy
48. University of New England Westbrook College of Health Professions
49. University of North Carolina
50. University of North Carolina School of Dentistry
51. University of Southern Maine
52. University of Vermont
53. University of Vermont School of Medicine
54. Wellesley College
55. Yale School of Medicine Physician Associate Program

Appendix B



**Tribal Career Expo II – May 2013
Wabanaki Center, Calais, Maine**

Appendix C



Sarah Dubay, Maryfrances Smith, Karen O'Rourke, Leah Buck

On The Hill Policy Day – April 2013 Washington DC

Sarah Dubay, Director, Eastern Maine AHEC; Director of Communications, Penobscot Community Health Care, Bangor, Maine

Maryfrances S. Smith, Program Manager, Maine AHEC Network – Program Office

Karen O'Rourke, Director, Maine AHEC Network – Program Office

Leah Buck, Director, Northern Maine AHEC; Assistant Dean of Continuing Education, Northern Maine Community College, Presque Isle, Maine

Missing: Karen Rogers, Director, Western Maine AHEC; Director of Education, Franklin Community Health Network, Farmington, Maine