

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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#### AHEC Program Office

716 Stevens Avenue  
Portland, ME 04103  
(207) 221-4461 T  
(207) 523-1923 F

## Maine AHEC Network Report to the State of Maine July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014

### 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:

- Develop a health career pipeline for Maine youth and mid-career professionals who are most likely to stay in 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*, at Penobscot Community Health Care, Bangor serving Penobscot, Piscataquis, Waldo and Hancock Counties
- *Northern Maine AHEC*, at Northern Maine Community College, Presque Isle serving Aroostook and Washington Counties
- *Western Maine AHEC*, at Franklin Memorial Hospital, Farmington serving Androscoggin, Franklin, Kennebec, Oxford and Somerset Counties
- *AHEC Program Office*, School of Community and Population Health, Westbrook College of Health Professions, University of New England, Portland (administrative oversight, coordination and program development)

### Program Funding

In FY2014, the Maine AHEC Network's total budget was \$608,052 with the following funding sources:

- **Fund for A Healthy Maine (FHM):** In FY13, AHEC received \$108,545 from FAME. This is 18% of the AHEC Network budget and is a portion of the HRSA required cash match.
- **University of New England (UNE):** UNE also contributes to the required cash match. Their FY14 contribution of \$194,497 is 32% of the total budget.
- **Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA):** The Network's FY14 HRSA funding of \$305,010 is 50% the total annual budget.

### Maine AHEC Network Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee meets four times per year to provide input and guidance to the AHEC staff on program activities and priorities.

The FY14 Advisory Committee Members:

- Matt Chandler, *MaineCDC Office of Rural Health*
- Jane Ham, *Maine Hospital Association*
- Karen Rogers, MSN RN-BC, *University of Maine Augusta*
- Cynthia Robertson, MD, *Sebasticook Family Practice, Faculty UNE College of Osteopathic Medicine*



- Carl Toney, PA (retired), National Health Service Corps Ambassador
- Cheryl Seymour, MD, MaineGeneral Health Care (New Member)
- Sally Sutton, MA, MSSW, Portland Adult Education
- Lorri Brown, Western Maine AHEC, Franklin Memorial Hospital
- Sarah Dubai, MMEL, MEd, Eastern Maine AHEC, Penobscot Community Health Care
- Leah Buck, MSB, Northern Maine AHEC, Northern Maine Community College
- Mary Frances Smith, Program Office, UNE School of Community and Population Health
- Karen O'Rourke, MPH, Program Office, UNE School of Community and Population Health
- Kira Rodriguez, MPH, AHEC evaluator, UNE School of Community and Population Health (New Member)

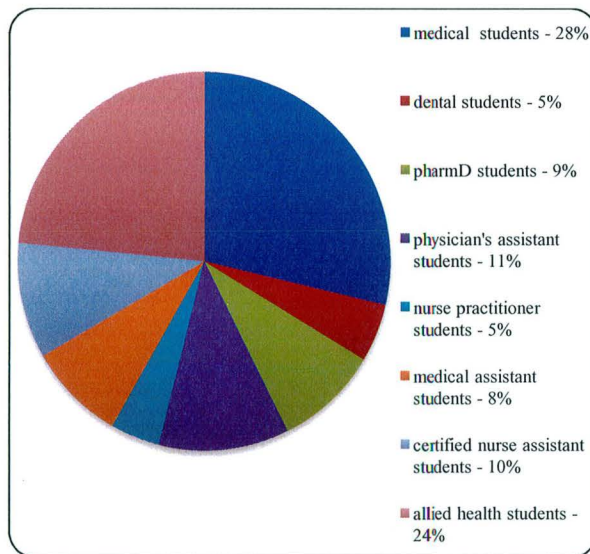
## Program Highlights

### Clinical Rotations Statewide Summary

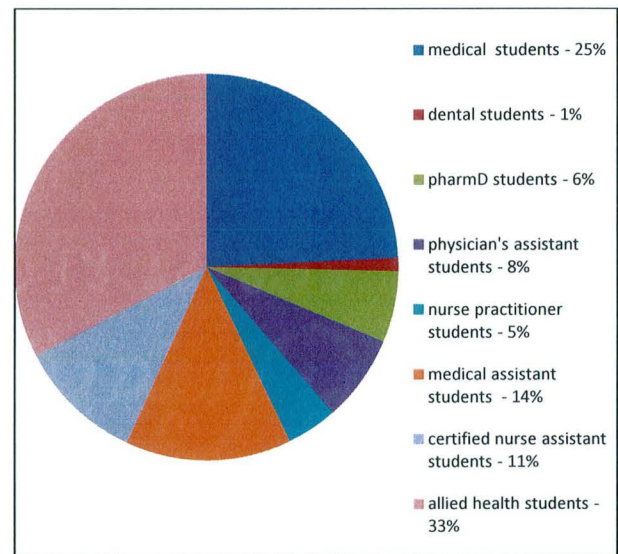
During July 2013 to June 2014, the Maine AHEC Network arranged 371 clinical rotations in Maine for medical, dental, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, and nursing students from over 35 colleges, universities, and training programs in Maine and nationally (Appendix A).

The Program Office arranged and coordinated over 60 clinical rotations in Maine for UNE College of Osteopathic Medicine third and fourth year medical students. This Community Health Rotation is a required part of the curriculum and places students in rural or underserved communities in Maine.

Clinical rotations increased 8 percent over the previous year. The largest increases were seen in students training to be medical assistants, certified nurse assistants, and allied health professionals (e.g., radiology technician and emergency medical technician). There was a decrease in the number of nurses and nurse practitioners placed in FY13.



2012 – 2013 Clinical Rotations by Discipline  
N=345



2013 – 2014 Clinical Rotations by Discipline  
N=371

### Continuing Education Statewide Summary

The Maine AHEC Network provided continuing education programs for more than 2,100 health care professionals. At least 619 (29%) of the attendees fulfilled licensure or recertification requirements. Continuing education programs are a valuable retention tool and enable health care professionals to enhance their skills and stay updated on best practices.

	<b>2013-2014 Continuing Education Participants</b>
Physicians	191
Physician Assistants	780
Dental	32
Nurse Practitioners	219
Nurses	465
CNAs	37
EMTs	128
Mental Health Practitioners	135
Allied Health Professionals	364
Other / Unreported	521
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2159</b>
<b>Recertification/Licensure</b>	<b>619 (29%)</b>

### Eastern Maine AHEC (EMAHEC) Program Highlights

- In conjunction with the University of Maine (UMO) and Tufts University School of Medicine (TUSM), Eastern Maine AHEC conducted a successful outreach and student experience in Waldo County called Medical Outreach Maine. Eleven UMO pre-med (9) and nursing (2) students along with 3 TUSM Maine Track medical students spent four days in Waldo County engaged in a number of community activities including: high school health career fairs; dental and hand washing education at nursery and elementary schools; assisting elementary school nurses with year-end heights, weights, and blood pressures; job shadowing with primary care physicians and hospital based specialists; blood pressures for a seniors group at the local YMCA; and attending a site tour and class on healthcare technology at Athenahealth. Post-trip survey data of participants show an increase in the likelihood of participating in a rural rotation while attending professional school and of considering practice in rural and under-served areas, and an increased understanding of the needs of a medically under-served area.

### Northern Maine AHEC (NMAHEC) Program Highlights

- In collaboration with the Family Medicine Department at Maine Medical Center, NMAHEC held a Doc4ADay program that included 12 Aroostook County high school students. The program targets students from rural and underserved areas in Maine. Doc4ADay (a half-day training) is an opportunity for high school students to experience what it is like to be a physician using high tech simulators and hands-on activities. Nine of those students have followed-up on arranging job shadows.
- Survivor Aroostook X was held at Northern Maine Community College. This is a week-long summer camp for fifty (50) 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders to explore health careers. Along with a staged “accident,” there were many hands-on activities including a clinical dental simulator, suturing activities, and a moulage workshop.

- During Spring 2014, 700 high school students participated in an area health career fair in Presque Isle.
- In collaboration with the Maine Geriatric Education Center at the University of New England, an Alzheimer's training was held in Presque Isle. Eighty-two (82) participants from Aroostook and Washington counties attended.

### **Western Maine AHEC (WMAHEC) Program Highlights**

- As part of the MaineCDC's public health workforce development plan, an intern with the Western Maine AHEC developed a "Live Binder" which is a virtual one-stop shop for resources about public health careers and is organized like an actual binder. It is now available on the Maine Public Health Association's website under "Career Pathways" heading:  
<http://www.livebinders.com/play/play/1206701>
- In collaboration with the Family Medicine Department at Maine Medical Center, WMAHEC held a Doc4ADay program for 12 Oxford County high school students (described above.)
- Summer Scrub Club at Franklin Memorial Hospital hosted 34 local middle and high schools in June 2014 for three days. Along with the variety of hands-on learning experiences, an interactive session about public health and the many career options that are available in the field was offered for the first time.
- In conjunction with the University of Maine at Farmington's health sciences program, an intern visited five high schools to talk about public health careers. The sessions lasted for about forty minutes and reached 87 high school students. The intern has been asked to return to repeat the sessions.
- Take Your Child to Work program at Franklin Memorial Hospital continues as a positive way to have employees connecting families and careers. This year, twelve children were part of the program.
- WMAHEC hosted a timely Opiate Prescriber training for twenty-five (25) providers in conjunction with the UNE College of Pharmacy and the AHEC Program Office.

### **UNE Program Office Highlights**

- The Program Office at UNE's Portland Campus co-sponsored two interprofessional education trainings. Both events were in collaboration with UNE's Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC). The first event, held in March 2014 for UNE faculty, featured the University of Toronto's Advanced Interprofessional Practice and Education Teaching and Leadership Training. The second event in May 2014, was an IPE Summit that brought together more than 100 practitioners, health systems leaders, faculty, staff and students from across Maine to discuss interprofessional collaboration within federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), large medical centers, and other organizations. Both IPE events were also supported by foundation grants.
- Health Expo III was held in May 2014 at the Wabanaki Cultural Center in Calais. This year's attendance was almost double (82 students) over the previous year (42). All area tribes were invited. The fair included speakers about student aspirations, Native American dancing and drumming, and tables with health career information from several health professions, including the UNE AHEC dental simulator. This device is a robotic simulation of a patient in a dental chair and provides a hands-on experience for students who can drill and fill teeth with actual dental instruments. Evaluations from the students were positive with requests for more hands-on activities and more health career professionals.
- A Veteran's Mental Health training was held in July 2013 for almost 80 health professionals in Maine.
- Maine AHEC Network became the home of the Maine Health Workforce Forum and is co-chaired by the AHEC Director. The first event of the year was the release of a 2014 Maine Health Occupations Report from the Department of Labor in collaboration with the Forum.

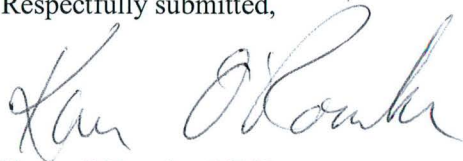
- Because AHEC has seen fewer medical students willing to be placed in the most rural areas of the state, the Maine AHEC Network and its Advisory Committee members developed a program to reduce barriers to spending time in distant rural areas. The program includes preceptor training, community involvement, housing and travel expenses. Students from rural areas who will be more likely to return to those communities to practice are the target audience for this program. Working with UNE's College of Osteopathic Medicine and Aroostook County community organizations and clinical sites, AHEC will launch this pilot program in October 2014. This is a 4-week 160-hour primary care clinical rotation for third year UNE COM medical students with weekly community-focused activities. Students must apply to participate and three students have been accepted to date.

### **Final Remarks**

The Maine AHEC Network is now entering the third year of its five-year HRSA-funded grant. A focus of the coming year is to work with the evaluator to better assess and identify program successes and areas for improvement. We will also strengthen our engagement with health professions' students to enhance their knowledge and exposure to the unique and exciting challenges of practicing primary care, especially in rural communities. A final priority is to provide additional health career learning opportunities for students from the tribes and mentor those who have an interest in health professions.

We are grateful for the support we receive from the Fund for A Healthy Maine and 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,



Karen O'Rourke, MPH  
Director, Maine AHEC Network  
Assistant Clinical Professor of Public Health  
School of Community and Population Health  
Westbrook College of Health Professions  
University of New England  
Linnell Hall Room 109  
716 Stevens Avenue, Portland, Maine 04103-2670  
T 207.221.4620 F 207.523.1914  
korourke3@une.edu  
www.une.edu/ahec

## Appendix A

### Universities and Colleges with Maine AHEC Network Affiliations

1. Atlantic Partners EMS
2. Beal College
3. Brigham Young University
4. Central Maine Community College
5. Colby College
6. Dartmouth Medical School
7. Eastern Maine Community College
8. Eastern Maine Medical Center Family Medicine Residency
9. Farmington Area Adult Education
10. Foster School of Applied Technology (Farmington)
11. Franklin Pierce University
12. Husson University
13. Kaplan University (aka Andover College)
14. Kennebec Valley Community College
15. Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
16. Northern Maine Community College
17. Northeast Technical Institute
18. Northeastern University
19. Pinnacle Career Institute
20. Simmons College
21. St. Joseph's University
22. Thomas College
23. Tufts University School of Medicine
24. Tufts University School of Dental Medicine
25. University of Maine (Orono)
26. University of Maine at Augusta
27. University of Maine at Augusta - Bangor
28. University of Maine at Farmington
29. University of Massachusetts
30. University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine
31. University of New England School of Dental Medicine
32. University of New England School of Pharmacy
33. University of New England Westbrook College of Health Professions
34. University of Southern Maine
35. University of Southern Maine – Law School
36. University of Vermont School of Medicine
37. University of Washington

## **Appendix B**

### **University of New England**

#### **Maine AHEC Network**

#### **Aroostook Enhanced Community Health Rotation**

##### **Background**

Over the last 1-2 years, the number of UNE College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM) students who are placed in 4-week community health clinical rotation sites in Aroostook County and other more rural locations in Maine have gone down drastically. There are a number of reasons for this change including student preferences, AHEC policy changes and COM policy changes.

The Maine AHEC Network would like to pilot an “enhanced” community health rotation that would attract students interested in rural health and primary care and create a very rich experience that will increase the chances that COM students will make the decision to practice in rural Maine. A process for selection of students for this rotation will be developed and the AHEC Program Office will be responsible for placement of the student in the rotation.

##### **Components of the Enhanced Community Health Rotation**

A Work Group of the AHEC Advisory Committee has developed a concept for what would be included in this “enhanced” rotation. Below are some of the features that have been discussed:

1. A cadre of engaged preceptors/mentors will be recruited and well trained with opportunities for ongoing networking and problem solving.
2. Students from rural communities and/or with family practice intention should be actively recruited for participation.
3. Students will have direct interaction with providers and patients that will build their skills and confidence.
4. Students will have multiple opportunities and exposures to rural practice since all rural communities are unique.
5. Students will have an opportunity to engage in the community to better understand the people in the community they serve and rural life.
6. Students will have exposure to interprofessional practice and the role of providers in rural health care practices.
7. The experience will have ongoing evaluation for continuous quality improvement and to understand/measure impact on the student’s career.
8. Ensure rural experience is rich and nurtures students interest in practice and research in rural areas (e.g. Curricular support Rural research electives, Rural student interest group)
9. Ensure that there are adequate financial incentives and supports for rural rotations (e.g. Scholarship commitments, housing support)