

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Maine AHEC Network Report to the State of Maine July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015

Purpose

The Mission of the Maine AHEC Network is to alleviate shortages of health professionals in Maine's rural and underserved communities by engaging academic and community partners to:

- Develop a career pipeline for Maine youth and mid-career professionals
- Provide rural, community based clinical training experiences for medical and other health profession students
- Support practicing health professionals with continuing education and distance learning opportunities for practice improvement and retention

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, Westbrook College of Health Professions, University of New England, Portland (statewide focus and provides administrative oversight, coordination, program development and evaluation with 2.75 FTEs)

Program Funding

AHECs are funded through the US Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). AHECs have a required one-to-one match for funding.

In FY2015, the Maine AHEC Network received the following funding:

- **Fund for A Healthy Maine (FHM):** The Maine AHEC Network received \$110,459 in FY15 from the Fund for A Healthy Maine administered by the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) and was used as the required match. The FHM allocation is 18% of the total AHEC Network budget.
- **Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA):** The Network's FY15 HRSA funding of \$306,000 provides 50% the total annual budget.
- **University of New England (UNE):** UNE also contributes to the required matching funds. UNE's FY15 contribution was \$197,416 which is 32% of the total budget.

Use of Funds/Accountability

HRSA considers the match a required part of the cooperative agreement so matching funds must follow the same rules for allowable expenses as the HRSA funds and the matching funds must be used to meet the HRSA-approved workplan for the Maine AHEC Network.

Maine AHEC Network Advisory Committee

The Maine AHEC Network has an active Advisory Committee that reviews program plans, provides input on programmatic decisions and helps guide the work of the Program Office and three Centers.

The FY15 Advisory Committee Members:

Matt Chandler, *Director of the Office of Rural Health and Primary Care*

Karen Rogers, MSN, RN, *University of Maine Augusta*

Cynthia Robertson, MD, AHEC Medical Director, *family physician and former UNE Faculty*

Carl Toney, PA *(retired)*

Cheryl Seymour, MD, *Dartmouth Family Medicine Residency Program, and Maine Migrant Program*

Sally Sutton, MA, MSSW, *Portland Adult Education*

Lorri Brown, Director, *Western Maine AHEC*

Sarah Dubay, MMEL, Med, Director, *Eastern Maine AHEC*

Leah Buck, MSB, Director, *Northern Maine AHEC*

Vicki Hayes, MD., *Maine Medical Center's Family Medicine Department, Faculty MMC/Tufts Medical School (new member)*

AHEC Staff: Karen O'Rourke, MPH, Director, MaryFrances Smith, Program Manager

Summary of Services Provided

Pipeline – Recruiting Maine's Future Workforce:

- Intensive multi-day health careers exploration – 3 programs
- Doc4ADay – half day program --Maine Medical Center provides physicians and simulator
- Job Shadows
- Health Fairs/Career Fairs – Including Tribal Career Expo
- Mentoring for rural pre-health professions students – UMaine Orono
- Development of paid summer internships in rural health care settings for undergraduate students – collaboration with Hanley Health Leadership
- Medical Outreach Maine – Collaboration with UMaine Orono, MMC/Tufts Medical Students and local community schools and organizations

Community Based Placement of Health Professions Students –Experience practice in rural and underserved communities:

- Place students in rural and underserved communities as part of their clinical rotations
- Developed Enhanced Community Health Rotation to ensure students from UNE's College of Osteopathic Medicine have a positive rural health experience
- Work with multiple health professions and multiple universities and colleges
- Support students to learn about/consider practicing in rural and underserved areas through conferences and speaker support
- Provide opportunities for students to practice in an interprofessional environment

Continuing Education – Retention of the Health Care Workforce:

- Collaborate with other continuing education such as Alzheimer’s Disease Conference and the Minority Health Conference
- Ensure community providers have access to continuing education and credential renewal

Program Highlights

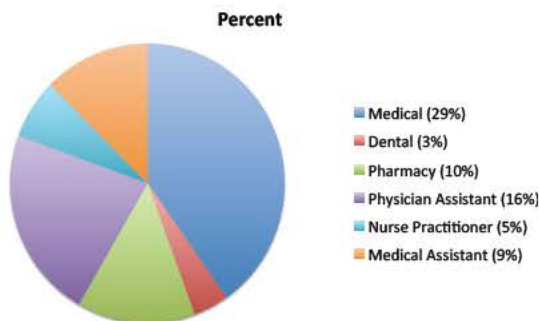
Clinical Rotations

During July 2014 to June 2015, the Maine AHEC Network arranged 305 *clinical rotations* in Maine for medical, dental, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, and nursing students from 25 colleges, universities, and training programs in Maine and nationally (Appendix A). These students were placed in medically underserved and rural areas. Research shows that students are more likely to practice in communities where they trained.

In October 2014, the Maine AHEC Network collaborated with community organizations and clinical sites in Aroostook County to launch an “Enhanced Aroostook County Community Health Rotation.” The number of students willing to spend a clinical rotation in the County had declined to 0-1 per year. During our first year, four students participated in this program that provides housing, transportation and community connections, along with their rural clinical experience. Because students in the program had very positive experiences and spread the word, we expect the number of students spending 4 weeks in Aroostook County to double in the FY16 academic year.

Plans are underway to expand the enhanced community health rotation to Western Maine and Downeast Maine.

2014-2015 Clinical Rotations by Discipline



Continuing Education

The Maine AHEC Network provided *continuing education programs for over 1900* attendees. Seventeen percent of these attendees were actively meeting licensure and recertification requirements. These continuing education programs serve as valuable retention tools and enable health care professionals to enhance their skills and stay updated on best practices.

Health Care Professional Participants	2014-2015 Continuing Education Participants
Physicians	127
Physician Assistants	50
Dental	23
Nurse Practitioners	59
Nurses	593
CNAs	54
EMTs	82
Mental Health Practitioners	76
Allied Health Professionals	195
Other / Unreported	633
TOTALS	1902
Recertification/Licensure	308 (17%)

Eastern Maine AHEC (EMAHEC)

- In conjunction with the University of Maine and Tufts University School of Medicine (TUSM), Eastern Maine AHEC held another successful outreach and student experiences in Waldo County called Medical Outreach Maine (MOM). This year the student participants had diverse backgrounds and interests. Ten University of Maine undergraduates attended and most were biology or chemistry majors with the intention of pursuing medical school, dental school, physician assistant programs or nursing programs. Along with the undergrad students were five second year Tufts medical students, including four from the Maine Track Program. The Tufts' medical students acted as mentors to the undergraduates. Over the four days of the program, the group volunteered over 230 contact hours including dental health with pre-school children, tick identification and prevention in the elementary schools, health careers exploration in high schools, and blood pressure screenings in the communities of Waldo County. As one participant said: *"The trip was an incredible opportunity to explore medicine, especially in a rural setting ...I've always wanted to practice in Maine, and this trip only reinforced my feelings...I truly believe that this trip was life changing for me."*

Northern Maine AHEC (NMAHEC)

- The Northern Maine AHEC hosted an Interprofessional Collaborative Practice (IPCP) Summit on the Northern Maine Community College campus in Presque Isle. As part of the Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation and the Maine AHEC Network, over 60 health care professionals in the Northern Maine region heard national and local experts discuss national trends in IPCP and team-based practice along with how to develop IPCP clinical experiences for students in Northern Maine.
- Career Expo IV was held in May 2015 at the Wabanaki Cultural Center in Calais. This year's attendance was almost doubled from the year before with 145 middle and high school students. All Maine tribal students were invited and had the opportunity to interact with representatives from many organizations and businesses along with the AHEC Program Office's clinical dental simulator. Post surveys showed that approximately 80% of the participating students planned to attend college.

- In collaboration with the Family Medicine Department at Maine Medical Center, NMAHEC presented a Doc4ADay program to 12 Aroostook County high school students on the Washington County Community College campus in Calais. Students targeted were located in the under-represented populations all across 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. There was also a round table discussion with residents and medical students from Maine Medical Center about their experiences pursuing careers in medicine.
- Survivor Aroostook XI was held at Northern Maine Community College. This is a week-long summer camp for forty-two (42) 8th and 9th 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 mock disaster. Eighty-three percent of the participants plan to attend post high school education with 66% planning on a healthcare profession and 31% “maybe” working in healthcare.

Western Maine AHEC (WMAHEC)

- In collaboration with the Family Medicine Department at Maine Medical Center, WMAHEC presented a Doc4ADay program to 12 Oxford County high school students. 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.
- The 12th Summer Scrub Club at Franklin Memorial Hospital hosted 40 local middle and high schools in June 2015. Students learned about a variety of health careers and participated in hands-on learning experiences including how to make a cast and how to do lab analysis and they participated in a mock accident working with emergency responders.
- A Google Site that integrates health career resources, including public health, has been created and updated. This site will allow a more in-depth community approach about health care career education and job shadowing opportunities that exist with local schools, colleges, Adult Education, Maine Department of Labor, and Career Centers.

Program Office Highlights:

- UNE recently became the recipient of a Josiah Macy Grant to enhance and expand current Interprofessional Practice and Education (IPE) activities. This grant specifically requires greater involvement of the UNE College of Osteopathic Medicine.
- The Program Office is continuing its second year of collaboration with the Veterans Administration to provide training to health personnel in their Community Based Out Patient Clinics across the state.
- The AHEC office has increased involvement with the first and second year medical students to promote family medicine/primary care in rural and underserved areas. Activities include job shadowing, sponsorship of speakers, scholarships to primary care conferences, and mentoring.
- A new national initiative by AHECs across the country was started last spring to increase HPV vaccine rates in the state in order to prevent future cancers. In our first year, more than 75 providers participated in a continuing education program on this topic.
- We have begun a new collaboration that will provide the children of New Mainers information about health careers and opportunities to visit colleges and job shadow with different health professions.
- The AHEC continues to strengthen its evaluation capacity. We had developed and implemented an evaluation of summer health profession camps to ensure that students achieve core competencies. Results show significant increases in students’ knowledge of health careers after attending the programs.

Final Remarks

The Maine AHEC Network is now entering its fourth year of its five-year HRSA-funded grant. Some priority activities for the coming fiscal year include implementing a data system that can be used by the program office and 3 Centers to better manage and track program activities, implement a 5-year look back on students who participated in AHEC programs to see if those students have entered college and/or are pursuing health careers, develop new partnerships in the community and expand the number of highly qualified preceptors in rural areas of the state including at FQHCs, and continue to expand opportunities for students to engage in clinical Interprofessional Practice and Education.

The Maine AHEC Network is grateful for the support of the legislature and Governor in our efforts to ensure Maine has an adequate and highly trained workforce in all areas of the state.

Respectfully submitted,



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Appendix A
Universities and Colleges with Maine AHEC Network Affiliations

1. Beal College
2. Central Maine Community College
3. Central Maine Medical Center Residency Program
4. Dartmouth Medical School
5. Eastern Maine Community College
6. Eastern Maine Medical Center Family Medicine Residency
7. Farmington Area Adult Education
8. Foster School of Applied Technology (Farmington)
9. Husson University
10. Kaplan University (aka Andover College)
11. Kennebec Valley Community College
12. Maine Medical Center Family Medicine Residency Program
13. Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Services
14. Northern Maine Community College
15. Northeast Technical Institute
16. Northeastern University
17. Ohio University
18. Regis College
19. St. Joseph's University
20. Tufts University School of Medicine
21. University of Connecticut
22. University of Maine (Orono)
23. University of Maine at Augusta
24. University of Maine at Augusta - Bangor
25. University of Maine at Farmington
26. University of Maine at Fort Kent
27. University of Massachusetts
28. University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine
29. University of New England School of Dental Medicine
30. University of New England School of Pharmacy
31. University of New England Westbrook College of Health Professions
32. University of Southern Maine
33. University of Vermont School of Medicine