Testimony

Health Care Reform Review Committee

Representative George Keiser, Chairman

September 4, 2013

Chairman Keiser, members of the Health Care Reform Review Committee, I am Bill Krivarchka, Director of the Eastern North Dakota Area Health Education Center (Eastern ND AHEC). I am here to provide information regarding the ND AHEC Program.

It has been estimated that in the next 10 years, 50% of our nurses will retire, a shortage of approximately 300 primary care physicians, and all health care disciplines will be impacted with workforce shortages, resulting from retirement and the impact of the Affordable Care Act (which in ND will possibly infuse 70,000 new patient consumers for health care). Where will the health care workforce come from?

"Connecting students to health care careers, professional and health care students to communities, and communities to better health and sustainability". This is the mission of the ND AHEC Program.

AHEC strategies increase the number of students from urban and rural underserved areas who become doctors, nurses and other health professionals. Research shows that these students are more likely to choose primary care and practice in their home communities or similar

communities. We work with statewide, regional and local partners such as academic institutions, elementary/secondary schools, hospitals, clinics, community organizations, government agencies, Department of Commerce and businesses – making all of North Dakota a state campus.

So why North Dakota AHEC?

Between 2009 and 2013, the ND AHEC Program:

- AHEC has reached over 12,440 participants and AHEC has reached every county in ND.
- AHEC has given $36,333 (approximately 7,410 students) in grants to facilitate health occupation activities. Through programs such as, Marketplace for Kids (ND Small Business Development Center), The ND Crash Course (The ND Center for Technology and Small Business), CRH/AHEC Scrub Camps, CRH/AHEC Scrub Academy, and Sustaining Career Pathways for American Indian Health Professionals (NDSU).
- AHEC has assisted $11,800 (60) students to clinical rotations – Medicine, Nursing, Psychology, Pharmacy, Dietetics, Dentistry, Social Work, and Physical Therapy.
- Has contributed in over $110,000 (5,030 health professionals) toward continuing education for health care providers. Through Networking Interprofessional Continuing Education (NICE grants), Military Cultural Certificate Program (MCCP), Veterans Mental Health (VMH), and AgriSafe Programs.
- 48% of health profession students participating in summer clinical experiences in 2010 indicated (via surveys) intent to practice in communities of 10,000 or less.

- The ND AHEC Program has partnered with the UND College of Nursing and the UND Simulation Training Center to establish the ND Simulation Alliance to provide Simulation training for critical assess hospitals, health care providers, long term care, EMS and educational institutions throughout the state.
- ND AHEC has developed and implemented other strategies to address workforce needs. The Tri-State AHEC (ND, SD, MN) Collaborative has been established which is a partnership that will assist the three states to 1) create strong regional partnerships, 2) develop strategies to improve the number of American Indian students in health workforce pipelines, and 3) establish a uniform strategy for inter-professional education sites within health care systems that operate in two or more states.

What impact does health care have on a community:

- Only about 10 percent of the physicians practice in rural America despite the fact that nearly one fourth of the population lives in these areas.
- Quality rural health services in rural communities are need to attract business and industry
- On average, 14% of total employment in rural communities is attributed to the health sector.

Rural Primary Care Physician impact:

- One primary care physician in a rural community creates 23 jobs annually

- One primary care physician in a rural community generate 1.0 million in wages, salaries and benefits
- One primary care physician in a rural community generates approximately $1.8 million in annual total revenue
- The total economic impact of a typical critical access hospital is 195 employees and $8.4 Million in payroll

How do we attract and keep quality health care in rural North Dakota?

- By exciting students to explore, to study, and to become rural health care providers
- By assisting colleges and universities to create clinical experience rotations with rural health care organizations
- By supporting first-class continuing education for health care providers working in rural areas
- By creating policy to encourage and support admissions of rural students in health care professional education.

AHECs adapt to meet community needs and partner for economic development in our rural communities.

- Lisbon, ND, a community of 2,300, has a health care workforce of approximately 600 (hospital, clinic, long term care, basic skills, Veterans Soldiers Home, dentist, chiropractor, pharmacy, etc.). Good paying jobs, rewarding employment, and local "trickle" down economics, enhance the local education, betterment of Main Street, and create opportunity for new businesses and industry.

- Northwood, ND, population of 1,000, has a health care workforce of approximately 200, being the largest employer in the community.
- Of the 11 largest employers in the state of North Dakota, (with state government being the largest employer) the next 10 largest employers are all related to health care.

The North Dakota AHEC Programs multifaceted recruitment, training and retention strategies are solutions to current and future health workforce shortages. They increase diversity and distribute health care professionals where they are needed most. Our programs result in the sons and daughters of North Dakota becoming health professionals who work to improve health care access and economic development in underserved rural communities.

We look forward to working with legislative management for the creation of access to health care in our rural and underserved communities in North Dakota. We have attached a fact sheet that provides additional information about the ND AHEC Program. Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

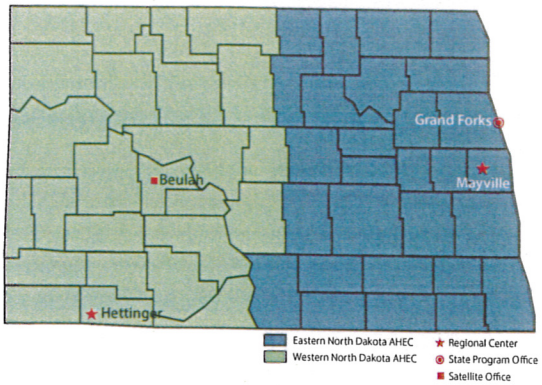
North Dakota Area Health Education Center

Mayville • Hettinger

AHEC

Stands for Jobs

NORTH DAKOTA AHEC



Our mission

We work to enhance access to quality primary care and public health in rural and underserved areas, by improving the supply and distribution of health care professionals through community and academic partnerships.

Why AHEC?

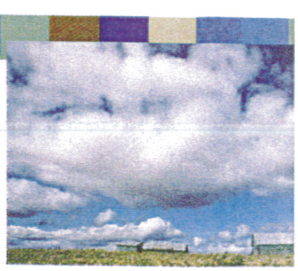
- AHEC links rural guidance counselors, teachers, and students to health career opportunities and resources to assist in health career planning.
- AHEC programs raise awareness and encourage students to choose careers in health care.
- AHEC supports rural clinical experiences to reduce and eliminate misperceptions about rural practice.
- AHEC lessens rural health professionals isolation, either socially or professionally, by facilitating community involvement and multidisciplinary professional education.
- AHEC expands the reach of rural health care facilities' recruitment and retention efforts by assisting with coordination and resources.

The need for health care professionals

- 91% of North Dakota counties have less than the national average of physicians to population.
- 89% of North Dakota counties are federally-designated as health professional shortage areas (HPSA).
- 47% of North Dakota counties have less than the national average of primary care providers to population. There will be a shortage of 200 rural family practice physicians by 2020.
- 32% of North Dakota counties have fewer nurses than the national average. 50% of rural nurses will retire in the next five years.
- 90-95% of rural emergency personnel in North Dakota are volunteers.

We are unique

- We support all individuals in the workforce pipeline: from students in grade school to rural professionals near retirement.
- We promote rural health care and workforce development.
- *We support rural from rural* - located in Hettinger, Mayville, and Beulah.



We address workforce shortages

We connect students to careers, professionals to communities, and communities to better health.

Connecting Students to Health Careers

- Introduce K-16 students to a variety of health careers through school visits, career fairs, and HOSA – Future Health Professionals.
- Increase the number of rural students into health careers.
- Provide education and training opportunities using human simulators.

Connecting Health Professionals to Communities

- Provide interdisciplinary clinical experience in rural settings for health professions students.
- Identify communities interested in hosting health care professions students for rural rotations.
- Educate students on scholarship and loan repayment opportunities.

Connecting Communities to Better Health

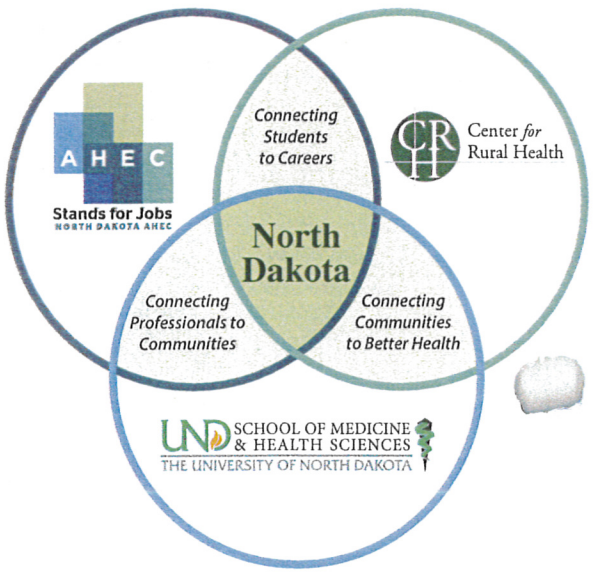
- Provide contact hours for low-cost, high quality continuing education programs.
- Support community education programs.
- Facilitate learning opportunities for health professionals and community partners through AgriSafe education, simulation, and mental/behavioral health training for health care professionals.

Our funding

The AHEC is supported by a federal Health Services Resources Administration (HRSA), Bureau of Health Professions grant which requires a 1:1 federal/non-federal match, and recently (2013-2015) state appropriated funds. In addition, an Otto Bremer Foundation grant supports development of rural interdisciplinary educational opportunities for health professions students.

Funding will allow us to develop and expand projects to support rural health workforce needs

- We have reached over 12,440 participants and every county in North Dakota.
- We have provided over $36,000 for health occupation activities reaching 7,400 students.
- We have contributed over $110,000 toward continuing education for 5,030 health care professionals.
- We have assisted 60 students in rural clinical rotations ($11,800) - medicine, nursing, psychology, pharmacy, dietetics, dentistry, social work, and physical therapy.

Our key partners

The North Dakota AHEC, works in close collaboration with the UND Center for Rural Health, the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, College of Nursing and Professional Disciplines to identify areas of need; leverage resources, both financial and personnel; in an effort to expand existing programs, develop new programs and reduce duplication amongst partners throughout our state. In addition, Mayville State University, serves as the fiscal host for the regional centers; and the North Dakota Department of Commerce that administers newly appropriated (2013-2015) state funding.