FY17 Area Health Education Centers Program: An Overview

National Advisory Council on The National Health Service Corps webinar
March 22, 2017

Presenter:
Aleisha A. Langhorne, MPH, MHSA, MDiv
Health Careers Pipeline Branch
Division of Health Careers and Financial Support
Bureau of Health Workforce
Health Resources and Services Administration
Agenda

• Current Structure
• Challenges
• Innovation and Change
• Programmatic Improvements
“Area Health Education Center Program” – a cooperative agreement program consisting of an entity that has received an award from HRSA under PHS Act section 751(a)(1) or section 751(a)(2).

“Area Health Education Center” – a public or nonprofit private organization that has a cooperative agreement or contract in effect with an entity (AHEC Program) that has received an award from HRSA under PHS Act section 751(a)(1) or section 751(a)(2)
Legislative Requirements

• Health careers recruitment;
• Community-based training and education, with emphasis on primary care;
• Field placements or preceptorships;
• Interdisciplinary/interprofessional education and training with emphasis on primary care;
• Continuing education and information dissemination for health professionals;
• Program evaluation; and
• Public health careers exposure to youth.
Academic-Community Partnerships (Current Structure)

Stakeholders
- Federal HRSA
- State
- Local

Schools of Medicine/Nursing 52 Programs

Communities
- AHEC Center
- 247 AHEC Centers
- AHEC Center
- AHEC Center
Area Health Education Centers: Summary

• The Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program enhances access to high quality, culturally competent health care through academic-community partnerships.

• **Goal of the AHEC Program:** to build education and training networks within communities, academic institutions, and community-based organizations.

  • These networks support HRSA/BHW’s strategic priorities to:
    • Increase diversity and distribution among health professionals;
    • Enhance health care quality; and
    • Improve health care delivery to rural and underserved areas and populations.
Key Challenges for AHEC

- Maximum flexibility in terms of activities and focus.
- Focused on health career exposure activities early in the pipeline.
- Focused heavily on health professions continuing education and professional development.
- Variance in outcomes in program.
- Concentrated on process measures/lack national impact.
- Consistently, zeroed out of the President’s budget proposal.
Area Health Education Centers: Summary

• The Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program develops and enhances education and training networks that support high quality, culturally competent health care through academic-community partnerships.

• **Goal of the AHEC Program**: to build education and training networks within communities, academic institutions, and community-based organizations.

  • These networks support HRSA/BHW’s strategic priorities to:

    • Increase diversity and distribution among health professionals;
    • Enhance health care quality; and
    • Improve health care delivery to rural and underserved areas and populations.
Innovation & Change in FY17

Distribution
Diversity
Practice Transformation

AHEC FY17+
Consistent Program Design = Consistent Outcomes
### Innovation & Change in FY17

#### Distribution • Diversity • Practice Transformation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHEC Scholars</td>
<td>HRSA/AHEC branded interdisciplinary educational and training program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Topic Areas</td>
<td>• Inter-professional Education • Behavioral Health Integration • Social Determinants of Health • Cultural Competency • Practice Transformation • Current/Emerging Health Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Partnership Activities</td>
<td>Strategic partnerships to coordinate educational/training activities to maximize the impact and outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statewide Evaluation</td>
<td>Must develop and implement a statewide evaluation in collaboration with AHEC Centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Based Experiential Training</td>
<td>Training must be team-based and specialized in rural and underserved areas and populations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pipeline</td>
<td>Limited funding to support youth public health pipeline (9th -12th grade) program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing Education</td>
<td>Limited funding for continuing education activities focused on the Core Topic Areas for health professionals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

*HRSA Health Workforce*
Innovation & Change in FY17:
AHEC Scholars Program

HRSA/AHEC Branded IPE Program Include:

• Longitudinal program with interdisciplinary curricula.
• Community-based, experiential or clinical training in rural and/or underserved settings (e.g., PCMH, team-based).
• Diverse student cohort with representation from disadvantaged backgrounds and underrepresented minorities.
• Establishment of strategic partnerships that will support the successful implementation.
• Individual-level data on program participants, with required one-year post-completion data on employment outcomes (e.g., rural/underserved primary care).
Enhanced AHEC Model

AHEC Program Office

AHEC Center(s)

- Specialized Community-Based Training
- Inter-professional, Education & Training
- Strategic Partnerships
- Rural & Underserved Areas and Populations
- Practice Transformation

Maximize Impact & Outcomes
AHEC Program

The Program Office will:

• Monitor, evaluate, and report on their sub-contracted center’s core activities and the impact of those activities;
• Provide guidance on educational and training activities;
• Conduct at least 10 percent of clinical education for medical students in their institution;
• Develop effective partnerships that engage key stakeholders; and
• Evaluate all programmatic processes and outcomes.
Area Health Education Centers

Centers funded by the AHEC Program will:

• Train students from minority and disadvantaged backgrounds;
• Place health professions students in community-based clinical practice settings;
• Promote interprofessional, team-based education to improve health care quality; and
• Provide continuing education resources and programs for health professionals, particularly in rural and underserved areas.
Overall, the outcomes of the FY17 **AHEC Program** will yield results that are in alignment with HHS/HRSA’s strategic priorities through:

- Increased focus on three overarching goals, inclusive of required activities and core topic areas.
- Coordination of AHEC activities with other HHS/HRSA-funded workforce training and education programs.
- Enhanced evaluation of programmatic processes and outcomes.
- Increased capacity to track healthcare providers in underserved and/or rural communities.
- Specialized Interdisciplinary team-based training in underserved and/or rural community settings.
- Prioritization of current investments, as opposed to standing up new investments.
Measuring Impact

• Collection of process and outcome-focused performance measures.

• Implementation of data-driven, evidence-based strategies and programs.

• Increased team-based and IPE community based trainings.

• Better preparation of the next generation of clinicians to serve in rural and underserved communities.

• Increased program standardization and accountability of HRSA funded programs.

• Partnerships to advance the AHEC program.
Discussion Question?

AHEC Scholars and the National Health Service Corps