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Message from the Executive Director

While state funding remained flat this year, we were able to continue expanding existing programs and positioning ourselves for healthcare reform due to additional funds from partner hospitals and federal grants. Specific accomplishments include:

- Received approval for 4 federal Primary Care Expansion Grants enabling us to increase the number of first year slots from 44 to 52 across the AHEC network of family medicine residency programs (FMRPs).
- Dr. Bob Price and his team were successful in obtaining a residency training grant on chronic disease management in all of our FMRPs, positioning us to become Patient-Centered Medical Homes (PCMH).
- AHECs have been implementing necessary IT components including e-prescribing, a disease registry, and a patient portal in order to meet PCMH accreditation criteria and meaningful use criteria.
- Working collaboratively with the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine, Pat Vannatta, M.S.P.H. was successful in obtaining a federal pre-doctoral training grant to expand first and second year medical student offerings. Specifically, we will offer a service-learning preceptorship that will take place in the summer between the first and second year, total eight (8) weeks of effort, and expose students to communities in Arkansas where they will perform service projects. We will continue our current 4 week preceptorship, but will add a curriculum to it. A community practice learning collaborative will be implemented for first and second year students who will be assigned to family medicine mentors in the community to gain early clinical experience. We will also host lectures and discussions on campus to keep students focused on a career in family medicine and rural practice. Additionally, the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine will be restructuring the required third year family medicine clerkship to improve the curriculum and will work with the UAMS marketing department to promote careers in family medicine to medical students.
- Received a one-year extension on our model AHEC Grant, funding pre-health recruiters, community outreach, IT (e-prescribing), research and continuing education activities. We are in the process of applying for a new Point-of-Service Maintenance and Enhancements AHEC grant for next year.
- Two of our AHECs (West and South Central) have hired a nurse practitioner to provide clinical services and to expand nurse practitioner training.
- Work continues with the Center on Clinical and Translational Research (CCTR) regarding community engagement initiatives. Dr. Price and his team are revitalizing our practice-based research network (PBRN) and supporting research projects in the AHECs and in the PBRN.
- We successfully kicked off our faculty development fellowship with two AHEC faculty.
- We were successful financially in achieving a 3% margin for the campus.

Healthcare reform remains a major topic of conversation. A recent focus group of hospital CEOs indicated a need for more education about accountable care organizations, PCMH, and the Governor’s partnerships. The Governor’s plan for restructuring healthcare in Arkansas has stimulated a great deal of discussion in the AHECs and with colleagues and stakeholders in rural health. The Center for Rural Health conducted a retreat in June to gain more information about these new models of care.

I also want to celebrate the career of Holly Eaton, who officially retired in October of last year after 20 years of outstanding service as Executive Assistant to myself and Mr. Bud McFadin. Holly was a remarkable asset to our program and shall be greatly missed. We wish her a fond farewell.

While the future remains unclear, I feel the AHEC Network is positioning itself to do well when new models of care are instituted. We remain committed to our patients, rural Arkansas, training high-quality healthcare professionals and providing high-quality clinical services to our patients.

Mark B. Mengel, MD, MPH
Executive Director, Arkansas AHEC Program
Vice-Chancellor for UAMS Regional Programs
History of AHEC and Regional Programs

The Arkansas Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program was founded in 1973, through combined efforts of the Governor, the State Legislature, and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), as a means to encourage UAMS medical school graduates to remain in Arkansas, and help address the state’s shortage and maldistribution of primary care physicians.

UAMS Regional Programs, now comprised of the AHECs and the Center for Rural Health, serves as the primary educational outreach effort of UAMS and the principal means of decentralizing medical and other health professions education throughout the state.

Eight teaching centers in El Dorado, Fayetteville/Springdale, Fort Smith, Helena-West Helena, Jonesboro, Pine Bluff, Texarkana, and Batesville/Mountain Home expose future health professionals to underserved communities and provide more varied hands-on experiences than they might receive in a traditional urban, academic environment.

What began with medical and residency training 38 years ago now encompasses nursing, pharmacy, and allied health professions training as well as continuing professional and public education statewide. Each AHEC serves a multiple county region.

“The AHEC program has been one of the best things that ever happened in the state of Arkansas.”

John E. Miller, Former Arkansas Legislator
AHEC Mission and Approach

To improve the supply and distribution of health care professionals in Arkansas, with an emphasis on primary care, through community/academic educational partnerships, to increase quality health care for all Arkansans.

Quality training experiences in settings away from the academic medical center expose trainees to opportunities in underserved communities, helping encourage rural practice choices.

The teaching atmosphere, library services, and continuing education offerings enhance the rural professional environment, aid in provider retention, and ultimately strengthen the participating community health care systems.

2010-11 AHEC Trainee Overview
This year, the AHECs provided valuable training for:
- 840 health professions students
- 142 medical residents
- 28 medical interpreters
- 974 junior high, high school, and college students

Specific program goals:
- Enhance the quality of health professions education by using the best academic resources available statewide
- Retain Arkansas graduates of health professions schools within the state
- Improve the supply and distribution of primary health care providers in Arkansas
- Increase the number of individuals from underserved populations entering health careers
- Supply professional support and continuing education for health care providers statewide
- Provide quality health care services and educational programs to the public
- Promote cooperation among providers, educational institutions, and health-related organizations

AHECs employ 655 people statewide, operating as important economic forces in their communities.
Southwest Named “Best AHEC” for 2010

Dr. Mark Mengel presented AHEC Southwest with the “Best AHEC” award for fiscal year 2010 at a ceremony hosted by AHEC administration. Dr. Mengel stated, “I am personally impressed with Pat Evans, RN, RRT and his leadership of AHEC-Southwest. He has managed to instill a true team spirit that is focused on results. Their creativity often gets them into trouble, but, they learn fast and are able to “right the ship” quickly! In essence, they are not afraid of innovation and I think they are taking the right approach to being highly innovative in their region.”

This award developed as a direct result of the AHEC annual review process which takes place in the fall of every year, in which a team from AHEC administration reviews all aspects of each AHEC, paying particular attention to accomplishment of mission and service to customers in five general areas of leadership, education, IT, community relations and clinical issues. AHEC Southwest achieved best practice in 10 of 30 subcategories. AHEC-Southwest was runner-up in several best practice activities. Our hope is that as AHECs are identified with best practices in a specific operational area, they will be willing to share their practices with the other AHECs in order to improve overall AHEC performance statewide.

Honors and Awards

Becky Hall, Ed.D. (Delta) received a Humanitarian Award in recognition of her dedication and contributions to the Arkansas Delta IRT Medical Mission by the 4010th United States Army Hospital in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Jimmy Acklin, MD and Katherine Irish-Clardy, MD (West) were named among the Best Family Doctors in America (Dr. Acklin for the 8th time).

Richard Aclin, MD (West) was named one of the Best Physicians in America for the 13th year.

Morris Henry, MD (Northwest) Adjunct Assistant Clinical Professor was awarded the 2011 Asklepiion Award at the 135th Arkansas Medical Society Annual Meeting which honors a member who promotes the art and science of medicine, and embodies the values of the medical leadership, excellence, and service.

Haley Vo, MD (Northwest) was appointed by Gov. Mike Beebe to the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission.

AHEC Northwest clinics were awarded a Quality Improvement Award in May from the Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care for efforts in improving colorectal cancer screenings.

AHEC North Central sponsored the 1st and 2nd place winning student teams from the ASU Mountain Home branch of the UACCB Respiratory Care program in the annual ASRC Sputum Bowl competition.

AHEC Career Employees

We gratefully want to acknowledge the faithful dedication of the following faculty and staff who mark this year with 20, 25, 30 or 35 years in service to the UAMS AHEC Program.

20 Years: Adrienne Boone, Ann Bynum, Sterling Moore (Central), Robin Mouzy (NE), Virginia Breshears, Alan Martin (NW), Deborah Johnson (SA), Terri Ashley, Joe Nolen, Deanna Sanders (SW), Pamela Cannefax (WE)

25 Years: Herb Fendley (SC), Laura Doyle (SA), Don Heard (WE),

30 Years: Michael Mackey (NE), Danny Proffitt (NW), Patsy Cope, Susan Over (SC), Pamela Pyland (WE)

35 Years: James Lindsey (SC), Grace Anderson (WE)
AHEC Excellence in Teaching Award

Linda A. McGhee, MD, who holds the rank of Associate Professor in the UAMS College of Medicine and is double boarded in Family Medicine and Pediatrics, was selected by her peers as recipient of the 2011 AHEC Excellence in Teaching award to recognize her numerous contributions to resident and medical student education. Dr. McGhee is Director of the Family Medicine Residency Program at AHEC Northwest. In her long tenure, Dr. McGhee has assumed many roles. She has served as director of the AHEC Family Medical Center and coordinated the pediatrics, community medicine and behavioral sciences curriculum. She has facilitated the Resident Support Group and developed Individual Educational Programs for PGY1 residents to promote attainment of required competencies.

Dr. McGhee is described by a colleague as an “avid supporter of the less fortunate.” She has served as medical director for the Washington County HIV Clinic, the first such clinic in the state, for almost 20 years. She also served as president of the Arkansas Academy of Family Physicians and been a member of both the Arkansas State Medical Society and the Arkansas State Board of Health. Dr. McGhee truly exemplifies the qualities of a master teacher through her example. As one of the residents said when describing his experience during the Community Medicine rotation, “my eyes were opened to the plight of the areas underserved and my potential position to champion their cause.” Dr. McGhee was also recognized as an Eagle Award recipient during Washington Regional Foundation’s Gala 2011 for outstanding contributions to the improvement of health care in Northwest Arkansas, and she was reappointed by Gov. Beebe to the Arkansas Minority Health Commission. In addition to the AHEC award, Dr. McGhee will also be recognized as a recipient of the 2011 Chancellor’s Teaching Award.

Phenomenal Woman

Katherine Irish-Clardy, MD was selected as a 2011 Phenomenal Woman by UAMS. Irish-Clardy, the chief medical officer at Sparks Health System in Fort Smith, is one of only 29 women statewide receiving this distinction as a part of the school’s annual Women’s History Month celebration. A full-time faculty member of the UAMS AHEC West in Fort Smith, Irish Clardy practices both general medicine and obstetrics to provide care for people of all ages. Irish-Clardy also serves as the chief of Quality Improvement and Patient-Centered Medical Home Coordinator for the UAMS Area Health Education Center in Fort Smith. Raised in Costa Rica, Irish-Clardy moved to the United States for her last year of high school and received her undergraduate degree from Russell Sage College in Troy, N.Y. She returned to Costa Rica to obtain her doctorate of medicine from the University of Costa Rica Medical School.

Award recipients were nominated by UAMS employees, who were asked to write a one-page essay describing why a co-worker is phenomenal. Those making nominations were asked to consider women who made a significant contribution to UAMS, her family or community; or overcame adversity; or demonstrated UAMS core values of integrity, respect, teamwork, creativity or excellence.
Division of Research and Practice Improvement

Robert D. Price, Ph.D., Director

AHEC Research:
The AHEC system has a five year plan for research development, with the Division of Research and Practice Improvement funding research activities across the AHECs. Faculty in all the AHECs have responded enthusiastically and are moving forward in new projects including: Arkansas Healthy Body Plan, MERIT III, Depression among African American Males, Vitamin D & Hypertension in Pregnancy, Hypertension Control among Adult Patients in the AHECs, Health Literacy and Pregnancy, Cadmium, The Effectiveness of Diabetes Self-Management Education Program in South Arkansas, Can a PCP improve adherence to medicine in patients with HTN. The AHEC Pilot Research Program provides funding for projects that might be replicated at other Centers to improve the AHEC System as a whole.

The AHEC research mission correlates closely with the UAMS Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) initiatives, with the AHEC system serving an integral role in this $20 million dollar research endeavor. Dr. Price also serves as Director of Community Engagement for the UAMS CTSA project, which promotes and supports AHEC faculty translational research efforts. The Community Engagement program managers are Marcia Byers, Zuzana Gubrij, and Todd Moore.

The UAMS Center for Clinical and Translational Research (CCTR) Community Engagement Component is improving the health of Arkansans with our stakeholder communities (community, health practice and institution) by: 1) enhancing partnerships, 2) improving research capacity, and 3) increasing dissemination of research. New partnerships have developed with the Chronic Disease Coordinating Council and Arkansas Community Foundation (ARCF). We strive to find overlapping goals with partners and have assisted in developing 30 community engagement collaborations, 10 of which are in process of conducting projects on topics such as hypertension, diabetes, health literacy, and smoking cessation.

Quality Improvement:
All AHECs have upgraded to Centricity 9.5 and are becoming virtualized clinics. Upgrading to Centricity will help them move one step closer to meeting guidelines for Meaningful Use as well as Patient Centered Medical Home. Pilots have begun at the AHECs, and all Directors and staff are working vigorously to implement ePrescribing, CareManager, and Patient Portal/Secure Messaging.

EMR:
All AHECs have recently upgraded Electronic Medical Record (EMR) technology to CPS 9.5 and have decided to standardize forms through the use of the CCC form to provide a data infrastructure for translational research, improve quality of care for patients with chronic illness, and improve implementation of evidence-based preventive interventions.

PCMH:
Implementation and evaluation of the Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) involves production of standard quality improvement reports, including quarterly clinical outcome reports for specific chronic disease and prevention outcomes. AHEC PCMH Coordinating Committees and work groups have been established at each AHEC to work with Dr. Price and staff.
The ePrescribing pilot in Jonesboro under excellent management of Director Ron Cole and staff is in process with the pre-implementation checklist, with all clinics to be fully implemented by late summer. eRx enables a prescriber to electronically send an error-free and understandable prescription directly to a pharmacy from the point-of-care, which is important in improving patient care.

CareManager, a patient registry system for chronic disease, is being piloted in AHEC South Central and AHEC West by implementing diabetes as the first of ten modules. Directors Don Heard and Eddie Maples and staff have been working hard to ensure smooth execution. Training from Kyrptiq is underway. This new QI model will provide standardized reports across the AHEC system.

A Patient Portal/Secure Messaging pilot has begun in El Dorado under management of Dr. Michael Fitts and staff, with a projected go live date of August 11th, 2011. The Patient Portal will enable online health services and education for patients, including patient enrollment, pre-visit or other health forms, and e-visits. These online services will enable consumer-centered care by improving information accessibility and streamlining workflow.

Wade Offutt, Project Manager, has been working closely with all the AHECs to make this process seamless and productive, with close oversight by a steering committee, chaired by Dr. Mark Mengel.

**Academic Fellowship:**

Our AHEC Academic Fellowship, currently in its second year, is a two-year fellowship designed for physicians, PharmDs and those with doctorate degrees who are at least 50% time with an AHEC. The program combines quality improvement and translational research with faculty development and graduate courses in the UAMS College of Public Health. The program allows the fellow to continue regular clinical work at home while supporting dedicated time to the fellowship. Current fellows are Dr. Larisa Kachowsi and Dr. Philipp Narciso.

**Practice Based Research Network:**

The Division of Research and Practice Improvement has revitalized the Arkansas Practice Based Research Network (APBRN), formerly known as OzarkNet. The network’s mission is to improve patient care in family medicine settings by translating clinical research into practice settings and assisting these sites in carrying out clinical studies.

**Meaningful Use:**

The Division is also working with the AHECs to integrate Meaningful Use Requirements. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will be providing a reimbursement incentive for physician and hospital providers who become “meaningful users” of an electronic health record (EHR) beginning in 2011. By 2015, providers are expected to be actively utilizing an EHR in compliance with the “meaningful use” definition or be subject to financial penalties under Medicare.
Pre-Health Professions Recruitment

Our Pre-Health Professions Recruiters are doing an exceptional job traveling their regions, expanding programs to encourage more students across the state to become Arkansas’ health professionals of tomorrow. This year, the Recruiters reached over 41,000 rural students statewide through more than 460 health careers presentations and events, in addition to our signature programs described below.

Community Health Applied in Medical Public Service (CHAMPS)

In Summer 2010, 78 students participated in a CHAMPS program in one of 6 rural communities. This week-long program provides hands-on experiences in health careers, health education, and community service for students entering grades 8, 9, and 10, with 59% coming from small towns.

Medical Application of Science for Health (M*A*S*H)

In 2010, 361 high school students participated in a M*A*S*H program. Every summer, hundreds of high school students across Arkansas don surgical scrubs and spend time with medicine, nursing, pharmacy, and allied health professionals at UAMS, AHECs and community hospitals. During this two-week program for students entering their junior or senior year of high school, participants are certified in First Aid, CPR, and learn the importance of healthy lifestyle habits. They also learn to identify various health care disciplines, what they do, how they interact, and how anatomy, biology, pharmacology, and physiology are employed in “real life” practice. M*A*S*H programs are sponsored by the Arkansas Medical MENTOR Partnership, a collaboration of Arkansas Farm Bureau, UAMS Regional Programs, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Baptist Health Systems, and the Arkansas Department of Health Office of Oral Health. M*A*S*H and CHAMPS are often directed by UAMS medical students.

Club Scrub, Mentoring, Shadowing, and Pre-Med Support

Students from junior high through college age can participate in a variety of other programs or arrange individual mentor/shadow experiences through any of the AHECs. College/Pre-Med students can also receive support applying for medical school, including mock interviews and MCAT preparation. This year, 535 high school and college students participated in some aspect of these opportunities through an AHEC.

Arkansas Health Careers Website

ArkansasHealthCareers.com is an ongoing website project intended to maximize the number of students in primary grades through college that are informed about, choose to prepare for, and successfully enter health professions training programs. The website is geared toward young students and utilizes the latest in Social Media and Web 2.0 technologies and serves as a marketing tool for the AHEC Pre-Health Recruiters to publicize educational offerings, financial assistance and career opportunities in rural Arkansas. The Health Careers Exploration Module in the For Students section provides a snapshot of various health careers, detailing the education required by each career, as well as well suited personality traits and typical daily tasks. The site also contains videos and articles highlighting healthcare professionals around the state. According to Google Analytics, the website received almost 3,000 visits, with 10,500 pages viewed in FY2011.
**AHEC Outreach Initiatives**

The new Outreach Directors at each of the AHECs have had a very busy year conducting school health, diabetes education, prescription assistance, and community health screenings, among many other activities. Arkansas continues to rank near the bottom nationally in overall health status, with chronic disease and mortality rates for diabetes, heart disease, cancer, stroke, respiratory disease, and injuries higher in rural areas than in other parts of the state and the nation. These programs focus on key areas considered critical to improving both short- and long-term health outcomes of Arkansans: Teaching the importance of healthy lifestyles to children to prevent onset of unhealthy behaviors; earlier identification of many common health risks and problems through screenings; increased education and support for chronic disease patients, and assistance with purchasing medications to help improve compliance and reduce complications.

Educating and empowering Arkansans to make healthy lifestyle choices and increase the ability of individuals with chronic diseases to provide better self-management are some of the most important and cost effective investments that can be made to improve health outcomes.

**New Medical Student Initiatives**

In an effort to increase the number of students entering family medicine, especially in underserved areas, AHEC has joined with the UAMS Department of Family and Preventive Medicine (DFPM) to implement comprehensive curricular activities to encourage and support such decisions throughout medical school. A federal grant awarded in September 2010 is funding: 1) changes to the AHEC preceptorship program for first-year medical students, 2) creation of a learning community for first and second year students that includes family medicine mentorships, 3) revision of the required family medicine junior medical student clerkship curriculum, and 4) a family medicine marketing campaign. For summer 2011, a new standardized curriculum was added to the 4-week family medicine preceptorship, and a new 8-week service learning preceptorship was piloted in Monticello, Springdale, Heber Springs, and Batesville to allow more in-depth understanding of rural practice and care of the underserved.

Plans are underway for a Community Practice Learning Collaborative for first year medical students that will pair students with family physician mentor role models and offer monthly sessions throughout the school year to discuss issues pertinent to primary care and rural practice. A complete revision of the family medicine clerkship curriculum was finalized by AHEC and DFPM Clerkship Directors, and this standardized curriculum will be implemented across all DFPM and AHEC settings in 2011-2012. Lastly, communication and marketing strategies that promote the importance of family medicine and the need for family physicians in Arkansas will emphasize the satisfaction that accompanies the practice of family medicine; dispel rumors and myths about the specialty, and highlight successful Arkansas practices. A new website: [http://isthisyourseat.com](http://isthisyourseat.com) and a presence on various social media outlets will serve as a means of getting messages to students.
Area Health Education Centers 2011 Annual Report

**Family Medicine Residency Programs**

AHEC residencies help retain UAMS College of Medicine Graduates in Arkansas, ultimately improving the supply and distribution of family physicians throughout the state. The six Arkansas AHEC Family Medicine Residency programs have trained fully half of all family physicians now practicing in Arkansas’ small towns. However, the 2007 Health Workforce Study conducted by the Center for Rural Health estimated a need for more than 900 additional family physicians statewide. To continue to meet this need, four of the AHEC residencies applied for and were awarded HRSA Primary Care Residency Expansion (PCRE) Grants in 2010. As a result of this grant funding, 30 new resident positions will be added over five years; Jonesboro and Pine Bluff will accept two additional residents for 2011-12 and El Dorado and Fayetteville each will add one.

During 2010-11, AHEC Residencies provided training for 142 Family Medicine residents, with 40 graduates completing a 3-year AHEC residency to become board eligible in Family Medicine. Of the 2011 AHEC Family Medicine Residency Graduates, 65% (26/40) remained in Arkansas to practice, and 38% (10/26) are practicing in small towns of <15,000 population.

As of July 1, 2011, the AHECs will have a total of 148 residents in training, including 50 first-year residency positions. Combined with 6 positions at the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine program in Little Rock, a total of 56 first-year slots are now available statewide.

For 2010-11, 45% of the graduating medical class chose to pursue residency training in a primary care specialty, defined as Family Medicine, Pediatrics, General Internal Medicine, Med/Peds, and OB/Gyn. Of the 26 students who chose family medicine, 17 (65%) matched with AHEC residency programs in Arkansas.

**Ten-Year Totals 2001-2011**

AHEC Family Medicine Residency Graduates:

- 70% (282/403) remained in Arkansas to practice
- 44% (123/282) chose to practice in small towns of <15,000
The map at left shows locations of AHEC-trained family physicians across the state, and below is a list of counties and communities where they practice.

665 AHEC-trained family physicians currently practice in 120 Arkansas communities, including 67 of the state’s 75 counties*

*Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) and/or Community Health Center (CHC)
Rural Training Emphasis

All AHECs offer elective rotations at rural clinical sites to prepare residents for and encourage practice in rural and medically underserved areas. Medical Students who participate in the Rural Loan Scholarship program are required to perform a Family Medicine Preceptorship through an AHEC, and complete a portion of their Junior Clerkship in a rural community. They also complete at least one of their required senior rotations (Acting Internship or Primary Care Selective) at an AHEC. In the class of 2010, 10 students had Community Match Program/Rural Loan and Scholarship Program commitments; 6 are entering Family Medicine residencies, and 5 of those are in AHECs.

AHEC-sponsored training took place in 40 counties / 52 different communities

ARKANSAS
Stuttgart
ASHLEY
Crossett
BAXTER
Mountain Home
BENTON
Gentry
Lowell
Roger
Siloam Springs
CHICOT
Lake Village
CLARK
Arkadelphia
CLEBURNE
Heber Springs
CLEVELAND
*Rison
COLUMBIA
* Magnolia
CONWAY
Morrilton
CRAIGHEAD
Jonesboro
CRAWFORD
Alma
CRITTENDEN
West Memphis
CROSS
Wynne
DREW
* Monticello
FAULKNER
Conway
GARLAND
Hot Springs
GREENE
Paragould
HEMPSTEAD
* Hope
HOT SPRING
Malvern
HOWARD
Nashville
INDEPENDENCE
Batesville
JEFFERSON
Pine Bluff
White Hall
JOHNSON
Clarksville
LAWRENCE
* Walnut Ridge
LINCOLN
* Star City
LONOKE
Cabot
MADISON
* Huntsville
MILLER
Texarkana
OUACHITA
Camden
PHILLIPS
* Helena/West
POINDEXTER
* Helena
PULASKI
Little Rock
SAINT FRANCIS
Forrest City
SALINE
Benton
BRYANT
SEBASTIAN
Fort Smith
GREENWOOD
STONE
* Mountain View
UNION
El Dorado
SMACKOVER
VAN BUREN
* Clinton
WASHINGTON
Farmington
FAYETTEVILLE
Johnson
WHITE
Searcy

Family Medicine Interest Group

AHEC sponsors the UAMS Family Medicine Interest Group (FMIG) in partnership with the UAMS Department of Family and Preventive Medicine and Arkansas Academy of Family Physicians. Meetings highlight family physicians and skill-based workshops for medical students. This year, FMIG members also presented the Tar Wars tobacco prevention program to 150 elementary students in central Arkansas.
Medical Student Education

“My preceptor and partner were amazing. They really took the time to teach me, quiz me, and further my learning. They allowed me to be very hands on, learning to perform incisions, tie sutures, and give an actual patient stitches. I was also able to perform several complete physicals including pap smears. My preceptor has even agreed to continue to be my mentor…”

Jennifer Bentley, Medical Student

Family Medicine Preceptorships

During Summer 2010, 62 medical students performed Family Medicine Preceptorships, involving 2-4 week elective opportunities for entering second- and third-year medical students to work with family physicians in communities across Arkansas. A total of 18 medical students served as Assistant Directors for a M*A*S*H or CHAMPS program.

Junior Clerkships in Family Medicine

In 2010-11, 81% (117/144) of the junior class performed family medicine clerkships in the AHECs. This mandatory experience, at a time when students are beginning to make decisions regarding specialty and practice location, is the most effective recruitment tool to date for the AHECs.

The JRMC Preceptorship in Pine Bluff hosted 2 students.

Senior Electives/Selectives

In 2010-11, 62% (88/142) of the senior class completed rotations in the AHECs. The senior year of medical school allows students to design a program of study to supplement previous training and meet personal career goals. Acting Internships are 4-week required rotations that focus on inpatient clinical skills and instill confidence in preparation for the first year of residency. The Senior Selective in Primary Care is a 4-week rotation required of all senior students. Electives in all primary care specialties and most medical sub-specialties can also be taken in the AHECs.

This year, 33 out-of-state medical students performed rotations at Arkansas AHECs.

Rural Medicine Student Leadership Association (RMSLA)

The UAMS Rural Medicine Student Leadership Association (RMSLA) is sponsored by the AHEC Program and the Arkansas Farm Bureau. The purpose of the organization is to support medical students interested in rural practice and to provide a means to discuss issues of importance to future rural physicians. In addition to regular meetings conducted throughout the school year, RMSLA sponsored a fair for Critical Access and other small hospitals in the state. Students met with hospital representatives to learn about the role these hospitals play in providing care for individuals in rural areas. RMSLA students also served as judges for the 2011 Arkansas State Science and Engineering Fair held at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway.
Pharmacy Education

During the 2010-11 academic year AHEC clinical pharmacists served as preceptors for 54 senior pharmacy students. The AHEC sites continue to be integral for the experiential training of these students in a primary care environment. Students are exposed on a daily basis to the many and varied responsibilities of these key faculty members, including the education of medical residents, attending physicians, and medical students.

This year, AHEC pharmacy faculty members provided lectures for the third-year pharmacy Therapeutics course, which will have an expanded audience on the northwest campus. Scholarly activity included publications in state journals, directing quality improvement grants, and contributing to monthly journal club discussions. Participation on committees within the Colleges of Pharmacy, Medicine and AHEC represent further service to the UAMS campus.

AHEC pharmacists had a statewide presence in continuing education programs for health care professionals through lectures to organizations such as the Arkansas Association of Hospital Pharmacists, Arkansas Pharmacists Association, and Arkansas Academy of Family Physicians. Nationally, these faculty members served as item writers for the pharmacy board certification exam and for specialty certification in ambulatory care. Presentations were made at the annual STFM Conference on Practice Improvement, Association of Health-System Pharmacists, and several regional meetings.

AHEC pharmacists continue to have a vital role in drug therapy education and in direct patient care for diseases such as asthma and diabetes. They are important resources within their medical communities for all facets of drug information. Their roles will continue to evolve as e-prescribing and disease state monitoring expand within primary care.

“All of our PharmD faculty have a wonderful fund of knowledge. They are incredible teachers.”

AHEC NW Family Medicine Resident

http://www.uams.edu/AHEC
Nursing Education

In 2010-11, 355 nursing students from various educational institutions, ranging from the LPN to the doctorate level, participated in educational experiences at the AHECs, in addition to a growing number of nursing assistants and aides. Directors of Nursing Education at the AHECs assist nursing students in rural areas with academic advising, registration, computer and interactive video access, medical library access, preceptor assignments, and course assistance.

UAMS College of Nursing

In 2010-11, 70 students were enrolled in UAMS Nursing outreach programs in El Dorado, Fayetteville, Fort Smith, Helena, and Texarkana. Another 60 students were enrolled at the Off-campus BSN program based at UACCH in Hope.

Through UAMS College of Nursing faculty in the AHECs, rural nurses can earn credits toward the following UAMS degree programs via interactive video and the Internet:

- Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN Completion, RN to Articulated BSN/MNSc, Off-campus BSN program at UACCH in Hope)
- Master of Nursing Science (Nurse Practitioner, Nursing Administration, or Nurse Educator)
- Master of Nursing Science (Bridge Process for RNs with BS degree in non-nursing field)
- Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing (Courses offered on Little Rock campus or via Internet)

Other Nursing and Nursing Assistant Programs

Students from other institutions rotating through the AHECs included:

- 52 LPNs
- 99 RNs
- 11 NP/APNs
- 123 Nursing Assistants/Home Health Aides

Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) training classes are being offered through AHEC North Central, in cooperation with White River Medical Center. This new program is meeting an immediate workforce need while also serving as an entry point into the healthcare arena for area residents.
Health Related Professions Education

AHECs offer accredited programs or clinical practicum in several health-related professions, jointly support other programs, and offer continuing education to area practitioners. AHEC faculty teach CPR, ACLS, PALS, and HeartSaver training. This year, 129 students were trained through these programs.

Radiologic Technology
UAMS affiliated Radiologic Technology students may enter an AHEC program (Fayetteville, Texarkana) after acquiring college or university credits. It then takes 2 years to complete the professional curriculum, including clinical rotations through the AHECs, hospitals, and other facilities. Graduates earn an Associate of Science (AS) in Radiologic Technology, or a Bachelor of Science (BS), with extra hours. Those who pass certification of the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists become Registered Technologists. For more information, see: http://www.uams.edu/chrp/rad-tech.

Diagnostic Medical Sonography
Diagnostic Medical Sonography classes for AS and BS degrees are offered (Texarkana, Fayetteville) via interactive video from UAMS with clinical rotations through local hospitals and clinics. Graduates are eligible to take the national certification examinations administered by the American Registry of Diagnostic Sonographers. For information, see: http://www.uams.edu/chrp/dms.

Health Information Management
Students can pursue an AS degree in Medical Records Technology from the UAMS Department of Health Information Management (Texarkana, El Dorado) by completing credit courses via compressed video, videotapes, and the Internet. An elective cancer registry track is also available. See www.uams.edu/chrp/him.

Respiratory Care
Students enter the UAMS affiliated Respiratory Care BS degree program (Texarkana, Batesville) after 2 years of prerequisites, and can take all 3 National Board for Respiratory Care exams prior to graduation, to become Registered Respiratory Therapists (RRT). Interactive Video presentations and a 3-year BS option are offered to students wishing to enroll in professional coursework while completing prerequisites. A Respiratory Care AS degree is also offered, with the professional component provided through a consortium agreement with ASU-Mountain Home. Other programs allow AS degree RRTs to earn a BS in Cardio-Respiratory Care, through Internet course work. Neonatal Resuscitation (NRP) is also taught in Texarkana. See http://www.uams.edu/chrp/res.

Medical Technology
Through this program (Fayetteville, Texarkana) students can complete 2 years of college prerequisites, and enter UAMS for junior and senior courses. Upon completion of clinical internships at AHEC and hospital laboratories, graduates receive a BS degree. A Medical Technology fast track (12-month) accelerated program is also available for students with a bachelor’s degree in a science related field; students graduate with a second bachelor’s degree in Medical Technology. See http://www.uams.edu/chrp/medtech.

Nuclear Medicine
Individuals can apply to the UAMS Nuclear Medicine Imaging Science program and complete most clinical education at sites located in their respective AHEC areas (Jonesboro, Fayetteville, and Texarkana). The professional curriculum is provided by instructors at UAMS via the Internet. Upon successful completion of pre-professional and professional curricula, UAMS awards a BS degree in Nuclear Medicine Imaging Science, with graduates eligible to take the national board exam in Nuclear Medicine Technology. See http://www.uams.edu/chrp/nuc_med/default.asp.

Dental Hygiene
AHEC North Central, the UAMS College of Health Related Professions, ASU Mountain Home, and Mountain Home Christian Clinic have collaborated to implement a new Dental Hygiene Program in Mountain Home. This exemplifies AHEC at its best, combining the academic medical center, a community college, and a faith-based service agency to train health professionals while providing community service. See http://www.uams.edu/chrp/dentalhygiene.
Learning Resource Centers

AHEC Learning Resource Centers serve as regional medical and health professional information specialists in their regions. This year, **AHEC Libraries served 62,242 patrons**.

Close interaction with the UAMS Library greatly enhances AHEC resources and services. Most UAMS Library electronic full text resources can now be accessed off campus through the AHECs and inter-library requests can move from library to desktop within minutes.

AHEC Librarians teach group and one-on-one instruction in accessing the Internet, Pub Med and resources from the UAMS Library, and promote DynaMed, which is an electronic point-of-care reference tool supporting evidence-based medicine that is updated daily for physicians and health professionals. AHEC Southwest conducted a survey of all Arkansas professionals using DynaMed, and added a program called Exam Master to help residents prepare for board exams.

Outreach is a primary mission and the librarians regularly participate in local health fairs. Several facilitate distance learning classes by proctoring exams for UAMS students via Web-CT in nursing and allied health programs. The AHEC Northeast and Southwest Libraries are involved with the Reach Out and Read program, this year distributing more than 4,700 books during well child visits. The Delta AHEC Library hosted the Phillips County Health Unit for a two-week Innovative Readiness Training, where the military provided free medical, dental, and optometry care to more than 1,500 community members.

The decision has been made to discontinue a large percentage of print journal collections and, following the national trend, transition to mostly electronic journals. This change will be carefully monitored to track user participation and satisfaction.

Close interaction with the UAMS Library greatly enhances AHEC resources and services. Most UAMS Library electronic full text resources can now be accessed off campus through the AHECs. The Librarians use a variety of methods for interlibrary requests. Requests can now move from library to desktop in hours or even minutes. Redesigned web pages and other marketing tools are improving visibility and promotion of AHEC library services.
Continuing Education

Keeping up with rapidly changing medical research, technology, trends, and procedures is a challenge for all health care professionals, but particularly for those practicing in rural areas. It is difficult for many rural providers to attend distant educational programs that require travel and time away from the office.

To address this need, the AHECs offer recurring continuing education for health professionals statewide through onsite and online programs, as well as a variety of offerings available through UAMS and the Center for Rural Health via the statewide interactive video network.

http://ruralhealth.uams.edu/CME
Public Service

AHEC faculty and residents are very active in their communities, serving on many national, state, and local advisory boards and committees. AHECs also provide a vast array of health care services and resources, some of which are listed below.

Physical exams and health services:
- Boy and Girl Scouts
- Church Health Clinics
- EPSDT/HIPPY
- Forensic Child Abuse/Sexual Assault Exams
- Medical Mission Trips
- Nursing Homes
- Pre-school/Immunization updates
- School Athletics
- Special Olympics
- Summer Camps
- Veterans CBOC

Specialty clinics:
- Asthma/COPD
- Pediatric Cardiology
- Diabetes
- GI/Colonoscopy/EGD
- HIV/AIDS
- High Risk Obstetrics
- Infectious Diseases
- Minor Surgery
- Telemed Pacemaker

Other clinics & counseling:
- Anticoagulation
- Childhood Obesity
- Colposcopy
- Developmentally Delayed
- Hyperlipidemia
- Pediatric Cardiology
- Prescription Assistance
- Prenatal Care
- Tobacco Cessation
- Tubal Ligation
- Vasectomies
- Weight Control

Support Groups:
- Alzheimer’s
- Arthritis
- Breast Cancer
- Caregivers
- Diabetes
- Heart Club
- Huntington’s Disease
- Lupus
- Sickle Cell Anemia

Health screenings:
- Asthma
- Blood Pressure/Sugar
- Breast/Cervical Cancer
- Cholesterol
- Colon-rectal Cancer
- Depression
- Hearing/Vision
- Lung Disease
- Prostate Cancer
- Scoliosis
- Skin Cancer

Community Education & Service:
- Aging Successfully
- Blood Drives
- Breast Self-Exam
- Career Days
- Child Safety/Abuse
- CLASSICS
- CPR Instruction
- Diabetes Management
- Drug/Alcohol Abuse
- Farm Safety
- Go Red for Women
- Growth & Development
- Health Fairs
- Heart Health
- Herbal Products
- Hormone Replacement
- Hypertension/Stroke
- Komen Race for the Cure
- Medical Reserve Corps
- Migraine Headaches
- Nutrition & Fitness
- Osteoporosis
- Parenting
- Parkinson’s Disease
- Pharmacy updates
- Poison Prevention
- Reach Out & Read
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Stress Management
- Teen Pregnancy Prevention
- Tobacco Prevention

Medical Interpreting

This year, 28 Medical Interpreting students received training through the AHEC program
http://ruralhealth.uams.edu/MedicalInterpreterProgram
Publications, Research & Presentations

Arkansas AHEC faculty and staff are known and respected nationally in many areas of expertise. A sampling of their publications and presentations from this year is listed here.


The Family Physicians Inquiries Network (FPIN) is an effort to increase the number and improve the quality of the scholarly activities of Family Medicine faculty and residents. The following residents and faculty were published this year in the FPIN’s Evidence-Based Practice:

Dabu DV, Carroll P. Is platelet function testing important in patients taking aspirin and/or clopidogrel after a coronary event? 2010; 13(7).


Merritt E, Over DR. How are central causes of vertigo distinguished from peripheral causes of vertigo? 2011; 14(1):11.

Mohiuddin M, Over DR. For stenosis of a single coronary artery, is stenting more effective than medical management? 2011; 14(5):10.

Narciso PC, Havard K. What is the value of a clinical impression of costochondritis on evaluation of chest pain? 2011; 14(1).

Over DR, Kirksey K. For adults, what are the risks for recurrent seizures if you stop seizure meds after a prolonged seizure-free period? 2011;14(9):9-10.

Over DR Banerjee A. What is the most common pattern of hearing loss associated with acoustic neuroma? 2011;14(8):6.


Pasarica M, Narciso PC. How safe and effective is finasteride for hair loss in post-menopausal women? 2011; 14(5).

Weaver MC, Narciso PC. Is amnioinfusion beneficial for babies following preterm premature rupture of membranes? 2010; 13(9).
Division of Research and Practice Improvement Projects

Delta - “Community Views of Depressed African American Males in Northeast Arkansas” Purpose: Identifying the role faith based organizations play in depression among African American males to subsequently develop a faith based intervention for depression.

Northeast - “Medication Reconciliation In Transitions: The MERIT Program” Purpose: Determining the status of referral completion in the UAMS Family Medicine Clinic-Jonesboro.

South - “Vitamin D & Hypertension in Pregnancy” Purpose: Establishing a link between the development of gestational hypertension and Vitamin D levels.

South Central - “Health Literacy and Pregnancy: Understanding a measure of predictors of, and experiences related to health literacy in pregnant women in an AHEC setting” Purpose: Investigating the relationship between pregnancy risk behaviors and health literacy scores on the HLSI-SF in a sample of pregnant women.

Southwest, Central - “Arkansas Healthy Body Plan” Purpose: Exploring the perceptions of the community health environment in Southwest Arkansas and their impact on health behavior.

West, South Central, Northeast - “Hypertension control among adult patients in Arkansas Area Health Education Centers” Purpose: Comparing hypertension control rates in the AHECs to that of state and national control rates.

South - “Cadmium Exposure in Arkansas Pediatric Patients” Purpose: Conducting the first systematic survey of pediatric blood and urine levels of cadmium.

AHEC Fellowship Research

South - “The Effectiveness of Diabetes Self-Management Education Program in South Arkansas” Purpose: Determining: the diabetic knowledge of participants in the diabetic education program towards self-management, the participants knowledge on diabetes mellitus, if the participants have achieved their goals on diet and life-style changes and the effect of a diabetes support group in maintaining long-term diabetic self-management.

South Central - “Can active participation of health care providers improve patients’ adherence with hypertension medicine?” Purpose: Improving patients’ adherence with HTN medicine through more active involvement of care providers, by building of a team consisting of patient and his/her PCP based on mutual trust.

National Presentations

Mengel MB, Rudeen K. (Central) Updates from the FASD/Alcohol Use Literature. Presented at the MRFASTC Booster Session, St. Louis, Missouri, March 24, 2011.


Frank T. (Northeast) New Drugs in Primary Care 2011; Annual Meeting; American Society of Health Systems Pharmacists; Denver, CO; June 14, 2011.

Frank T. New Drugs 2011; Annual Meeting; American Drug Utilization Review Society; Scottsdale, AZ; Feb 26, 2011.
AHEC Program Future Priorities

Work has already begun on the following priorities, and these areas will continue to be our focus over the next 3-5 years:

- Establish a Patient-Centered Medical Home in each AHEC center with a Family Medicine Residency Program, achieving Level 1 NCQA by 2014.
- Further develop the UAMS Center for Rural Health.
- Increase the number of medical students selecting Family Medicine and other primary care disciplines as a career choice upon graduation and choosing to select one of our AHEC Family Medicine Residency Programs for their post-graduate training.
- Expand Nurse Practitioner Training and Support.
- Expand existing Family Medicine Residency Programs where resources allow.
- Establish new Family Medicine Residency Programs with rural hospitals not subject to the cap on number of residency slots funded by Medicare.
- Further develop our community outreach and pre-health professions recruitment programs.
- Increase the number of translational research projects in which AHECs and our practice-based research network participate.
Financial Profile

Monies allocated by the State in FY 2011 remained consistent. We continue to develop the Patient-Centered Medical Home concept at our Family Medicine Clinics by implementing technology associated with this new care delivery model. Also, the pre-health profession recruiting and community outreach programs have been enhanced for the second year with the hiring of key personnel to put in action the objectives associated with these initiatives.

Expenditures for Student and Resident Education grew, with emphasis on health careers recruitment and rural training. Due to the general economic climate, we again anticipate no new State Funds for FY 2012. Other sources of funding continue to be well balanced, with the need for self-generated funds increasingly important.
Delta AHEC

Becky G. Hall, EdD, Director

More than 6,000 people received care through Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) conducted in Wynne, Marianna, Helena, McGehee, and Eudora in June 2011, in partnership with the Army, Navy, and Air Force reserves and Delta Regional Authority. Dental, optometry, primary health care, health education, and prescription assistance were provided, as well as veterinarian services in Helena. MASH students had opportunity to shadow.

Dr. Becky Hall received the Humanitarian Award in recognition for her dedication and lasting contributions to the Arkansas Delta IRT Medical Mission by the 4010th United States Army Hospital in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Delta AHEC sites (Helena, West Memphis, and Lake Village) continue to provide health education in structured programs related to: infant car seat safety, childbirth, breastfeeding education, doula services, health education in schools K-12, including faculty and staff, awareness and prevention of gang violence/risky behaviors, fitness programs for all ages, diabetes education, nutrition education including cooking classes and community gardens, prescription assistance programs, health fairs with free screenings for BP, BMI, HIV, and diabetes. Sites also sponsored “Go Red for Women” and teams in the “Komen Race for the Cure”. Delta AHEC North educators provided a breastfeeding lecture series through UAMS Angels Program for Arkansas health providers. The Fitness Center in Helena provides services to 2950 active members.

The Diabetes Education Clinic has 2 ADA recognized education multisites, AHEC-NC and AHEC-So AR. Applications are pending for AHEC SW and AHEC WE.

Two RN to BSN students and one Family Psych-Mental Health NP student completed their UAMS College of Nursing programs. We had 4 first-year medical students complete family medicine preceptorships in Helena and Forrest City, and 1 senior medical student completed a Senior Selective. MASH, CHAMPS, Doctors of Tomorrow Club, and Club Scrub programs continue to encourage students to enter a health care career.

Grants were received from the Charles A. Frueauff Foundation, the Blue and You Foundation, the Mid Delta Community Consortium Delta States, the Arkansas Department of Health, the Arkansas Coalition for Obesity Prevention, the March of Dimes, the Walton Foundation, and the Office of Drug Abuse Prevention (ADAP).

Collaborative partners for programs include Delta Regional Authority, Helena Health Foundation, Arkansas Children’s Hospital, UAMS Angels Program, University of Arkansas Department of Agriculture, Arkansas Department of Health’s Hometown Health Coalition, and Phillips County Coalition 4 Prevention (C4P) Coalition.
AHEC North Central

Dennis F. Moore, Pharm D, Director

The North Central AHEC’s programs continue to mature and develop. We assisted the Independence County Hometown Wellness Coalition in obtaining a Growing Healthy Communities Grant, which was one of only five communities in the state awarded to target childhood obesity. Other small grants have been obtained to provide screenings that target Hispanics and other underserved groups.

The Pre-Health Professions recruiter made presentations in 26 schools reaching 1,728 students. One of our MASH programs grew from 2 to 15 participants, and Fulton County Hospital plans to begin a new MASH program next summer. A Facebook page was developed that ties interested students to the AHEC and our three local community colleges: UACCB, ASU Mountain Home, and Ozarka.

Six students are enrolled in the UACCB Respiratory Care program (2 graduated in May); eight enrolled in the ASU Mountain Home program (6 graduated in Dec). Two student teams from the ASU Mountain Home program competed in competition (Sputum Bowl) at the Arkansas Society of Respiratory Care annual meeting, finishing first and second out of the twelve teams competing. Tom Jones, program director, was invited to give the Dr. Fred Helmholz Education lecture in Vail, CO this year to the Summer Forum of the American Association for Respiratory Care to discuss our innovative partnerships.

The Dental Hygiene program developed among AHEC North Central, UAMS College of Health Related Professions, ASU Mountain Home and the Mountain Home Christian Clinic graduated its first class of five students this year. A Delta Dental grant allowed the program to add a digital Schick Panorex machine to the facilities at the Mountain Home Christian Clinic.

Our health educator, Amanda Harvey, MS, MCHES, is among the inaugural class of Master Certified Health Education Specialists across the nation. Outreach efforts touched 9,741 people throughout our region for health screenings, fluoride treatments, breast health presentations, and cooking clubs.

The Diabetes Self-Management Education program received its ADA certification this year. It has treated 57 patients to date, with outcomes including significant weight loss, reduction of A1C levels, and reduction (or elimination) of the need for medications. Many presentations and public service announcements have been made. The program actively supports the Five Star Network, which offers support groups for diabetics.

Another Medication Assistance Program office was established in the Fulton County Hospital, bringing to five the number of offices available to meet with clients. We have provided over 1000 prescriptions to 300 clients throughout the ten counties at a savings of $570,000.

One of our more successful partnerships has been with the White River Area Agency on Aging (WRAAA) and the White River Health System to train Home Care Aides and Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs). This year we trained 70 Home Care Aides, with most employed by the WRAAA.
AHEC Northeast was honored to receive a $1.5 million, five-year residency expansion grant from Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). This grant will support resident stipends and travel costs for two additional residents in each of the three years of training and will expand current resident numbers from an approved 18 training positions to 24. This represents a 30% increase in potential physician graduates from AHEC Northeast, which is needed to meet the future primary care needs of Northeast Arkansas. Effective July 1, 2011, we will begin training our first expanded class of eight residents.

In February 2011 AHEC Northeast hosted an exploratory meeting between UAMS and ASU to explore collaborative research opportunities and identify skills and resources that potentially could be shared between institutions. Currently one joint project has been developed with more expected in the future.

Medication Reconciliation in Transitions (MERIT) this year completed Phase 2, which focused on transition points of hospital discharge where medication error is most likely to occur, with the objective of providing medication reconciliation for these transition points and reducing potential risks to patients. Dr. Dosha Cummins was the research leader for Phase 2, with post project chart reviews revealing that 60% of those patients that kept their hospital follow-up visits received an updated medication profile. Dr. Mary Hartwig will be the research leader for Phase 3, which will analyze the referral process to gain understanding of those transition points and possible failures that expose patients to potential medication risks. MERIT II and III are funded by a Regional Programs Innovation Grant.

AHEC Northeast participated in an Arkansas Chronic Illness Collaborative (ACIC) sponsored by the Arkansas Health Department, with funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The initiative focused on chronic illnesses such as hypertension, diabetes and smoking cessation. Dr. Mary Hartwig served as project leader. Projects like this will serve AHEC Northeast well as we begin to manage patient populations by disease state by using disease registries as a part of the long term PCMH practice transformation.

Our pre-professional recruitment efforts continue to develop new partnerships that promote interest in young students for health careers in northeast Arkansas. Two new MASH programs were developed in partnership with Blytheville and Piggott, and a new CHAMPS program is planned for Paragould. This marks the second year AHEC N.E. has partnered with ASU in a four-week MCAT (Medical College Admissions Test) prep course for college students.

AHEC Northeast looks forward to the opportunities that the ever changing medical environment will offer and the possibilities that regional partnerships can provide in meeting the needs of fellow Arkansans. Program management, faculty, staff and residents will continue the pursuit of excellence in patient care and medical education.
AHEC Northwest

Robert R. Gullett, Jr, MD, Director

This has been a year of progress and challenges. The former Washington Regional Medical Center building, which we now occupy, has been transformed into UAMS Northwest and the AHEC Family Medical Center – Fayetteville. We are encouraging use of our clinic as a Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH). In May, our clinics were awarded a Quality Improvement Award from the Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care for our efforts in improving colorectal cancer screenings.

In June, 8 residents graduated. We welcome 10 new interns, for a total of 27 residents in July. Dr. Derrick Gray joined the residency as full-time faculty. Dr. F. Allan Martin stepped down as residency director in August 2010, but remains as faculty. Dr. Linda McGhee became interim residency director on August 16, 2010 and was subsequently promoted to residency director.

Pharmacy Educators, Drs. Eric Schneider, Jonell Hudson, and Lois Coulter developed a Post-Graduate Year-1 Pharmacy Practice Residency with the inaugural resident, Dr Christy Agee, joining us in July. Dr. Schneider will be leaving for a faculty position in Canada. We thank him for his dedication and leadership and wish him well.

Dr. Linda McGhee received an Eagle Award during Washington Regional Foundation’s Gala 2011 for her outstanding contributions to health care in Northwest Arkansas. She also won the AHEC Excellence in Teaching Award for 2011, was reappointed by Governor Beebe to the Arkansas Minority Health Commission, and serves as Chairman of the Physicians Health Committee at Washington Regional Medical Center.

Dr. Danny Proffitt is immediate Past President of the Arkansas Academy of Family Physicians. Dr. Ronald Brimberry was elected Vice Chief of Staff for Northwest Health Systems hospitals.

Dr. Joanna Thomas, Assistant Residency Director and faculty member for 18 years, recently resigned to accept a position as Regional Medical Director of the Northwest Region for Arkansas Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Her teaching and mentoring skills will be greatly missed.

Eleanor Hughes, MS, CHES became our Community Health Outreach Coordinator in January, and is devoting one day a week to education in our AHEC-NW Clinic on tobacco cessation, nutrition and exercise. Ana Sanchez, MA, Health Career Recruiter, oversaw CHAMPS, with 16 minority junior high students and M*A*S*H, with 20 high school students. We partnered with the Lincoln School District Wellness Center and AHEC-NW Harrison to provide education programs, health screenings and other services.

The 11th Annual Educator’s Institute was held in March with 486 attendees from 36 states and Canada; 340 students participated in workforce training; 1,656 health professionals received continuing education credits; 10,364 seniors participated in programs and services; 248 clients saved $937,000 through Prescription Drug Assistance; over 7,000 people participated in wellness classes and health screenings; 31 nursing students were enrolled in College of Nursing graduate courses; and 9 students in Radiologic Imaging Sciences.

Our Library assisted over 10,350 patrons. Librarian Elva Conditt is currently working with the clinic manager at Fayetteville Diagnostic Clinic to implement DynaMed.
AHEC South Arkansas

Michael Fitts, PsyD, Director

AHEC South Arkansas completed a busy year as the regional center for UAMS in El Dorado. Our Family Medicine Residency program completed the year with 17 residents; 5 graduated in June 2011, with one remaining as a new faculty member. This was a successful match year, and 6 new residents will be joining us in July 2011. A new HRSA Residency Expansion Grant will allow our Residency program to become a 6-6-6, for a total of 18 residents in the future. While our graduating physicians have an excellent board pass rate, the addition of the Challenger Program this year will further strengthen their preparation tools.

Our Family Medical Center and UAMS Faculty Clinic maintain a strong presence in the region, with our faculty and residents delivering 200 babies and providing over 17,000 patient encounters. The VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) ended the year with 1,798 veterans enrolled and 6,100 patient encounters. In addition, we hosted 15 junior medical students, 4 senior medical students, and 6 pharmacy students from UAMS. Our prescription assistance program helped several patients receive medications while saving over $60,000.

The Carroll Medical Library continues to be a strong asset in South Arkansas, with services provided to over 2,579 patrons. The medical library was awarded an Express Outreach Award Grant and was able to update professionals in our region on available services. Over 1,400 journals and books were circulated and 1000 information requests handled. Through the efforts of our Education Department, the Diabetes Center hosted 76 hours of self-management counseling for 135 patients. Nearly 380 physicians, nurses, and other healthcare providers attended continuing education programs for earned credits.

Our M*A*S*H Program exposed 12 students to various healthcare careers. Emphasis on training nurses through the distance learning program at UAMS continued, with 4 MNSc and 2 BSN students graduating this year.

Outreach efforts increased through our Pre-Health Recruiter and Community Outreach Coordinator. Health recruiting activities were presented to 2,400 students, with most targeting rural areas of our region. School based training for 1,800 K-6 students was conducted through Kids for Heath and Catch programs. Twelve community health screenings evaluated 663 participants, and 129 new mothers received training in motor vehicle safety, injury prevention, and safe sleep practices.

The Region 11 Prevention Resource Center (PRC) impacted our region through community coalition meetings, substance abuse prevention literature at health fairs, prescription drug media campaigns, and assisting PRIDE Youth Programs in schools and Boys & Girls Clubs. The PRC hosted several task force and Prevention Generalist educational programs.

AHEC South Arkansas’ technology department made major changes this year, with new servers virtualized, electronic health record system upgraded, and electronic prescribing added. Installation began on a patient portal, a care management system, and meaningful use reports. Our IT department is keeping pace with the changes required by our clinics to achieve patient centered medical home and meaningful use status.
Eddie Maples, RN, RRT, Director

This year AHEC Pine Bluff was officially renamed as UAMS AHEC South Central to more clearly describe our regional mission. Our two family medicine clinics are now known as UAMS Family Medical Center-Pine Bluff and UAMS Justiss-Lindsey Clinic.

The Pine Bluff VA Community Based Out-Patient Clinic (CBOC) has continued steady growth, now serving nearly 2,000 veterans as their Primary Care Medical Home. This year, we had a total of 28 residents in training; 9 completed the program and 5 will stay in Arkansas to practice. In July, 12 new PGY1s will join our program. Our Family Practice Inquiries Network (FPIN) has resulted in 6 articles published to date, with 4 more in preparation.

AHEC South Central provided educational opportunities for medical students from UAMS, Florida, Kentucky, and Tennessee. In Summer 2010, 17 UAMS medical students performed 4-week Family Medicine Preceptorships, and 2 junior medical students completed a 2-week Family Medicine/Peds/Surgery preceptorship. During 2010-11, 13 Senior UAMS Medical Students completed 19 rotations at the AHEC.

This fiscal year, the Family Practice Clinic and Justiss-Lindsey clinic served a combined total of over 24,400 clinic encounters, generating more than $4.9 million in charges and $3.3 million in collections for a collection ratio of 68%.

Pre-Health Professions Recruiter, LaSonya Shelby, provides presentations on health related careers at schools and colleges throughout our catchment area. She coordinated multiple “A Day in the Life” programs, as well as our first CHAMPS program with 22 participants, and our largest MASH program ever with 34 participants from 11 school districts in 5 counties.

M*A*S*H students focused on volunteerism and partnership with Jefferson Regional Medical Center (JRM C) Daycare. With emphasis on childhood obesity and increasing physical activity featuring an obstacle course, the 34 M*A*S*H students brainstormed exercise stations and healthy refreshments for 20 JRMC daycare youth.

AHEC South Central continues to coordinate continuing education for health care professionals in southeast Arkansas, offering 55 CE courses for 650 participants.

Outreach activities increased this year through the efforts of Kemi Talabi, with more than 22,600 outreach encounters, including health screenings, smoking cessation, diabetes education, life skills workshops, and health and fitness presentations. The prescription assistance program has increased enrollment by 50%, with 60 patients saving $250,000 to date.

Our newly formed AHEC South Central IT Services Department is providing network support and assistance for 12 private physician clinics, including upgrades of our Laboratory Information System and Centricity Practice Solutions (CPS). New virtualization technology will strengthen our attempt to gain Level II Patient Centered Medical Home status. We also coordinated installation of digital radiography equipment in five AHEC Family Medical Centers, with remote disaster data recovery servers now available in the event of hardware failure. Collaboration with SEARK College established an IT internship, which this year gave two interns hands on experience in Health Care IT, providing 3 hours college credit.
AHEC Southwest

Patrick Evans, MEd, RRT, RN, Director

UAMS AHEC Southwest enjoyed an exceptional year: educational programs are strong, clinics are meeting area needs, our financial footing is firm, and we received the Outstanding AHEC award. The eight allied health and nursing education programs on this campus, which are extensions of the UAMS Colleges of Health Related Professions and Nursing, saw 26 graduates, with most remaining in this area. Five students completed the phlebotomy course. Nurse practitioners (NP) in the Texarkana Community Clinic (TCC) and All for Kids Pediatric Clinic have become essential preceptors to UAMS NP students. The TCC established a dental partnership with CHRISTUS St. Michael Health System and a local dentist, with the dental clinic seeing TCC patients and ED referrals on Fridays.

The Family Medicine residency expanded to 24 residents, and 7 residents graduated in June. Dr. Allison Denson joined the All for Kids Pediatric Clinic faculty, and Edward Teng, M.D., joins our faculty in August.

The UAMS AHEC Southwest Cancer Registry coordinates the Commission on Cancer (CoC) Approved Cancer Programs for CHRISTUS St. Michael Health System and Wadley Regional Medical Center in Texarkana. These facilities completed their seventh successful CoC survey in November of 2010 to achieve full approval with Commendation. The Cancer Registry staff accessioned 1099 new cases in 2010 for a total of 24,672 cases since 1989.

The Community Education Department provides outreach programs on breast health, diabetes, and tobacco education; CPR training; and youth leadership. A total of 7,597 encounters have occurred to date.

Two “Hands On Health Care” programs were provided for high school students in Texarkana and DeQueen. We partnered with UAMS AHEC South Arkansas to host a health careers session at SAU in Magnolia for over 40 undergraduate science majors.

UAMS AHEC Southwest sponsored two M*A*S*H programs in Texarkana and Nashville, for a total of 33 students.

Texarkana Arkansas School District partnered with UAMS AHEC Southwest to develop and implement a Patient Care Tech program for high school students, which will start in fall 2011. Graduates will be certified as both nursing assistants and phlebotomists, who can work in emergency rooms, clinics, hospitals, and nursing homes while pursuing additional education.

As part of our Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) transition, our clinics are upgrading electronic medical record systems. The clinics also expanded to a total of 57 patient rooms.

AHEC Southwest was designated a National Health Service Corp (NHSC) site for behavioral health and pediatrics, allowing providers from Southwest Arkansas Counseling and Mental Health to see patients at our AHEC clinics.

Arkansas Healthy Body Plan is a CTSA research project led by Dr. Nancy Greer-Williams and Patrick Evans, seeking to identify health disparities among African American, Hispanic, and Caucasian populations in southwest Arkansas. To address health literacy and navigation needs of these populations, a lay community health worker training program will be established to equip “natural helpers” with knowledge to help members of their own community access services.
AHEC West

Don Heard, EdD, Director

AHEC West (formerly Fort Smith) is striving to adapt to changes in the health care environment, train more family physicians, and meet the increased demand for services. A 4,378 sq ft facility one block from our Family Medical Center in Fort Smith is undergoing remodeling to open mid-summer 2011. This additional clinical space will allow AHEC West to expand patient care services and increase the number of residents in training from 22 to 24 in 2011-12. Accreditation approval will be sought from ACGME to increase the number of residents from 24 to 30, increasing by 2 residents per year beginning July 2012. AHEC West is now fully accredited with its next site visit scheduled in late 2011.

To emphasize our regional focus, AHEC Fort Smith was re-named AHEC West and our clinic is now UAMS Family Medical Center-Fort Smith. We are implementing Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) concepts, Care Manager electronic data system, and a Patient Portal that will allow us to enhance patient care as well as teach residents and students using state-of-the-art medical health systems. We are also pursuing National Commission for Quality Assurance (NCQA) accreditation and “Meaningful Use” certification.

Peggy Brigance, APN filled the Director of Nursing Education position vacated when Dr. BJ Landis retired in April 2011 after 15 years as Director of Nursing Education at UAMS/ AHEC West and 50 career years. Seven residents joined our residency program July 1, 2010 and seven graduated in June. In total, 22 residents trained at AHEC West in 2010-11. AHEC provided 60,000 outpatient and inpatient exams and delivered 500 babies.

In 2010-11 AHEC West provided educational opportunities for 27 medical students, 6 pharmacy students, 2 B.S.N. students, 3 graduate N.P. students, 1 A.D.N. student, 22 L.P.N. students, 4 C.N.A students, 13 Health Information Management students and 15 shadowing/mentoring students. The AHEC West library, headed by Ms. Grace Anderson, provided services for over 5,000 patrons this year.

Richard Aclin, MD, was named one of the “Best Physicians in America” for the 13th year. Jimmy Acklin, MD and Dr. Katherine Irish-Clardy were chosen as two of the “Best Family Doctors in America” (Dr. Acklin’s 8th time). Dr. Elisa Spradlin was named AHEC West’s Teaching Faculty of the Year.

Director of Community Outreach, Ms. Tammy Trouillon, conducted 9,900 encounters that included health education, prescription assistance, screenings, and health fairs. Our Pre-Health Recruiter, Ms. Chris Dickens reached 5,700 students via health career presentations and fairs. She arranged shadowing opportunities and CPR training, and established a “Day in the Life” program on nursing. M*A*S*H programs at Sparks Hospital, Saint Edward Mercy Medical Center, and Summit Hospital reached 73 high school students.

AHEC West is positioned to increase the size of our residency program, expand nursing education, augment services to our community, and enhance patient care and education, while committed to quality in all areas.
Key Partners

We are extremely grateful for the leadership of the Regional Programs Advisory Council, our AHEC directors, faculty, and hard working employees, the dedication of our volunteer faculty, the support of affiliated hospitals and other community partners, and the commitment to educational outreach of the various UAMS Colleges.

Advisory Council

Internal and external advisory groups consult on various aspects of Regional Programs planning and implementation from a statewide perspective (see page 34).

UAMS

Educational programs conducted at AHECs are approved by the appropriate colleges at UAMS and coordinated through a central office on the UAMS campus. AHEC faculty are involved in the medical school admissions process, teach classes on campus, and participate in medical student interviews.

AHEC-Based UAMS Faculty

AHEC Directors serve as regional health care leaders and are responsible for administering AHEC programs in their respective areas. Multi-disciplinary teams of physician, nursing, pharmacy, and allied health professionals oversee and participate in clinical training, including 350 volunteer faculty.

Regional Partners

Each AHEC works closely with Community and Migrant Health Centers, public health clinics, mental health agencies, and other local health care providers and facilities to promote cooperative solutions to local health problems. We are indebted to the Arkansas Farm Bureau, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Baptist Health Systems, and the Office of Oral Health of the Arkansas Department of Health for their ongoing support of our M*A*S*H programs, in collaboration with the AHEC and Rural Hospital Programs. Other important partnerships with the UAMS Donald W. Reynolds Center on Aging and the Veterans Administration are meeting regional needs of the State’s elderly and our veterans.

Other Schools and Universities

AHEC collaborates with many schools, community colleges, vo-tech schools, and universities across Arkansas to provide health professions education specific to regional needs.
Affiliated Community Hospitals

The AHECs hold formal agreements with the community hospitals listed below as host institutions and training facilities. We extend our deep appreciation to our hospital affiliates, which contribute their facilities, funds, and staff in support of AHEC training programs.

**Delta AHEC Teaching Hospitals:**
- Crittenden Memorial Hospital
- Helena Regional Medical Center
- Chicot Memorial Hospital

**AHEC Fort Smith Teaching Hospitals:**
- Sparks Regional Medical Center

**AHEC North Central Teaching Hospitals:**
- White River Medical Center
- Baxter Regional Medical Center

**AHEC Northeast Teaching Hospitals:**
- St. Bernards Regional Medical Center
- NEA Baptist Memorial Hospital

**AHEC Northwest Teaching Hospitals:**
- Washington Regional Medical Center
- Fayetteville City Hospital
- Northwest Medical Center –Springdale
- Veterans Health Care System of the Ozarks
- Willow Creek Women’s Hospital

**AHEC Pine Bluff Teaching Hospital:**
- Jefferson Regional Medical Center

**AHEC South Arkansas Teaching Hospital:**
- Medical Center of South Arkansas

**AHEC Southwest Teaching Hospitals:**
- CHRISTUS St. Michael Health System
- CHRISTUS St. Michael Rehab Hospital
- Wadley Regional Medical Center

http://www.uams.edu/AHEC
UAMS Regional Programs Advisory Council

The Regional Programs Advisory Council consults on various aspects of planning and implementation for the AHEC Program from a statewide perspective. The Council is comprised of the Chair and Vice Chair of the advisory councils of each of the eight AHECs and several partner members representing statewide organizations that support and work with Regional Programs to achieve our statewide mission. We are deeply indebted to these capable advisors.

Delta AHEC Advisory Board
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AHEC West Advisory Board
Buddy McMahon
Jimmy Bell

AHEC Northeast Advisory Board
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