

## The AHEC Mission

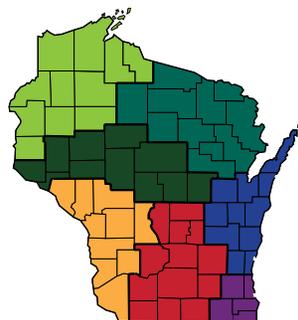
Improving the supply, distribution, diversity, and quality of health care professionals through academic partnerships with local communities.

## Wisconsin AHEC Strategic Priorities

1. Increase supply and improve distribution of primary care providers.
2. Improve diversity of the health care workforce.
3. Enhance health professions education, with emphasis on interprofessional practice and public health.
4. Provide supportive infrastructure for local providers/practitioners in underserved areas, including opportunities for continuing education and community-based research.
5. Address health disparities and access issues through community health outreach activities.
6. Collaborate and offer leadership in Wisconsin health care workforce planning efforts.
7. Conduct assessment and outcomes evaluation.

## Programs in Local Communities

- Development of regional training sites to provide community-based clinical education for health professions students.
- Matching students with community agencies to engage in service opportunities.
- Internships for college students, frequently connected with public health departments.
- Summer camps for high school students.
- Continuing education for health professionals.
- Community health education events.
- Connecting community organizations to the resources of the state's health professions education programs.
- Alumni events for AHEC signature programs (Youth Health Service Corps, Wisconsin Express, community health internships, summer camps).



## Wisconsin AHEC System

[www.ahec.wisc.edu](http://www.ahec.wisc.edu)

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# AHEC

## Strengthening Wisconsin's Health Care Workforce

Recruiting and training students and professionals.

Encouraging placements throughout the state where health care professionals are urgently needed.

Improving health in Wisconsin communities.

## About Wisconsin AHEC

The Wisconsin Area Health Education Center program is a health professions education and outreach program supported by the State of Wisconsin, federal grants, health professions training programs, and local communities. AHEC is part of a nationwide network of programs for improving accessibility and quality of primary health care, resulting in better health.

The Wisconsin AHEC System consists of 7 regional centers – each providing a range of local programs and services – and a statewide program office.

AHEC program areas include:

- Learning experiences for **health professions students** at community-based sites, with an emphasis on interdisciplinary programs, developing cultural competence, and community projects.
- Health careers recruitment in **underserved rural and urban areas**, to assist high school and college students from underrepresented populations prepare for entry into health professions schools.
- Supporting **faculty mentors and preceptors** at community-based training sites with continuing education, technology support and other services to enhance the practice environment and maximize the ability of health professionals in underserved communities to provide high quality health care.
- Partnering with **local organizations** in a variety of outreach activities, health education, ongoing programs, and special events designed to increase health literacy and improve the health of all members of the community.

# Programmatic Goal Areas and Accomplishments

## Distribution and Primary Care

The cornerstone of the AHEC program is a partnership with academic programs to develop training sites in local communities across the state. *Selected examples:*

- **Clinical Training**

Every UW medical student has a community-based training experience in each year of medical school. Wisconsin AHEC has supported site development, faculty development, web-based information access, purchase of equipment for students to use on site, and other local services as requested by the sites. By improving the experience at rural sites, Wisconsin gains the short-term benefit of a better-educated workforce, and also makes progress toward the long-term goal of attracting professionals to return and practice primary care in rural and underserved communities.

- **Community Health Internship Program (CHIP)**

AHEC places students in 8-week-long internships throughout the state. In summer 2016, 83 students worked at 61 public health departments and other agencies. These internships yield three-fold benefits: 1) completed projects that improve health in the local community, 2) the local health department gains a talented short-term employee, and 3) the student establishes the foundation of a career in public health.

### OUTCOMES

*Through these experiences, I have developed a better understanding of the critical role public health plays in multiple aspects of our lives. I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to gain this knowledge and because of it, **I now intend to specialize in primary care** – a field where I can easily continue to support public health missions through practicing preventative medicine.*

**AHEC summer intern worked in Wood County**

## Health Equity and Diversity

Wisconsin AHEC reaches out to local communities to deliver programs on site which enhance the practice environment in rural and underserved communities.

- **Extension of Library Services**

AHEC's online portal [InformedCaring.org](http://InformedCaring.org) provides access to an array of carefully selected evidence-based resources. AHEC staff conduct on-site trainings across the state, resulting in increased use of health information resources.

- **Health Careers Recruitment**

Regional AHEC centers host summer camps, high school presentations, health career training for K-12 staff, Youth Health Service Corps, and Health Career Academy sites. Most students in these programs are in populations currently underrepresented in health professions.

## Interprofessional Training

Utilizing our robust statewide network of partnering organizations, AHEC develops unique interprofessional training and education opportunities. Focus areas include interprofessional teamwork and public health.

- **Wisconsin Express**

Small teams of students from different health professions are immersed in a city/region of Wisconsin for one week to explore healthcare resources and experience local cultures.

- **Continuing Education for Providers**

Last year, there were 2,617 participants in continuing education workshops provided by regional AHEC centers. Attendees included nurses, social workers, public health, physicians, physician assistants, dental hygienists, health administrators, allied health providers, and many others.



**Connecting students to careers... professionals to communities... and communities to better health.**