



HRSA - Bureau of Health Workforce Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program

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Advisory Committee on Interdisciplinary,
Community-Based Linkages (ACICBL) Meeting

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Area Health
Education
Centers
(AHEC)
Program

Health Careers Pipeline Branch

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Health Careers
Opportunity
Program
(HCOP)

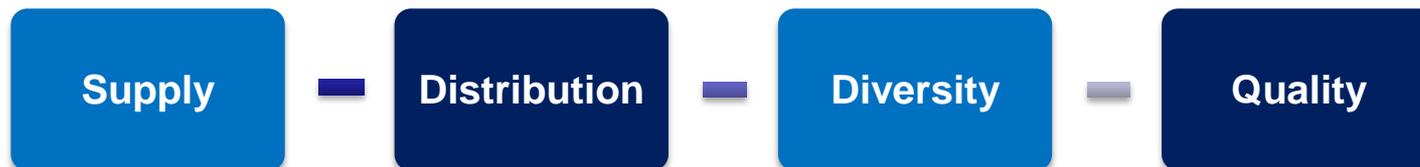
Centers of
Excellence
(COE)
Program



The Health Careers Pipeline Branch (HCPB) serves as the focal point for:

- Health career pipeline programs supporting **disadvantaged and under-represented minority** students; and the
- Recruitment and training of clinicians in **rural and medically underserved communities.**

Purpose: To enhance access to high quality, culturally competent health care, through academic-community partnerships, by improving:

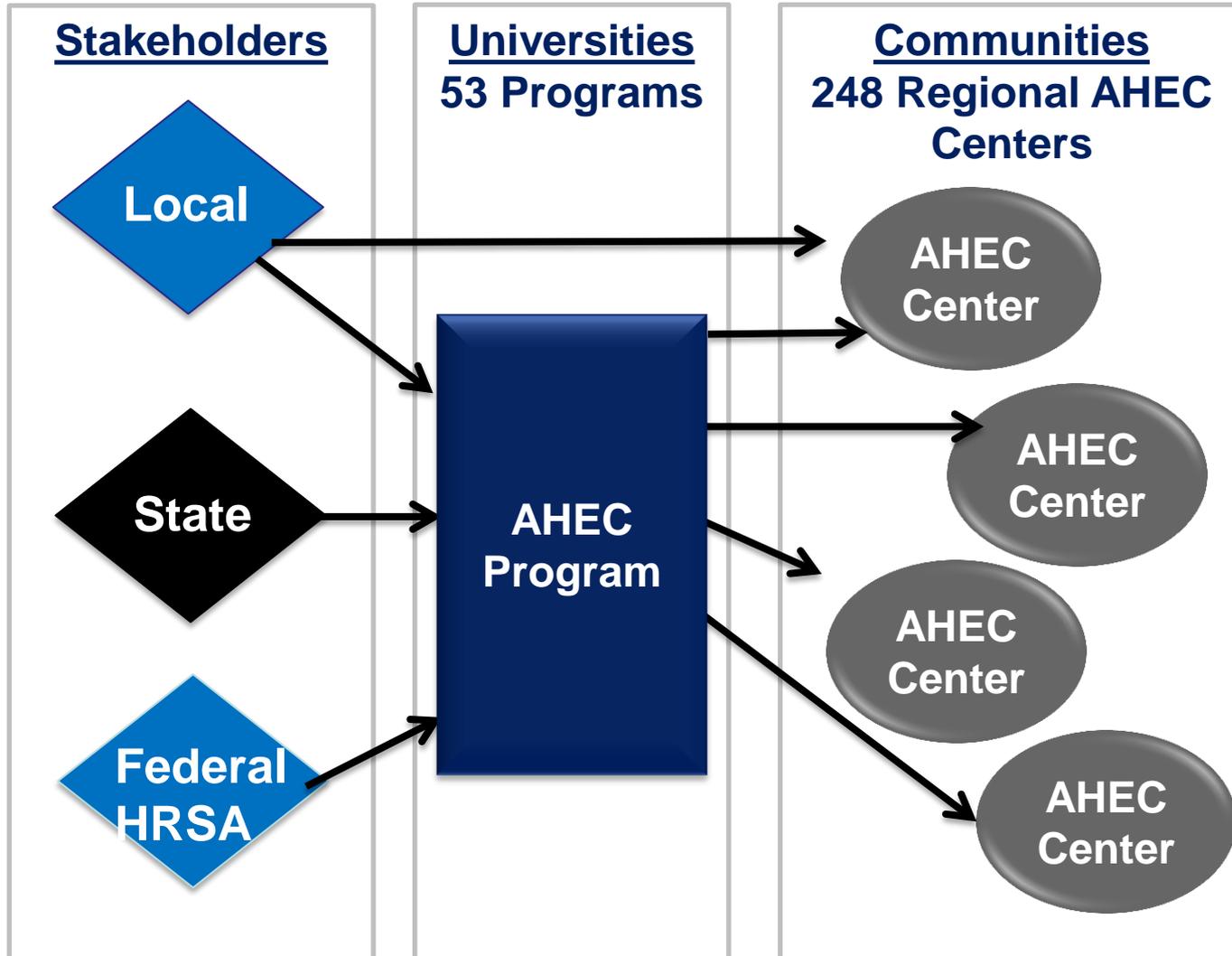


of the health professions workforce, specialty primary care; and addressing the health care needs of medically underserved communities and populations.

Eligibility: Schools of medicine or in states with no medical school, schools of nursing

Legislative Requirements and More:

- Health professions recruitment and training
- Interprofessional education and training
- Continuing education
- Rural health workforce initiatives, community health workers, health Information technology, veterans mental health, Affordable Care Act provider education, etc.





AHEC Priority Areas



- Expand **primary care workforce** supply, capacity, and distribution through stronger education and training opportunities, with an emphasis in rural and medically underserved communities.
- Promote **interprofessional education (IPE)**, training and team-based practice to assure quality care.
- Improve health workforce **diversity** to reflect the population it serves.
- Conduct **evaluations** to assess short and long term program performance and effectiveness.



Current Activities



Legislative Requirements and More

- Recruitment, Health Professions training, CE
- Interprofessional education and training
- Rural health workforce initiatives, CHW/Outreach Workers

Health Care Reform – ACA

- Outreach and Education
- Provider education

Special Initiatives

- CHW-Behavioral Health Primary Care Integration Pilot Project
- Nursing Workforce Capacity-Building in USAPI
- Veterans Mental Health



AHEC Special Initiatives



Community Health Worker-Behavioral Health Integration into Primary Care-Pilot Project

Grantee: The University of Texas Medical Branch - Texas AHEC East (TAE)

Project Period: 9/1/2012-8/31/2016

Partners: HRSA, SAMHSA, HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health

Purpose: To develop a CHW BH curriculum to prepare CHWs to effectively enhance BH services within the primary care setting. Includes both didactic in-classroom training and onsite hands-on experience in a primary care setting. The project follows an apprenticeship “learn while you earn” model.

Multiple Phases Over Four Years:

- Phase 1: Development and evaluation of the training curriculum specific to behavioral health
- Phase 2: Small scale pilot utilizing trained CHWs within local primary care systems in Texas
- Phase 3: Dissemination including a multi state pilot project



AHEC Special Initiatives



Nursing Workforce Capacity: Improvement Initiative in the U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands

Grantee: University of Guam School of Nursing and Health Sciences - Guam/Micronesia
AHEC Program

Project Period: 9/1/2012-8/31/2014

Partners: HRSA/BHW, U.S. Department of the Interior

Purpose: To support strategic nursing workforce and infrastructure development activities that focus on strengthening nurse training programs and the nursing leadership pipeline in the USAPI.

Objectives:

- Improve the foundational skills of nursing students in the areas of math, science, and English.
- Improve the regional nursing education infrastructure in the USAPI.
- Enhance nursing faculty capacity through increased knowledge and skills in teaching and learning, curriculum development, and evaluation.
- Improve the existing career pathways for nursing professional advancement through development of articulation agreements and increased accessibility to advanced educational programs.



Strengths

- Implement activities that are **responsive** to the evolving needs of their respective geographic regions;
- Significant **national infrastructure** with extensive capabilities to **reach** into pockets of underserved rural and urban areas;
- Strong **partnerships and collaborations** with academia, community health centers, rural health clinics, and various other organizations at the local, state, and national levels; and
- Function as neutral agents and **conveners**.

Challenges

- Varying degrees of **capabilities and resources** across the country;
- Significant **variations** on programmatic strategies, making it difficult to assess outcomes and impact of the entire AHEC Program;
- Inconsistent **funding**; and
- **Broad roles** of AHECs which contribute to a perception of lack of focus and dilution of core AHEC values.



AHEC Program Opportunities



- Prioritize and focus on fewer but **impactful** programs;
- Incorporate **evidence-based/evidence-informed models** or using established **competencies** and minimal **standards**; and
- Strengthen **program evaluation** in the short and long-term.



AHEC Program



In Summary

- AHEC fosters community-academic and government partnerships to improve the recruitment, training and retention of a diverse health workforce to serve rural and underserved communities.
- There is an AHEC near you – with 53 programs, and 248 regional AHEC centers in 45 states, plus – there are opportunities for collaboration.
- AHECs are responsive to the community's needs and have significant expertise and experience to reach rural and urban underserved communities.



Contact Information



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