



## MAINE AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER (AHEC) NETWORK

The Maine Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Network's mission is to alleviate health workforce shortages in rural and underserved areas of the state. AHEC supports that effort by working with academic and community partners to:

- Provide rural, community-based clinical training experiences for medical and other health professions students
- Encourage Maine youth and mid-career professionals to explore health careers
- Support practicing health professionals with continuing education and distance learning opportunities

### HOW TO CONTACT US

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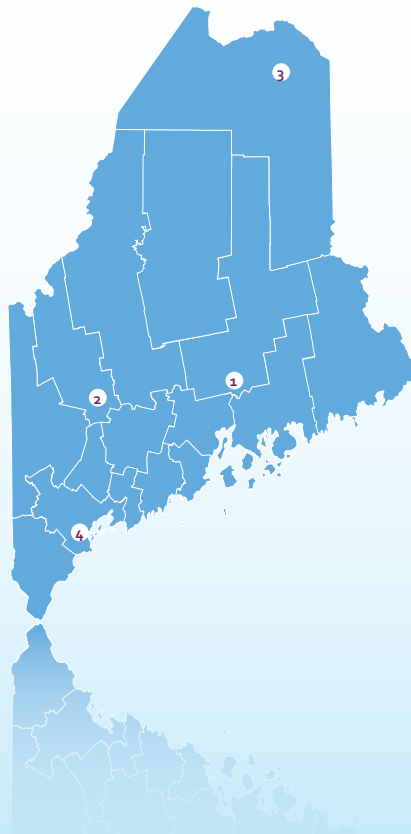
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INNOVATION FOR A HEALTHIER PLANET

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# MAINE AHEC NETWORK MAKES A DIFFERENCE



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Maine AHEC  
Network

Addressing Healthcare Workforce  
Recruitment and Retention



UNIVERSITY OF  
NEW ENGLAND

INNOVATION FOR A HEALTHIER PLANET





## PRIORITY INITIATIVES 2016–17

### PIPELINE

- Implement pipeline tracking system and collect consistent pipeline competencies data

### CLINICAL EDUCATION

- Identify and develop new preceptors from across the state
- Identify further areas of collaboration between UNE AHEC and MMC/Tufts Medical School program
- Develop and/or implement enhanced community health rotations in targeted rural areas
- Increase connections to UNECOM students interested in rural health/primary care
- Increase UNE COM students' exposure to public health concepts
- Support IPE activities that are part of other UNE programs

### CONTINUING EDUCATION

- Meet the National AHEC Organization's HPV education program goal of 300 health care provider participants across the state
- Continue to provide the Veteran's Administration with educational programs and evaluate the effectiveness of those programs
- Provide preceptors and others in rural areas with IPE CE programs

### OVERALL

- Refine data system that will improve accessibility and quality of data
- Develop/enhance partnerships (e.g. Maine Primary Care Association, Maine Indian Education, New Mainers Public Health Initiative, GEAR Up, etc.)

## A PIPELINE FOR COMMUNITY-BASED HEALTH PROFESSIONS EDUCATION



The Maine AHEC Network creates opportunities to connect students to careers, professionals to communities, and communities to better health. During this past year the Maine AHEC Network was successful in:

### ENGAGING STUDENTS IN HEALTH CAREER EXPLORATION

**1816 students** were introduced to health career opportunities. Of those students, **125** participated in AHEC health programs of 10+ hours, providing them with health career exposure, professional mentorship, and academic enhancement to prepare them for health professions training programs.

### NEW MAINER PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVE

Maine AHEC Network's Program Office partnered with the New Mainers Public Health Initiative (NMPHI) to bring 20 high school students from Lewiston's New Mainer community to UNE's Biddeford and Portland campuses. In an effort to increase the diversity of Maine's healthcare workforce Maine AHEC Network has collaborated with NMPHI to expose high school students who are the children of immigrants and refugees ("New Mainers") to healthcare careers.



NMPHI is a health related, ethnic-based organization serving the needs of immigrant and refugee youth and their families. Their goal is to empower, inform and educate new Mainers in order to decrease health disparities. While visiting UNE the students received presentations from Undergraduate Admissions, UNE's Nutrition and Physician Assistant Programs and toured both campuses, including a tour of UNE's Oral Health Center. Faculty and students from the College of Pharmacy created an experiential learning activity that allowed the students to try their hands at creating a simulated medical compound.

*"It is very inspirational to hear [student and faculty] success stories. I also like the hands-on things because it gives deeper insight into the career field."*

### INCREASING COMMUNITY-BASED TRAINING

**305 health professions students** received training at **41 community-based training sites**. The majority of those sites were located in underserved areas, including designated Health Professions Shortage Areas, Federally Qualified Health Centers, and Community Health Centers. Nearly 60% of a total of **1298 weeks of clinical training** was provided to students training to become physicians (23%), physician assistants (23%), pharmacists (12%), and medical assistants (9%).

### ENHANCED AROOSTOOK COMMUNITY HEALTH ROTATION

Two years ago, the Maine AHEC Network's Program Office and one of its Centers, Northern Maine AHEC, collaborated to create a rural community health rotation in Aroostook County to attract students interested in rural health and create a rich experience to increase the chances that University of New England (UNE) College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM) third and fourth year medical students would make the decision to practice in rural Maine in the future. In the first two years of the program, 11 COM students have participated. In reflection papers, all 11 students were highly enthusiastic about their rotations, describing how their four weeks in a rural community positively impacted them professionally and personally.



The value of this program is evidenced by stories like that of Jarryd Ros. As a 3rd year medical student he completed the Enhanced Aroostook Community Health Rotation at Pines Health Services in Caribou. In his review of the experience he said, *"I hope that I am able to return to the area after residency and become an important part of the community for a long time."* His hope is set to be realized as he has been offered a job at Pines Health Services, and he intends to accept it upon the completion of his residency in Montana.

### FOSTERING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**1593 contact hours** of health education programs were provided across the state of Maine, with **1902 health professionals** receiving training through AHEC continuing education programs. **More than half** of the continuing education participants were physicians (7%), nurse practitioners (4%), nurses (29%), and first responders (5%).

### VETERANS ADMINISTRATION RURAL PROVIDER TRAININGS

In FY16 Maine AHEC Network partnered with the Veteran's Administration to provide educational programs to clinicians in their primary care Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC). This training included a session for all nurse managers and the head of primary care at the VA hospital on resiliency and team development, followed by 6 sessions of team building, how to have difficult conversations, conflict management and other issues specific to the CBOC.

