

South Carolina Area Health Education Consortium

Annual Report 2014



Making an Impact

David R. Garr, M.D.
Executive Director,
South Carolina AHEC



I am pleased to provide this introduction for the 2014 Annual Report describing the accomplishments of our South Carolina AHEC system. The members of our AHEC team located in Charleston, Florence, Greenville, Lancaster and Walterboro are making significant contributions on a daily basis, and it gives me great pleasure to highlight some of the developments that have occurred during the past twelve months. I also want to acknowledge the partnerships our AHEC system has with many organizations across the state without whose participation and support the accomplishments described in this report would not have been possible.

Two milestone events occurred during this past year- one for the Upstate AHEC center and the other for the Lowcountry AHEC center. The Upstate AHEC now has its own building, which is in a very convenient location in Greenville. The Lowcountry AHEC broke ground on a new building in Walterboro, which they look forward to occupying in the spring of 2015. Both of these facilities will have state-of-the-art technology. The members of the AHEC team in both locations are pleased to have a home of their own.

The Health Careers Program (HCP): This program is designed to provide encouragement and support for middle, high school and college students interested in careers in healthcare. Significant disparities in healthcare services exist in our state, and a major goal of our Health Careers Program is to increase the diversity of the health workforce to meet the needs of our state's diverse population.

Some noteworthy achievements during this past year have been the receipt of a grant from the National Library of Medicine to increase health information literacy among middle school and high school students. The Bench to Bedside program has seen a significant increase in the number of college students who take advantage of the monthly seminars delivered by live video as well as the encouragement and support the students receive from the members of the HCP team. The addition of a parent workshop to the longitudinal, four-year high school Health Careers Academy has also been successful.

The Health Professions Student Program (HPS): Our AHEC system has the opportunity to work with a wide range of health professions students. A high priority is to retain our health professions student graduates in South Carolina. The AHEC HPS coordinators work closely with campus faculty to provide excellent community-based clinical experiences for students. When the students arrive in the community for their rotations, the HPS coordinators assist them with their housing and introduce them to the community.

Several members of the HPS team have also been assisting the state Medicaid program with the education and deployment of community health workers (CHWs) in 14 South Carolina clinical practices. An additional seven community health workers will be trained during the coming academic year. Our AHEC system has provided coordination for this new program at the community level. Discussions are underway regarding a substantial expansion of the training program for CHWs, given the need for these members of the healthcare workforce to work as the interface between the clinical practices and the communities where people reside.

There is a great need for more primary care clinicians in the state. The Institute for Primary Care Education and Practice, established with funding from The Duke Endowment, has provided interprofessional educational and mentoring experiences for MUSC and USC medical and advanced practice nursing and MUSC physician assistant students. This program is designed to help students with an interest in primary care to complete their studies and enter careers in primary care in South Carolina.

The Continuing Education Program (CE): Talented educators in our AHEC system work to provide educational programs to healthcare professionals. Thousands of health professionals are able to remain current with developments in healthcare through use of our videoconferencing system, South Carolina Health Occupations Outreach Learning System (SCHOOLS), and the online AHEC U, based in the Upstate AHEC office in Greenville. In addition, AHEC educators continue to deliver quality programs in traditional settings based on the needs of regional partners and community providers.

Another noteworthy accomplishment this past year was a statewide educational program for health professionals regarding the use of extended release/long-acting opioid medications. Each of the four AHEC centers provided educational sessions that informed clinicians about the appropriate use and possible misuse of opioid medications.

Office for Healthcare Workforce Analysis and Planning (OHW): Established with support from The Duke Endowment in 2008, this office has been providing very important information about the health workforce in South Carolina. Prior to the establishment of the OHW, there had not been a ready source of information and research focusing on the health workforce in the state. One tangible outcome from the availability of data from the OHW has been the recognition of the need for more obstetrical services in some areas of the state. This led to a multi-million dollar appropriation by the South Carolina Legislature to use telemedicine technology to provide consultative services and clinical care to women in these rural and underserved communities. Since funding from The Duke Endowment will end in 2015, efforts are underway to secure funding from the South Carolina Legislature to sustain the important work of the OHW for years to come.

Graduate Medical Education: The network of family medicine residencies in South Carolina is quite unique. There are very few states where eight family medicine residencies work as closely together as do ours in South Carolina. The residency program directors meet once every two months, collaborate on sponsoring educational and recruitment activities, and share information with one another to help provide the best education possible for family doctors. Our AHEC system works very closely with the family medicine, advanced practice nursing and physician assistant programs and looks forward to sustaining this positive working relationship for years to come.

In January 2014, a report was released that was prepared by an advisory committee to the state Medicaid program. This report included a number of recommendations designed to increase the number and distribution of primary care clinicians in South Carolina. The eight family medicine residencies, along with the advanced practice nursing and physician assistant programs, are an important source for clinicians able to address the primary care needs in rural and underserved communities. One of the recommendations was that an advisory committee be established to oversee the implementation of the steps needed to address the recommendations in the report. When the advisory committee is convened, it is anticipated that more support will be made available to help these programs train more primary care practitioners.

Recruitment and Retention: Our AHEC system continues to administer important programs designed to help place needed healthcare professionals in rural and underserved communities. We administer the Rural Physician and Rural Dentist Programs that have been successful at placing physicians, advanced practice providers, and dentists in underserved communities. In addition, our AHEC administers a locum tenens program that provides coverage for doctors when they need to be away for professional or personal reasons.

One of the challenges of recruiting and retaining clinicians in underserved areas has been access to consultative services. Our AHEC has worked closely with others in the state to help increase access to such services through the use of telemedicine. In the coming years, it is anticipated that telemedicine will be a great asset for increasing access to specialty services in rural and underserved communities.

In summary, our AHEC system is making contributions in many different areas, all designed to increase access to the best healthcare for the South Carolina population. We are fortunate to have a dedicated, talented team of professionals in our AHEC system who are making a significant difference in the lives of South Carolinians. Their creativity and commitment to the mission of our AHEC system is truly inspiring and I feel fortunate to work with such a terrific team.



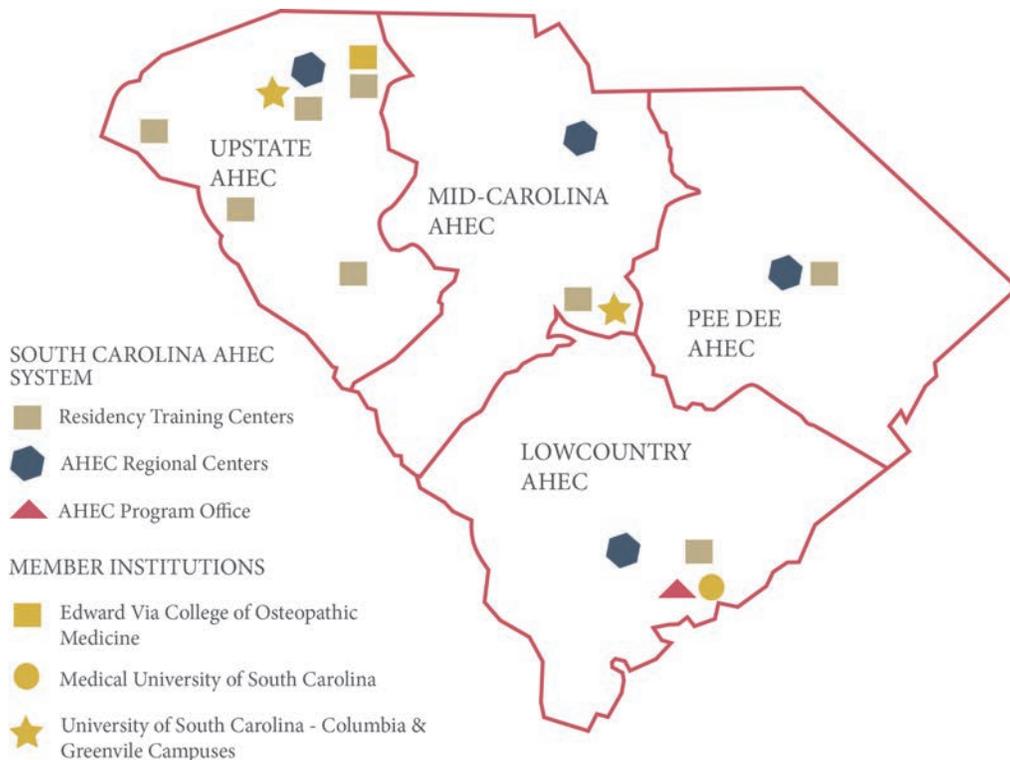
Institute for Primary Care Fellows participate in a "speed dating" networking event with primary care preceptors from across the state.

The networking event was part of the spring IPC Retreat where preceptors and IPC Fellows were able to network, attend discussions and presentations on the state of primary care in South Carolina, and learn about the realities of being a primary care provider from practitioners who have years of experience in clinical practice and teaching.

South Carolina AHEC System

The South Carolina AHEC is committed to being a leader in building a collaborative educational system designed to optimize the health of South Carolinians by achieving excellence in healthcare through recruitment, retention and education of healthcare professionals.

The essential role of AHEC programs in the United States is to recruit, train, sustain and inspire a broad range of health professionals to practice in underserved communities in order to maintain a high quality healthcare safety net. South Carolina is a state that is disproportionately poor, rural and underserved relative to the rest of the United States. Therefore, the role of the South Carolina AHEC is crucial for training and retaining the next generation of healthcare professionals.



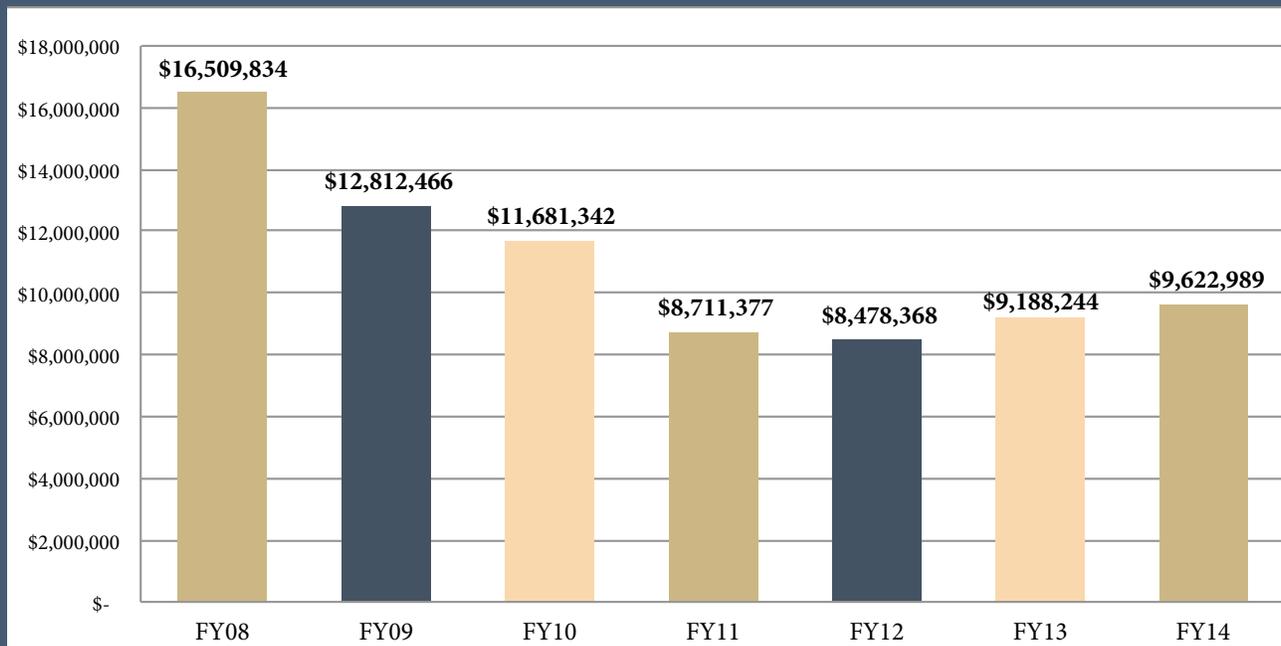
SCHOOLS Locations

The South Carolina Health Occupations Outreach Learning System (SCHOOLS) is a videoconferencing system that permits access to educational programs, health professions student rotation support, and research initiatives. Programs, trainings and meetings are delivered to SCHOOLS locations over a high-speed, dedicated broadband highway known as the Palmetto State Providers' Network (PSPN). The network of SCHOOLS locations and programming continues to grow with more locations coming online.

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|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Abbeville Area Medical Center | Fairfield Memorial Hospital | North Greenville Hospital |
| AnMed Health | Georgetown Hospital System | Novant Health Gaffney Medical Center |
| Barnwell County Hospital | Greenville Hospital System | Oconee Medical Center |
| Beaufort Memorial Hospital | KershawHealth | Pee Dee AHEC (McLeod Florence) |
| Cannon Memorial Hospital | Laurens County Health Care System | Roper Hospital - Mount Pleasant |
| Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center | Lowcountry AHEC (Walterboro) | South Carolina AHEC (MUSC) |
| Chesterfield General Hospital | McLeod Loris Seacoast | The Regional Medical Center |
| Clarendon Memorial Hospital | McLeod Medical Center Darlington | Upstate AHEC (Greenville) |
| Coastal Carolina Medical Center | Mid-Carolina AHEC (Lancaster) | Waccamaw Community Hospital |
| Edgefield County Hospital | Newberry County Memorial Hospital | Wallace Thomson Hospital |

2014 State Funding

Funding appropriated by the state for the South Carolina AHEC totaled \$9,622,989 in FY 2014.



2014 Grant Funding

\$406,680

AHEC Point of Service Maintenance & Enhancement Award - Formerly Model AHEC (DHHS*, HRSA*)

\$150,000

Recruitment and Retention of Future Healthcare Professionals: Bridging the Gap in the Education Pipeline (The Duke Endowment)

\$233,978

Increasing the Primary Care Workforce in South Carolina (The Duke Endowment)

\$53,592

Geriatric Education Center - University of South Carolina (DHHS*, HRSA*)

\$74,295

Obesity Management & Prevention Using Telehealth to Connect Rural Primary Care Practices (MUSC Center for Telehealth)

\$49,317

Health Information Literacy Project (National Library of Medicine Center for Public Service Communications)

\$3,823

Tri-State Telehealth Advancement Network (HRSA AIDS Education and Training Center)

*DHHS = Department of Health & Human Services

*HRSA = Health Resources & Services Administration

Health Careers Program

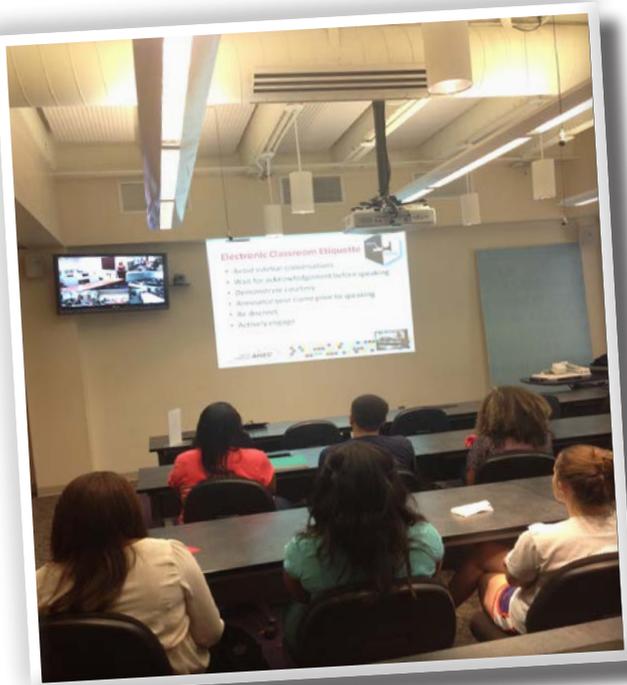
6,903 Hours of health professions observation time provided to 757 HCP high school participants in healthcare facilities throughout South Carolina.

2,649 Hours of service-learning activities completed by high school students across the state in the HCP.

The South Carolina AHEC Health Careers Program (HCP) provides a variety of extended learning opportunities for students to support their matriculation into health professions training programs. HCP initiatives promote the development of academically proficient and self-confident future healthcare professionals. The Health Careers Academy (HCA), the flagship of the HCP, serves students in grades 9-12 in the regional AHEC areas. The AHEC Centers' HCP coordinators facilitate educational programs and activities during the academic school year for these students. Service-learning, mentoring and academic advising are components of the curriculum, which aligns with the South Carolina Department of Education Academic Standards.

Highlights

South Carolina AHEC, Lowcountry AHEC and Colleton County High School partnered for a pilot health literacy project in 2014 with a group of high school students dedicated to learning more about health professions. The students researched the field of pharmacy, interviewed pharmacists in their workplace, and are creating a comic book for middle school students that explores the pharmacist profession. Over the course of the service-learning experience, the students learn valuable skills and expand their knowledge of healthcare and health professions. The information will then be presented to middle school students in a fun and easily understandable manner. South Carolina AHEC will partner with more high schools for an expanded literacy project in 2015, with funding from the National Library of Medicine.



B2B students participate in a videoconference from Clemson University.

Bench 2 Bedside (B2B) is an initiative funded by The Duke Endowment that prepares students for admission and success in health career training programs. B2B had a successful seminar series to bridge the gap for students between high school programming and health professions student programming.

- 221 student registrations for seminars
- 2 new campuses, Francis Marion University and South Carolina State University, have joined B2B to expand the program to seven campuses
- 504 participant contact hours

B2B 121: Introduction to Health Professions course offered by Winthrop University for the first time in spring 2014.

- 15 students registered
- Students from Winthrop and Coastal Carolina Universities enrolled

Health Careers Academy

- 4,888 hours of experiential learning
- 1,835 hours of classroom instruction
- 489 programs delivered
- 22 hours of parental involvement instruction

The HCA Parent Workshop program at Mid-Carolina AHEC is going strong. The workshops provide parents with information about their students' HCA participation and future in health careers. Check out the feature on the next page to learn more about the program's impact.



As an AHEC Health Careers Academy parent, it is such a privilege to share with others the awesome experiences my daughter and myself have been afforded through the program. Now in her third year in the Academy, she is first aid and HIPPA certified, has attended Summer Health Institutes at universities across our state, participated in college tours, completed valuable health science curricula and service learning hours, interned at a major hospital, and the list goes on and on. [Mid-Carolina AHEC HCP Coordinator] Erica Davis has been more than a dedicated Academy program director, but a compassionate advisor and friend. So often, I think about how great it would be if all young people had the opportunity to get such a tremendous jump start on their career paths. Truly, the AHEC Health Careers Academy is one of South Carolina's best-practices in youth workforce preparedness. We are grateful for the privilege to participate.

Ms. Pam Bryant

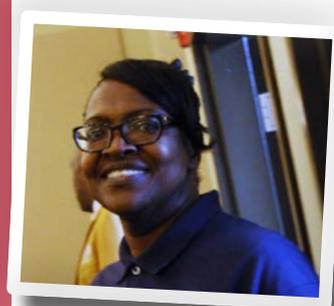
The HCA program is an excellent program for all participants. The student workshops and educational programs have expanded opportunities to students who are seeking higher education. The HCA program brings awareness to parents and students of curriculum requirements and cost requirements at early stages to prepare families of future needs. As a parent on the advisory committee, communication in the HCA program has increased knowledge of scheduled events, workshops, and services planned for all students. Erica Davis is an excellent coordinator of the HCA program. Her compassion for higher education is instilled in the students through community service and course curriculum in the field of medicine.

I am pleased with the progress of the HCA Program.

Thank you - Mrs. Tonja Brimfield

South Carolina AHEC Makes an Impact: HCA Parent Workshops

Making a Difference



Mid-Carolina AHEC has had a huge impact on me as a parent, and my son, Zachary. As a student, Zachary has been afforded so many opportunities, such as participating in Toastmasters, serving as

a Student Ambassador, visiting various colleges and universities like MUSC, the Citadel, and participating in the Pharmacy Lab workshop at USC Columbia. Because of these opportunities, they have helped to give Zachary the confidence to pursue his goal to become a Biomedical Engineer.

Thank you, AHEC.....you definitely are making a difference!!!

Ms. Linda Jackson



For the past three years, my daughter, Vanessa Harris has been a member of AHEC in Columbia, SC. I have been extremely pleased with the program and the skills my daughter has learned as well as the exposure she has had to different opportunities academically. AHEC has not only

broadened her perspective on education but it has done the same for me from the view on parental involvement. The Toastmasters workshop has been instrumental in boosting the self esteem and self worth of students and AHEC has brought back the old adage of it takes a village to raise a child. It does this by educating, nurturing, encouraging and supporting our students and their parents. Erica Davis is a vital part of that village as she is the eyes, ears and at times the loving arms wrapped around our students. I am so blessed to be a part of the AHEC family and my daughter is all the better because of it.

Thank you - Ms. Alicia Harris



Lowcountry AHEC ***South Carolina AHEC Regional Centers***

The Lowcountry Area Health Education Center is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit AHEC center, serving 12 counties in southeastern South Carolina. The counties of the service area are a continuum of rural to urban and the socioeconomic nature of the population is very diverse, from very poor to very affluent. Education levels tend to match socioeconomic status; as income levels drop there is a corresponding decrease in educational attainment. With a large area at or near the I-95 corridor, population health issues are typical of this area: diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. To combat these issues, Lowcountry AHEC staff have worked diligently during the past year to provide programs to increase and diversify the healthcare workforce, bring health professions students into rural and underserved areas, and design continuing education programs for over 10,000 participants based on regional, state, and national needs.

This past year, Lowcountry AHEC piloted a new health careers to health professions program called the “Lowcountry AHEC Pipeline Connects.” The goals of this program are to increase the numbers of eighth grade students joining the Health Careers Academy (HCA), create new interprofessional experiences for health professions students, and create new ways for these two groups of students to interact with the hope of creating health professions student mentors. Participating health professions disciplines included advanced practice nursing, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, physician assistant, and public health. The program was a successful first step and plans are being made to refine the program in the coming year.

In March 2014, Lowcountry AHEC launched a totally revamped website. One of the biggest additions was the automation of the entire continuing education registration process. Another important event was the ground breaking for a new office and training building. The Lowcountry AHEC office building is expected to open in March 2015. The board of directors and staff have been planning the new building since 2009, so Lowcountry AHEC is ready to move forward with a brand new space in which to serve the Lowcountry Region.

Health Professions Student Program

287 Clinical facilities served as training sites for 948 health professions student placements.

126,473 Patient contacts for health professions students provided through the teaching by 458 preceptors.

The South Carolina AHEC Health Professions Student (HPS) Program collaborates with health professions education programs in our state to provide community-based learning experiences for undergraduate and graduate students. This educational partnerships are designed to expose students to the realities of clinical practice in rural and underserved areas and provide them with opportunities to help address specific health needs in those communities. The South Carolina AHEC placements give students the opportunity to experience healthcare in a real world clinical setting away from their health science centers. Students are able to interact one-on-one with patients in community health centers, county health departments, homeless clinics, local practitioners' offices and other primary care sites. Students learn firsthand how economic, cultural, and geographic barriers affect the provision of healthcare services and the specific needs of underserved and ethnically diverse populations.

Highlights

With grant funding from The Duke Endowment, in 2012 the South Carolina AHEC established an interprofessional Institute for Primary Care Education and Practice (IPCEP) on the campuses of the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) and the University of South Carolina (USC). The Institute includes students, campus faculty mentors, and primary care preceptors from the fields of advanced practice nursing, medicine, and physician assistant studies. Currently, there are 71 student participants in the first and second cohorts and 33 faculty preceptors. The breakdown of the student participants is:

- MUSC Campus: Medicine 28; Advanced Practice Nursing 14; Physician Assistant Studies 8
- USC Campus: Medicine 14; Advanced Practice Nursing 7

Institute faculty, staff, students, and preceptors had the opportunity to expand their dialogue during a statewide Institute retreat in the spring of 2014. The third cohort of students was accepted into the Institute for Primary Care in the fall of 2014. Students participate in a seminar series, networking activities, and clinical rotations with exemplar preceptors.

The Lowcountry AHEC Pipeline Connects Program was piloted this year, bringing together HCP students with HPS students to bridge the gap between health careers and health professions programming. Lowcountry AHEC held two sessions with nine health professions students, 27 health careers students, and 51 middle school students participating. Check out the feature on the next page to see what students are saying about the program.

Pee Dee AHEC worked hard to add new clinical sites for placements for health professions students. All of the hard work paid off, with the region boasting 17 new clinical sites for student training. These additions are an excellent resource for training the health professions students, not just regionally, but statewide.

The four regional AHEC centers have collaborated with the South Carolina DHHS to coordinate a community health worker (CHW) program for 21 clinical practice sites across the state. The AHEC HPS coordinators have provided support for the CHWs during their work in the practices as well as organized and attended regional meetings with the clinical supervisors and CHWs to assess and evaluate the new initiative. A number of initiatives are being launched by DHHS that will benefit from participation of community health workers. It is anticipated, as a result, that more community health workers will be trained in the coming years. Our AHEC system has been a valuable contributor to this statewide initiative, and we hope to continue involvement with this important program.

Student Pipeline

Lowcountry AHEC's HCA/HPS Pipeline program brings together students from all points along the journey to health professions.



This experience was an awesome opportunity. Not only did it further my knowledge of healthy behaviors, it helped me learn how to share this information with the youth in my community. The middle school students seemed happy and engaged in all of the activities. They too learned something new while having fun. I am convinced that this project made a lasting impact, and I look forward to participating in another project in the future.

*Octavia Hannah
Colleton County High School Senior*

As a student in Charleston Southern University's Health Promotion Program, I appreciated working with students from other health profession disciplines through the Lowcountry AHEC Pipeline Connects program. It was a great opportunity to educate the high school students in the Health Careers Academy (HCA) as well as a chance to let other health professions students understand what someone in the health promotion and education field does and how we fit into the interprofessional team. By participating in this program in Walterboro, I was able to teach the HCA students about becoming a public health professional and educate them on exercise and making healthier choices.

*Elizabeth A. DeMeo
Charleston Southern University Health Promotion Program Student*



Impact

AHEC U

AHEC U is an online learning management system that offers busy healthcare professionals a way to obtain continuing education from the comfort of their offices or homes and work at their own pace. AHEC U is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Upstate AHEC is pleased to provide accessible distance education to a vast audience of healthcare professionals across the state of South Carolina and beyond.

Last year AHEC U offered a new service: Upstate AHEC added "AHEC U-only" consortium membership. For an affordable fee of \$49.95, an individual can become a consortium member of AHEC U and have access for one year to all AHEC U courses at no additional charge. Additionally, AHEC U added 48 new courses, including a new category of obstetric courses, bringing the total number of offerings to 165.



Last year AHEC U served more than 5,000 participants, with 2,400 in the Upstate alone. The opportunities for asynchronous education are expanding exponentially. Upstate AHEC is staying ahead, continuing to grow and offering healthcare professionals in South Carolina the most complete and comprehensive web-based line-up to meet their educational needs.

Mid-Carolina AHEC

South Carolina AHEC Regional Centers

Mid-Carolina AHEC serves an 11-county region in the central portion of South Carolina. The Center serves as an education pipeline for healthcare professionals and routinely works with regional partners to navigate the changing healthcare landscape associated with education, recruitment and retention. Mid-Carolina AHEC also continues to develop and implement processes and programs that support improved healthcare delivery, especially in rural and underserved areas.

Since 1998, Mid-Carolina AHEC has served as an American Heart Association (AHA) Community Training Center, providing certification/recertification education for Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS), Basic Life Support (BLS), and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS). The Board of Directors' overarching goal was to cost-effectively centralize the administrative services associated with all AHA mandates of the nine consortium hospitals in Mid-Carolina. Mid-Carolina AHEC viewed this collaboration as an opportunity to leverage limited regional resources and activities by working with other agencies, providers, and facilities with similar goals to strengthen education and public awareness relating to heart disease and stroke in South Carolina.

As an approved American Heart Association Community Training Center (CTC), Mid-Carolina AHEC provides administrative support, conducts research updates and trains health professionals across all disciplines in Basic Life Support (BLS) skills. In addition, the CTC is required to provide training to a minimum of 1,000 lay public individuals (Heartsaver CPR, AED and First Aid). In an effort to support and maintain a regional cadre of instructors, Mid-Carolina AHEC provides instructor courses in ACLS, BLS and PALS. Currently, Mid-Carolina AHEC's CTC has 22 regional training sites (hospitals, EMS, technical colleges, clinical sites) and is responsible for quality assurance and educational leadership of 559 instructors.

The commitment of the 22 community training sites to the AHA's mission and the CTC's commitment to timely responsiveness, quality education and training, and training site and instructor support continues to serve as the foundation of the CTC's success. This 16-year initiative continues to grow and provide a significant service to the associated facilities and partners as well as to the general public, as evidenced by the 12,517 certifications/re-certifications issued in FY 2014.

Mid-Carolina AHEC believes that the AHA CTC initiative supports education and training efforts to address South Carolina's health indicators associated with heart disease and stroke, as well as the Healthy People 2020 objectives.



Congaree National Park, Richland County

Educational Programs

2,502 Program hours made available to health professionals in South Carolina's 46 counties.

36,308 Health professionals took advantage of AHEC educational programs.

157,552 Contact hours of programming provided to assist professionals in maintaining their licenses and certifications.

The South Carolina AHEC supports healthcare excellence throughout the state by offering educational programs to the state's many healthcare professionals. Programs provide healthcare professionals in multiple disciplines with knowledge that allows them to utilize the most current information when they provide care to patients.

Highlights

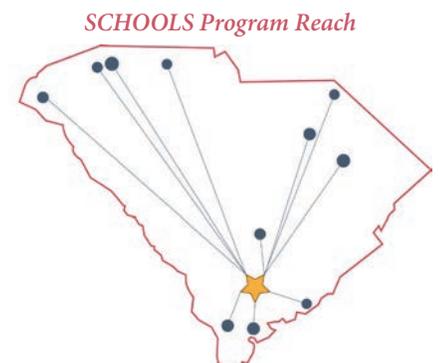
The four regional AHEC centers partnered to offer *Extended Release/Long Acting Opioid Risk Evaluation & Mitigation Strategy: Achieving Safe Use While Improving Patient Care* statewide. Four workshops were hosted regionally and served 250 participants from across the state who received information about these effective, yet highly addictive medications. The South Carolina regional centers worked together to collect and analyze data from the workshops, which were included in a presentation at the National AHEC Organization Annual Conference.



I was impressed with the [Opioid Risk Evaluation] presentation and its grounding sense of compassion for the patient who requires chronic pain medications; it has colored my care delivery for the chronic pain patient. Of a more practical or pragmatic nature in my practice, I have increased the frequency of urine drug screens and have certainly increased the use of extended release medicines over the short acting type.

Otis E. Engleman, Jr., M.D.
Family Practice Physician, Palmetto Primary Care Summerville
Lowcountry AHEC Preceptor

- South Carolina AHEC partnered with the Tri-State Telehealth Advancement Network (TITAN) at the USC School of Medicine to broadcast their monthly case presentation seminars on the medical management of the HIV patient for primary care providers statewide.
- Pee Dee AHEC partnered with a local advanced practice registered nurse group from the Florence area to provide CE presentations and broadcast the programs statewide once a month. The programs, focusing on topics such as hormone replacement, common drugs of abuse, and updates from JNC 8, have been well attended and well received by advanced practice nurses statewide.
- AHEC U, the Upstate AHEC online learning management system, has expanded to include consortium membership that allows participants unlimited access for a low annual fee. AHEC U now offers 165 courses to numerous participants statewide. Last year, there were more than 5,000 participants in AHEC U programs.
- SCHOOLS continues to expand its programming and offered more than 200 programs and 738 participant hours. The figure (right) illustrates a program, broadcast from Lowcountry AHEC in Walterboro, in which 11 sites in 10 counties participated, illustrating the broad reach of education through videoconferencing.





Pee Dee AHEC

South Carolina AHEC Regional Centers

The Pee Dee Area Health Education Center service area spans the 12-county Pee Dee region of northeastern South Carolina, with the office centrally located in Florence. Since the region is predominantly rural, accessibility to education is often challenging for providers residing and managing patients in some of the more outlying counties of the region. The utilization of technology has proven to be an effective equalizer in Pee Dee AHEC's aim to make healthcare-related education both affordable and obtainable, regardless of one's zip code.

Both nursing and allied health continuing education have achieved success this past year in making education more available to providers. The South Carolina AHEC South Carolina Health Occupations Outreach Learning System (SCHOOLS) videoconferencing system has made monthly regional advanced practice registered nurse meetings accessible to primary care providers spanning the far corners of the state. In addition, the SCHOOLS system has assisted echo technologists in accessing quarterly educational meetings via videoconference at a fraction of the distance they once traveled to obtain this much-needed education.

Pee Dee AHEC's Health Professions Student coordinators are instrumental in coordinating experiences for health professions students at sites throughout the region. This exposure is instrumental in providing students with an array of experiences via videoconference and live venues, while simultaneously providing exposures to rural healthcare and potential employment opportunities following graduation. The coordinators have seen a 69 percent increase in the number of students this year and have risen to the challenge by creating more community-based rotation opportunities than ever before.

The Health Careers Program (HCP) is an effective resource for channeling high school students toward the pursuit of higher education in healthcare. Numerous activities implemented in this program help today's youth achieve their educational goals of entering healthcare careers. Academic and community activities help equip these future providers with soft skills, access to internships, scholarship opportunities, and insight needed to achieve personal and academic success. This year, the HCP coordinators initiated a new partnership between the South Carolina AHEC Health Careers Program and Provost Academy, an online charter school. The SCHOOLS videoconferencing system served as a useful technological tool once again, facilitating statewide learning opportunities and communication between students.

Graduate Medical Education

38th

Rank of South Carolina in the nation in its supply of actively practicing physicians, South Carolina ranks 40th in the number of actively practicing primary care physicians. (Source: AAMC Center for Workforce Studies 2013 State Physician Workforce Data Book)

42

Counties out of South Carolina's 46 have at least a partial designation as a Primary Health Professions Shortage Area (HPSA); for 32 of those counties, the entire county is designated as a shortage area.

The South Carolina AHEC provides support for Graduate Medical Education (GME) through a number of initiatives. Our AHEC works collaboratively with South Carolina's medical schools to educate and retain medical students in South Carolina for their graduate medical education. Every five years, the South Carolina AHEC conducts a graduate survey to ascertain Family Medicine graduates' demographics, training needs, and practice experience. The results of these surveys are used to strengthen residency programs' curricula. In addition, AHEC works collaboratively to provide quality faculty development and networking opportunities for residency program faculty members.

Family Medicine Residency Training Program

In order to address the shortage and maldistribution of primary care physicians in our state, the South Carolina AHEC provides funding for and works closely with the statewide Family Medicine Residency Training Programs. Family Medicine is the medical specialty that provides continuing and comprehensive healthcare for individuals and families. The family physician typically functions as the patient's point of entry into the healthcare system. The family physician is the first contact in most situations and, as the initial provider, evaluates the patient's total healthcare needs, provides personal care and guides the patient's use of the healthcare system.

South Carolina AHEC-affiliated programs trained 208 family medicine residents in eight residency program sites across the state. The South Carolina AHEC Family Medicine Residency Training Programs are located in Anderson, Charleston, Columbia, Florence, Greenville, Greenwood, Seneca and Spartanburg.



We are proud that all South Carolina AHEC Family Medicine Residencies are participating in the I3 Collaborative this year. This is a cooperative effort by primary care residency programs in South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia. The I3 mission is to positively impact the quality of care for patients by educating residents on practice transformation and developing content expertise in advanced primary care practice and quality improvement. The collaborative is presently focusing on improving population health by focusing on the "Triple Aim": patient experience, quality of care, and value.

Chuck Carter, M.D., Family Medicine Residency Training Program Director,
Palmetto Health Family Medicine Residency Program

Highlights

The USC School of Medicine, in collaboration with Francis Marion University, Carolinas Hospital Systems, and McLeod Regional Medical Center has formed the Pee Dee Health Education Partnership for the purpose of creating a new branch campus for the USC School of Medicine. During the 2014-2015 academic year, third-year medical students will complete six, one-week rotations in Florence throughout the year. The goals of the rotations are to have the students work directly with community preceptors, giving the students the opportunity to experience life in a vibrant rural community and to work where the actual practice of medicine occurs.

AnMed Health's Family Medicine Residency Program will celebrate 40 years in 2015 with 315 graduates serving South Carolina and worldwide. AnMed's well-received Sports Medicine Fellowship is in its ninth year and the AnMed Family Medicine Residency Program since 2001 has served as the initial year of training in a 1+2 rural Family Medicine Residency in Seneca affiliated with the GHS-Oconee Memorial Hospital. Additionally, the MUSC Board of Trustees and AnMed Health Board of Directors have finalized an agreement whereby up to 24 MUSC medical students (12 third-year and 12 fourth-year) will receive their final two years of training in Anderson beginning in the summer of 2015. The goal will be to attract students with Upstate backgrounds.

Notes from the Field

Sean Christensen, a medical student from USC, recounts his experience participating in the McLeod Foundation Fellowship and a community event sponsored by Pee Dee AHEC.

Our experience with the McLeod Regional Medical Center and the generosity of AHEC helped define what may be considered the “final summer” for medical students. Our time spent in the hospital working along with staff from many departments provided clarity into a future rich with opportunity and potential for rising physicians. We saw how critical it will be for us to collaborate and how valuable our input is so far as we express interest in, and encourage the participation of, our healthcare provider team.

Our ability to go to work each day with a refreshed mind could not have been achieved without the assistance of AHEC. [Pee Dee AHEC HPS Coordinators] Kam and Traci provided superb guidance in getting housing arranged and making sure that our questions and living requests were answered in full. The apartment was well kept, furnished to fit the personalities of those staying within, and pleasantly close to the hospital allowing for a quick commute each morning. In six weeks, our apartment became a second home where we could come back from the hospital, discuss interesting cases from the day, and simply relax. Additionally, the interprofessional living arrangements made for a great opportunity for health care providers from different tracks to share in others’ experiences and gain better insight into their respective roles. In our case it was among physicians and physician’s assistants.

When the students of the McLeod Foundation Fellowship were approached to help lead an interactive presentation at the Leatherman Senior Center, we were thrilled. Here was our opportunity to do more focused exploration on hypertension, stroke, nutrition, and exercise for the aging population while gaining the experience in presenting it in a palatable, understandable form that would hopefully make a difference. We enjoyed divvying up the work and designing our flyers, highlighting topics we found in research that would be relevant to those attending the senior center.

On the day of the event we could not have asked for a more intimate setting. I personally got to speak to attendees about exercise techniques that they could use on their own time, while explaining how just a little practice could go such a long way for their independence and health. By having medical students available in a face-to-face conversation, the seniors had the chance to ask questions, which were important to them and if we could answer, we would. As one would expect, there were certainly a few for which we recommended following up with their primary care physician. I gained immense self-confidence and enjoyed connecting with the attendees through these conversation-style sessions. With AHEC’s guidance and offer to let us lead this presentation, four medical students got a glimpse into the future: using their hearts and minds to make a difference.



Sean Christensen, pictured left, with fellow USC students at the senior center presentation: Elizabeth Kelly, Jessica Hoglund, Bryan Everitt

Upstate AHEC

South Carolina AHEC Regional Centers

Upstate AHEC achieved a milestone in 2014 with the purchase of a building to house the agency's headquarters. Upstate AHEC moved in May to the new location in the Patewood area of Greenville near Greenville Health Systems' and Bon Secours St. Francis Hospitals' campuses. The 5,000 square-foot building features 12 offices, a training center that holds 40 participants, an audio recording room and conference room. Upstate AHEC serves 11 counties in the Golden Corner and beyond and will continue to offer classes outside the Greenville area. The new building provides Upstate AHEC more flexibility in planning and conducting trainings on-site and will enable Upstate AHEC to have more face-to-face contact with regional healthcare professionals.

Also in 2014, Upstate AHEC enhanced the housing experience for its health professions students by adding much-needed student housing in the Greer area of Greenville County. The three-bedroom Greer apartment became "home away from home" to its first students in February. State funds from the rural infrastructure budget help Upstate AHEC provide the comfortable, rent-free housing alternative for in-state medical and allied health students who are engaged in clinical education in the Greenville/Spartanburg area. Upstate AHEC also provides student housing in Oconee County, serving communities and students alike in Seneca, Anderson and Pickens.

AHEC U, Upstate AHEC's distance learning, web-based training program for healthcare professionals, continues its rapid growth and now provides more than 165 courses that offer continuing education credit to various healthcare occupations. During the past year over 5,000 participants from South Carolina and other areas took an AHEC U web-based course for credit toward re-licensure. Nurses continue to use AHEC U more than any other healthcare provider group.

Finally, Clemson University and Upstate AHEC have partnered to provide continuing education modules to nursing faculty at colleges and universities. Funded by the Eli Lilly Foundation, the initiative will offer appropriate credit courses developed by Clemson University faculty and offered through AHEC U.

Falls Park, Greenville County



Recruitment & Retention

41

Rural dentists and 15 faculty members in MUSC's College of Dental Medicine have received loan repayments from the Rural Dentist Program since its inception in 2005.

181

Days of locum tenens services provided to physicians in rural and underserved areas of South Carolina in 2014.

The South Carolina AHEC has been committed to the recruitment and retention of healthcare professionals in the state through initiatives that have been ongoing and evolving for more than 40 years.

Rural Physician Program

The South Carolina AHEC Rural Physician Program was initiated by the South Carolina Legislature in 1989 to address the undersupply of clinicians in rural and underserved South Carolina communities. The program provides incentive grants for primary care physicians who commit to practice in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) for at least three years. In FY 2014, 16 physicians, five nurse practitioners and two physician assistants received funds from the Rural Physician Program. To date, 386 physicians and 50 advanced practice providers have been funded.

Rural Dentist Program

The Rural Dentist Program was established by the South Carolina Legislature in July 2005. The program assists with the repayment of educational loans for dentists who agree to practice in a HPSA or serve as a full-time faculty member in the MUSC College of Dental Medicine. Four rural dentists and five MUSC dental faculty were funded by the Rural Dentist Program in FY 2014.

Locum Tenens

The Locum Tenens Program is designed to support the practices and increase the retention of family practitioners and pediatricians in rural South Carolina by providing them with the opportunity for vacation and family time, continuing medical education conferences, or for other reasons that would require providers to be absent from their practices. Faculty from three of the South Carolina AHEC Family Medicine Residency Training Programs and a pediatrician from the USC School of Medicine provide Locum Tenens coverage for the state.

It has been a privilege to work in Ravenel and establish relationships with residents and provide oral health care to patients in this rural area. [It is] truly important for the patients in this area to have access to oral health care as well as the nearby communities without a dentist. The Rural Dentist [Loan Repayment Program] also helped give me the opportunity to volunteer at a free clinic in a rural area nearby so that I could further give back to my community. I do not know if it would have been possible without the assistance of the Rural Dentist Loan Repayment Program.

Dr. Sean Britton, Dentist Loan Repayment Recipient



Highlights

Fifty-two residents attended the South Carolina AHEC Residents' Scholarship Symposium in June. This meeting provided a unique opportunity for residents from all specialties to submit proposals to present research papers on basic research or quality improvement projects. A Chief Residents' Conference was also held at this meeting and residents received instruction on how to be effective chief residents and clinical teachers. This meeting was held in conjunction with the South Carolina Academy of Family Physicians' annual meeting.

In August, 95 medical students from the Medical University of South Carolina, University of South Carolina School of Medicine, the University of South Carolina School of Medicine Greenville, the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine – Carolinas Campus and 11 other medical schools attended the 2014 Rebecca S. Seignious Family Medicine Interest Day. Students participated in hands-on workshops provided by the South Carolina Family Medicine Residency Programs' faculty and residents as well as a recruitment fair hosted by the residency programs.

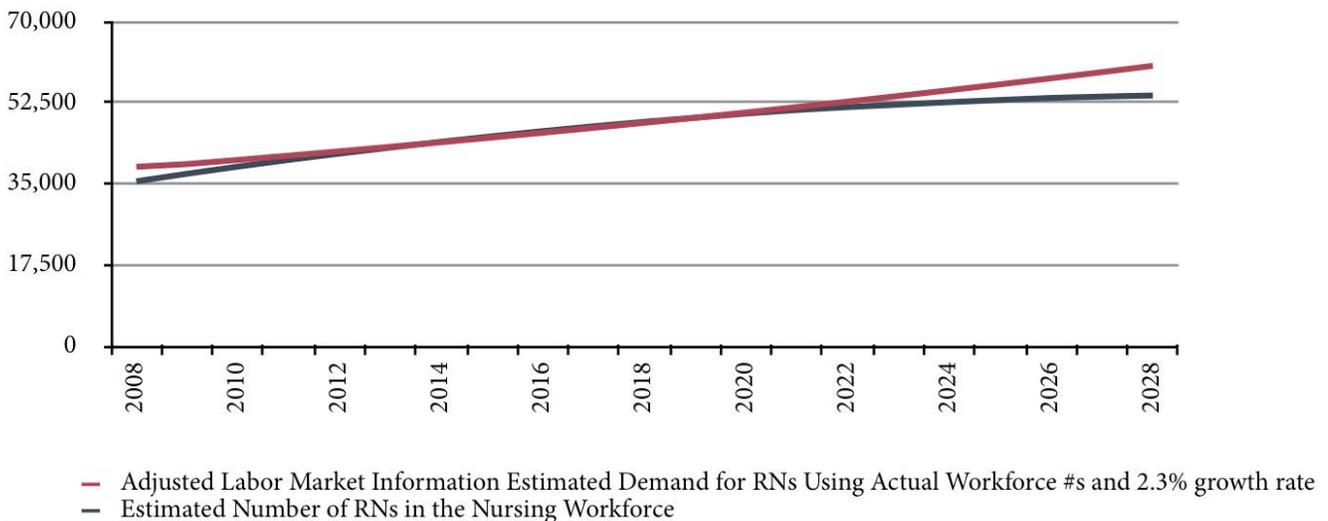
Office for Healthcare Workforce Analysis and Planning

The Office for Healthcare Workforce Analysis and Planning (OHW) is dedicated to studying the issues affecting the available supply of healthcare providers in South Carolina. Its primary mission is the development, analysis, and distribution of accurate, reliable data about the healthcare workforce in South Carolina in order to support planning and policy decisions— to ensure that the citizens of the state will have the number and types of healthcare providers they need in the future. OHW reports, policy briefs, data briefs and maps can all be downloaded free of charge from the website: www.officeforhealthcareworkforce.org.

Highlights

The Office for Healthcare Workforce Analysis and Planning developed estimation models of supply and demand for registered nurses (RNs) in the state of South Carolina in order to assess if or when a nursing shortage might develop in the state. The model for RNs projected the supply of nurses each year from 2008 until 2028 using a stock and flow methodology with age-specific estimates of various factors (gains and losses) that influence the total supply of RNs licensed and in the workforce in order to arrive at future estimates of supply for each year. The model of demand for RNs was based on information developed by the national Bureau of Labor and Statistics and the state Labor Market Information system. The result is an important tool that can be used by policy makers, educators and health care executives to develop actions and policies to counteract the historical trends that lead to a prediction of shortage after 2020. See the Office for Healthcare Workforce Analysis and Planning website for a summary report and a detailed technical report about the factors used in the models.

Supply and Demand Projections for the RN Workforce in South Carolina: 2008 - 2028



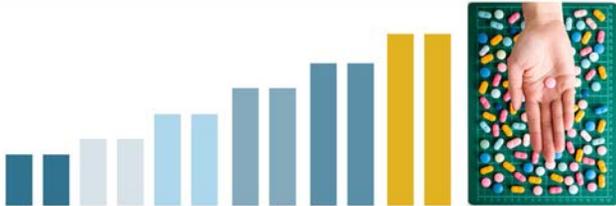


The Pharmacist Workforce in South Carolina

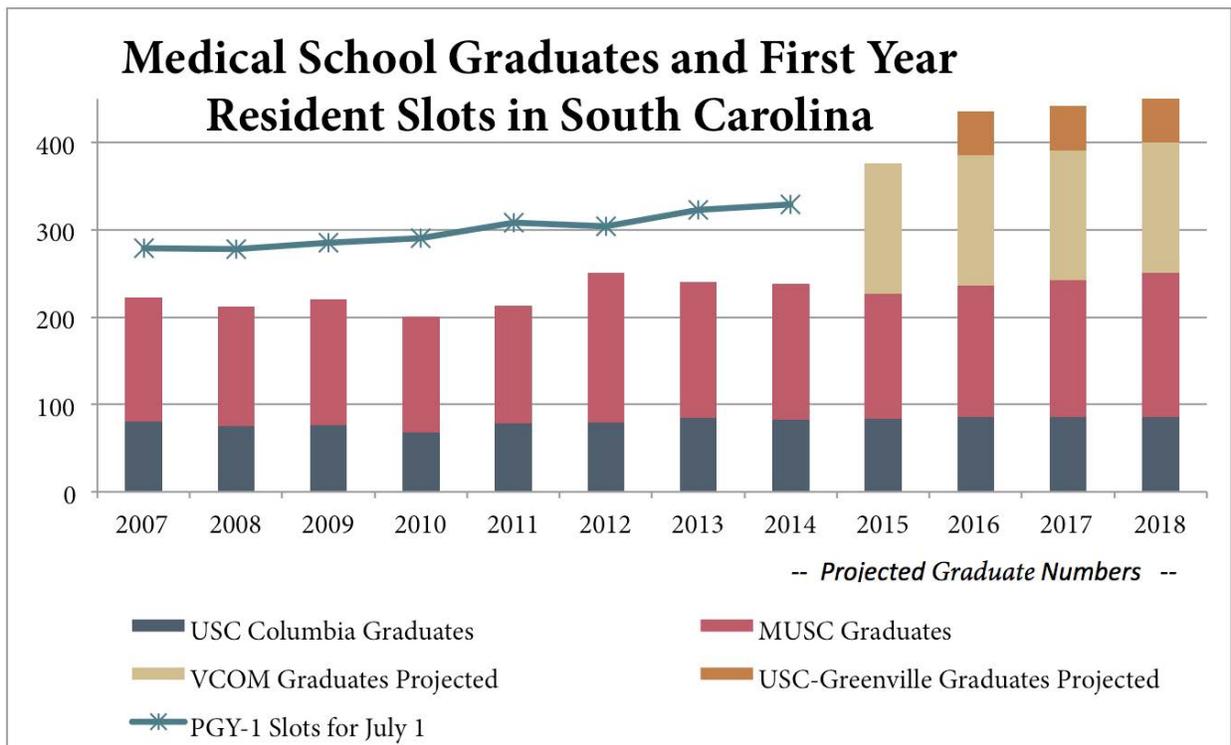
The OHW also released The Pharmacist Workforce in South Carolina report in February 2014. The traditional role of the pharmacist is expanding into more active involvement in patient care. Knowing the size and characteristics of the current pharmacist workforce in the state is valuable information for policy makers concerned with ensuring an adequate supply of pharmacists for South Carolina in the future. The report includes information about the number and types of pharmacists practicing in the state, their demographic characteristics, information about where and how much they practice, wages, and an estimation of the current balance between pharmacist supply and demand in South Carolina.



OHW also released the 2014 South Carolina Health Professions Data Book, a statistical reference book that reports the number and distribution of licensed healthcare providers practicing in the state. The data book also includes a variety of community factors that reflect or influence the health of the population, all organized by county and planning/service regions. This publication is a resource for state, county and local planning groups as they address healthcare needs and access issues. It is also valuable to anyone seeking information about health and healthcare resources in their local communities.



During the fall of 2013, the OHW worked closely with the DHHS Graduate Medical Education (GME) Taskforce in order to provide contextual information to their discussions about the primary care workforce in the state, undergraduate and graduate medical education capacity, and how GME funding streams could be used to address the maldistribution of primary care providers in rural and low income areas in South Carolina. The GME Task Force published their recommendations in January 2014.



For more information, visit the Office for Healthcare Workforce Analysis and Planning website at www.officeforhealthcareworkforce.org.

South Carolina AHEC

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The South Carolina AHEC joined AHECs from across the country at the 2014 National AHEC Organization Conference in Charlotte, NC. Members of South Carolina AHEC shared a total of 16 presentations encompassing interprofessional practice, community health worker programs, assessing continuing education outcomes, workforce data and analysis, and the health professions pipeline. South Carolina AHEC staff brought back many innovative ideas from the inspiring conference and look forward to putting these ideas to work.

Mid-Carolina AHEC CE Coordinator Rebecca Jackson, R.N., B.S.N.; Upstate AHEC CE Coordinator Bennie Pettit, M.S.; and Lowcountry AHEC Center Director Diane Mathews, M.S. at their NAO presentation, "Assessing Continuing Education Outcomes."

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