

South Carolina Area Health Education Consortium

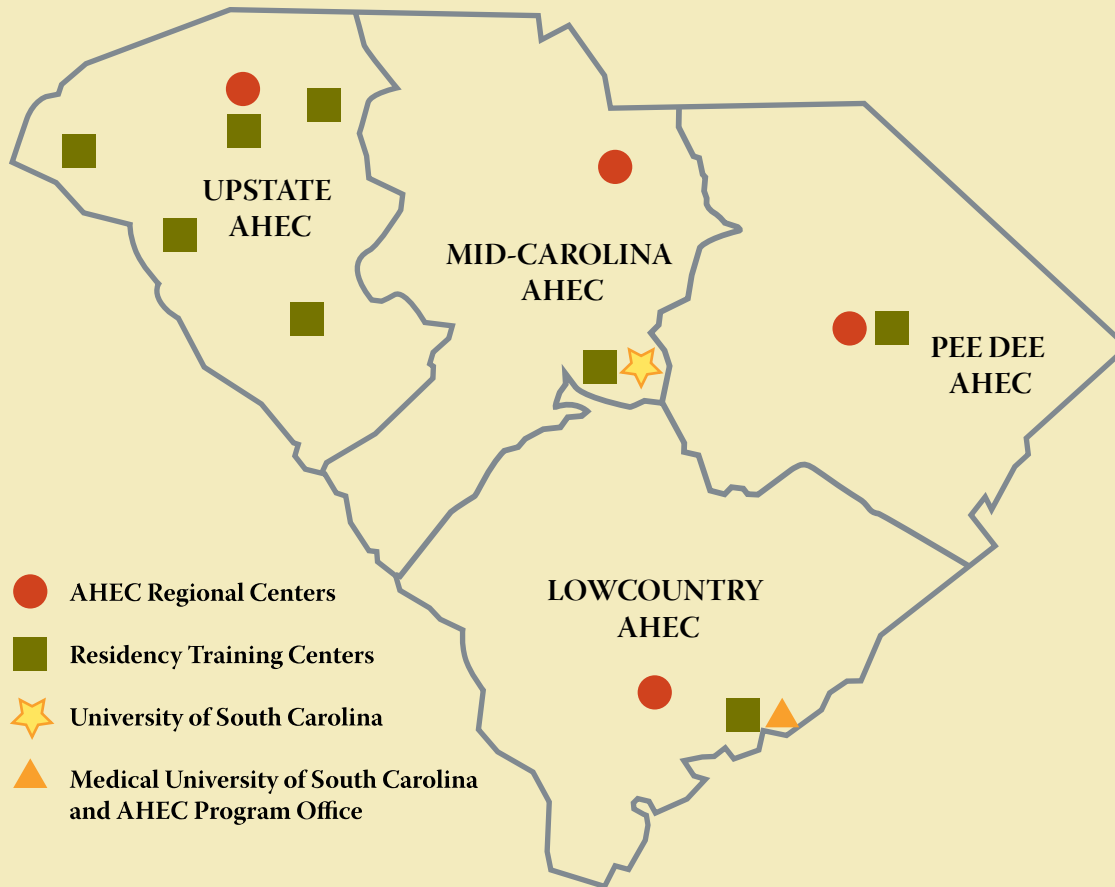
2006 ANNUAL REPORT

*Connecting Students to Careers,
Professionals to Communities, and
Communities to Better Health*



**SOUTH
CAROLINA AHEC**
Excellence In Health Care Through Education

South Carolina AHEC System



- AHEC Regional Centers
- Residency Training Centers
- ★ University of South Carolina
- ▲ Medical University of South Carolina and AHEC Program Office

VISION

To be a leader in building a collaborative educational system designed to optimize the health of South Carolinians.

CORE VALUES

Excellence, Integrity, Effectiveness, Professionalism, Service, Efficiency

MISSION

To achieve excellence in health care through recruitment, retention, and education.

www.scahec.net



Message from the Executive Director

The South Carolina AHEC was established in 1972 as one of the first eleven AHECs in the country. Since that time, we have provided a wide range of programs and services to the residents of our state. A spirit of collaboration and cooperation is the secret to our success. As is reflected in this report, we are engaged in activities on many fronts, all consistent with the vision, mission, and core values of the South Carolina AHEC.

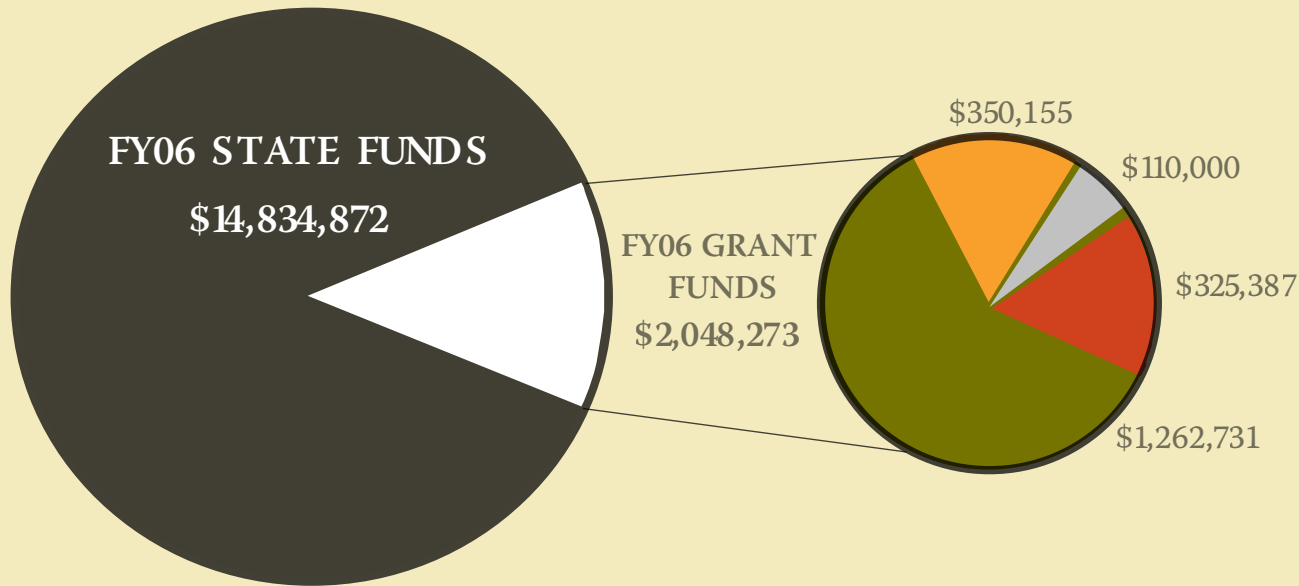
This 2006 annual report provides an overview of some of the excellent programs with which the South Carolina AHEC is associated. There were many positive developments during the year. One of particular note was the South Carolina AHEC being chosen to receive the 2006 Eugene S. Mayer Program of Excellence Award. There are 47 AHECs in the United States and this award is given to the nation's outstanding AHEC Program. This recognition is a tribute to all of the great work and dedication of the many people who are presently working within the AHEC system as well as those who preceded us. A special ceremony conferring the award was held at the annual meeting of the National AHEC Organization in July 2006.

South Carolina is changing rapidly, with projections that we will be among the fastest growing states in the nation. This will present opportunities and challenges to us, and the provision of accessible, high quality health care services will continue to be a very high priority. Those of us working within the South Carolina AHEC are proud of our accomplishments, yet we are mindful of the need to prepare for the future. I look forward to working with the dedicated AHEC employees and our many partners as we continue on our quest to contribute to the development of the most effective, accessible, and responsive health care system for South Carolina.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David R. Garr". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David R. Garr, MD
Executive Director
South Carolina AHEC

Funding Overview



- FY06 GRANT FUNDS
- BIOTERRORISM TRAINING & CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT (DHHS, HRSA*)
- BUILDING COALITIONS TO INCREASE THE DIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE (THE DUKE ENDOWMENT)
- STATE SUPPORTED MODEL AHEC (DHHS, HRSA)
- STATE LOAN REPAYMENT (DHHS, HRSA)

In addition to state and federal support, the South Carolina AHEC affiliated institutions expended in excess of \$59,293,122 in local funds in FY06 to support the organization's mission and goals.

*DHHS = Department of Health & Human Services HRSA = Health Resources and Services Administration



Health Careers Program

Health professions exploration is the central focus of the South Carolina Health Careers Program (HCP). The activities of the HCP are consistently geared to providing structured programming to increase the number of students entering the health professions in South Carolina. Emphasis is placed on minority and disadvantaged students in order to address disparities in the state's health professions workforce.

The 2006 fiscal year was spent developing and implementing the Health Careers Academy (HCA). The HCA is a four-year, interactive, educational program designed to provide academic enrichment and personal development activities for minority and disadvantaged high school students considering careers in health care. Even as the Health Careers Program Coordinators prepared for the fall 2006 implementation of the new Academy, a wide variety of health career exploration, skills development, and academic enhancement opportunities were provided to 396 students who were previously involved in the program.

Included among the program highlights were the pilot implementation of the Dental Careers Program along with the Third Annual Nursing Careers Program. These one-week

summer programs are designed to help students prepare for entry into dental and nursing education programs. Twenty-six undergraduate students from across the state successfully completed the programs.

“My involvement with South Carolina AHEC helped further develop my interest in medicine. My experience with the program allowed me to meet many outstanding people in the health care arena; this helped motivate me to continue in my chosen field.”

- Lowcountry AHEC HCP Participant

Additional accomplishments include:

- o This year's South Carolina AHEC Future Health Professionals' Leadership Institute was held at Furman University and was an engaging four-day residential program for high school and college students interested in exploring health care careers. The program included activities and interactive sessions on academic and career planning and basic health skills training. Over 120 high school and college students attended presentations given by practicing health professionals who graduated from the Health Careers Program and by educators from the Upstate region.
- o 203 programs for 20,650 hours of activity were provided by the regional AHEC Health Careers Programs.
- o Students attending 43 middle and high schools in 13 counties of South Carolina were served by HCP programs.

Health Professions Student Program



The South Carolina AHEC Health Professions Student (HPS) Program collaborates with health professions programs from universities in our state to provide community-based education for undergraduate and graduate students. These experiences are designed to expose students to the realities of clinical practice in rural and underserved areas and to introduce them to populations as a focus for health improvements.

This past year the HPS Program served 763 students from 20 academic programs and provided 1,969 weeks of housing. Disciplines served included medicine, physician assistant, dental medicine, nursing (multiple levels), pharmacy, rehabilitation sciences, social work, public health, nutrition, and health education. Students were guided by 516 preceptors in various health care settings. Students participating in AHEC placements came from the Medical University of South Carolina, the University of South Carolina, South Carolina State University, Winthrop University, Francis Marion University, Clemson University and several out-of-state institutions.

The South Carolina AHEC has been chosen by several programs to be the primary community placement organization for their health professions programs. AHEC has worked for years with the MUSC Family Medicine

Clerkship and the Physician Assistant Program to place students in the community and help students with community health improvement projects. The AHEC sites were also selected to work with MUSC on community placement for professional students taking the on-line course for the RN to BSN degree where working RNs can complete didactic requirements online, and then the South Carolina AHEC helps arrange clinical rotations within their community.

“Without a doubt, this has been the best experience of my medical school career. This is also the reason that I have decided to go into Family Practice.”

- Family Medicine Rural Clerkship Student from Pee Dee AHEC

The very successful 13 year-old rural interdisciplinary project known as SCRIPT offered five sessions across the state during the summer of 2006. Funded by a grant obtained by the Lowcountry AHEC, SCRIPT is an interdisciplinary practicum offering students an opportunity to experience rural life and practice in rural health care settings. Students earned up to six semester hours of academic credit depending on their academic program year. In 2006, there were 73 students in 20 counties representing 10 disciplines and six universities. Since 1993, there have been 688 SCRIPT graduates.

In the coming year, the HPS program will continue to place students in community rotations, support a revised SCRIPT project, and explore new models for year-round interprofessional education.



Continuing Education

The Continuing Education (CE) Program continues to serve the educational needs of practicing health care professionals at or near their workplace. Programs are designed to allow health care professionals to enhance their clinical skills, maintain their professional certification, and help rural hospitals maintain their accreditation. CE Coordinators work collaboratively with councils of government, foundations, public health departments, special health care associations and groups to assess educational needs. CE Coordinators then work with academic programs, health care associations, and health educators to design programs to address the identified needs. The CE “Best Practice Standards” are employed in the development of all programming.

During this past year, the South Carolina AHEC system offered a total of 780 programs with 4,956 hours of programming to more than 27,000 participants.

Special attention was given to educational offerings for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. All sites participated in the ongoing quarterly pharmacy updates produced by the MUSC campus of the South Carolina College of Pharmacy. Sites also expanded their services to include training for pharmacy technician certification. New requirements for certification in recent years have increased the need for these

programs. Other offerings that were designed to address the maintenance of licensure and certification for participants included Critical Care RN review, Pediatric Critical Care Nurse review, Medical Surgical review, and American Heart Association certification.

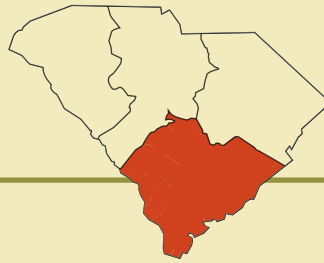
CE courses are also provided to enhance basic skills such as adult physical assessment, pediatric physical assessment, wound management and fall prevention. Professional development programs addressed topics such as legal issues in nursing and leadership skills for health professionals. A statewide conference provided special instruction on how nursing leaders can bring the Magnet concept to their hospitals, thereby improving the work environment for all nurses and the quality of patient outcomes.

AHEC regional CE Coordinators continued to collaborate with health professions associations and societies by co-sponsoring annual conferences and symposia such as the South Carolina School Nurse Conference, a trauma symposium, a renal disease symposium, and a HIV/STD conference. Collaborations and educational offerings will continue to be developed to meet the training needs of South Carolina’s health professions workforce.

“Thanks to this wonderful presenter, I leave this seminar with a refreshed hope to continue my career until retirement.”

*- Pee Dee AHEC
CE Participant*

Lowcountry AHEC



The Lowcountry AHEC service area encompasses a 12-county area in the lower part of the state as varied as it is unique. Historic Charleston has its beautiful beaches, while the rural counties offer many historic, cultural, and recreational opportunities.

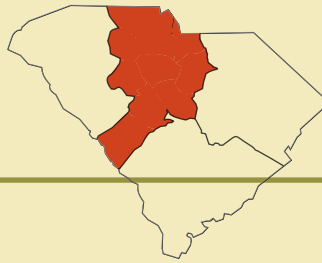
Partnerships and collaborations describe the work underway at Lowcountry AHEC. Three years ago, Colleton Medical Center and Lowcountry AHEC teamed up to develop a summer internship program to increase the number and diversity of health professionals in the area. The following summer, the Colleton Medical Center/Lowcountry AHEC Summer Internship Program was born. Since then, over 30 local students have spent their summers learning about health careers by shadowing professionals, learning new skills, and developing relationships. As of now, 20 students have graduated from high school, 14 of whom are enrolled at a university or in a health care program, and one student is working as an EMT in Hampton County.

Lowcountry AHEC's association with community groups and agencies has provided an opportunity to improve health outcomes, while enabling high school and health professions students to have a real life education in community health improvement. The Cardiovascular Health project is administered by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and partners with Lowcountry AHEC and others to increase stroke awareness and improve

outcomes for individuals with heart disease. Lowcountry AHEC students have conducted blood pressure screenings, education sessions, and assisted with improvements of local EMS systems. A total of 214 community members and Hampton county middle and high school students have been taught life saving CPR.

Childhood obesity is a national, state and local concern. Three years ago, the Coalition Organized to Address Children's Health (COACH) was formed. Lowcountry AHEC was a founding member along with many other groups including Clemson University Extension Program, Colleton Medical Center, the local school district, and the Chamber of Commerce. Lowcountry AHEC's South Carolina Rural Interdisciplinary Program of Training (SCRIPT), MUSC's Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program, and MUSC's Family Medicine Rural Clerkship students have assisted COACH in various ways. They have provided nutrition and exercise classes and organized, facilitated, and evaluated health fairs at the local farmer's markets. Since its inception, COACH has expanded too, and remarkable outcomes include the removal of soda machines from the local schools and nutritional improvement of cafeteria food choices.

In 2007, Lowcountry AHEC will continue to partner with community-based projects, fostering experiences designed to inspire future health professionals to become involved in community programs to improve the health of their patients.



Mid-Carolina AHEC

Mid-Carolina AHEC facilitates health professions recruitment, education and training through Continuing Education, Health Careers Awareness and Health Professions Student services in an 11-county region stretching across the state from North Carolina to Georgia.

In 2006, seven high school and college students participated in the Pharmacy Technician Certification Program. Mid-Carolina AHEC provided access to resources, educational support and proctoring for these students over the course of eight months. Upon completion of the online course requirements, students were eligible to take the National Pharmacy Technician Certification Board exam. The initial class of seven students recorded a 100% pass rate on the national certification board and they are all now practicing in South Carolina. Through AHEC's continuing education programs, these practicing professionals will continue to receive access to educational resources and competency-based professional development opportunities.

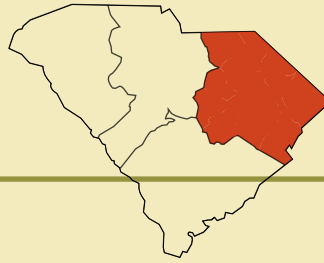
During 2006, 116 health care providers in the Mid-Carolina AHEC region welcomed students into their workplace and dedicated their time to the education of future health care professionals in our state. In an effort to enrich the students' clinical and "real world" experiences, AHEC provided housing for students to live in the community. While participating in health promotion activities, students worked closely with preceptors, patients, and community

leaders. Numerous health care providers and community members who enrich the students' experiences through their contribution, support and interaction with students during their community rotations.

The bustling town of Newberry, South Carolina provides an excellent example of the dynamic interaction between health professions students and the community. In 2006, Mid-Carolina AHEC supported 18 students from the fields of medicine, nursing and public health in clinical rotations throughout Newberry County. Students received discipline-specific training in four family practices sites and spent a total of 90 weeks working in Newberry County. They were able to "give back" to the community through 14 health promotion projects with local organizations. The health promotion projects targeted specific needs identified by the community, such as breast cancer risk factors, teen pregnancy, alcohol and drug use prevention, healthy nutrition, physical and fitness. One health promotion project resulted in Newberry County Memorial Hospital's Board of Directors approving the formation of a hospital committee to address implementation of smoke-free policies which ultimately led to a smoke-free facility.

As a convener of people, Mid-Carolina AHEC staff leverages limited financial and human resources to support excellence in health care through education.

Pee Dee AHEC



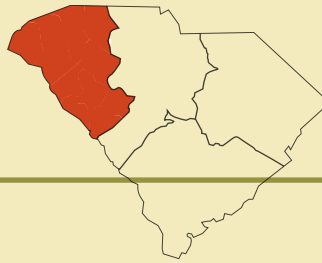
Since 1975, Pee Dee AHEC has served the 12 counties located in the rural northeastern area of South Carolina known as the Pee Dee. Today, Pee Dee AHEC continues this tradition by providing excellence in health care through education to a regional population of approximately one million. Pee Dee AHEC's wide range of health education services are provided through collaborative efforts between specialty health care facilities, practices, and professional associations.

In the spring of 2006, Pee Dee AHEC collaborated with the Department of Nursing at Francis Marion University to cosponsor a series of programs designed to train nurses to effectively precept new nurse employees and student nurses. With the current and projected nursing shortage, it is imperative not only to retain nurses in the workplace but also to enhance the training and satisfaction of student nurses. Recognizing the importance of the role of the nursing preceptor, Sylvia Lufkin, Ed.D, the Chair of the Department of Nursing, contacted Pee Dee AHEC for assistance in providing this training. As a result of this collaboration, 195 nurses from hospitals, mental health facilities, rehabilitation centers, health departments, public schools, and higher education received preceptor training preparing them to positively influence the retention of new nurses and facilitate the student nurse's transition to becoming a competent graduate nurse.

In April of 2006, Pee Dee AHEC and Mercy Hospice and Palliative Care co-sponsored the Claire Chapin Epps Memorial Palliative Care Day at Pawley's Island. Physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, social workers, counselors, case managers, chaplains, long-term care administrators, and pharmacists received information on improving the quality of life by controlling symptoms and providing effective pain management for patients who are not responsive to curative treatment.

Also in 2006, Judy Jones, Health Careers Program Coordinator for Pee Dee AHEC, successfully completed national certification as a Global Career Development Facilitator (GCDF). As a result of this training, Ms. Jones can now provide a new level of expertise to help students assess their individual needs and assist with successful career planning strategies. Ms. Jones' career development training will also complement the goal of the South Carolina AHEC's new Health Careers Academy, which is designed to develop culturally competent, resilient, academically proficient, and self-confident future health care professionals.

In 2007, Pee Dee AHEC plans to develop additional health professions student programs as well as continue collaborative educational partnerships with regional institutions, health care professionals and underserved communities, all designed to improve health care for the Pee Dee region.



Upstate AHEC

Upstate AHEC serves eleven counties located in the northwestern corner of South Carolina. Often described as the fastest growing region in South Carolina, the Upstate boasts a growing number of international corporations, four world-class teaching hospitals, and the most populated county in the state. This newer urban face is balanced in the Upstate by an enduring rural nature and a wealth of small, friendly towns where health care providers still know and serve multiple generations of the same family.

Whether urban or rural, however, virtually all Upstate communities have experienced a dramatic increase in their Hispanic population during the last decade, an increase not limited to the region but felt throughout South Carolina. These increases have challenged the state's health care systems and have raised concerns regarding our ability to effectively respond to the medical needs of this growing, often limited-English-proficient patient group.

In response to this issue, Upstate AHEC sought and received a three-year federal grant to increase the cultural competencies of South Carolina nurses with a primary focus on the delivery of quality health care to the Hispanic population. The goal of the Cross Cultural Healthcare Project is to motivate, equip, and assist a cadre of nurses to enhance the cultural proficiency of the organizations in which they practice. Nurses were targeted because, as key

members of almost every health care team, they are ideally positioned to influence the values and behaviors of systems as well as fellow practitioners. Project components include seven regional, four-day training Institutes, participant research and publishing opportunities, and three annual statewide conferences. Already underway in the Upstate, project activities will expand into the other three South Carolina AHEC regions during the next two years.

In 2006, Upstate AHEC also introduced its Healthcare Leadership Diagnostic Services through testing at Abbeville Area Medical Center (AAMC). Testing included a customized online survey of all AAMC managers followed by focus groups that clarified and refined initial assumptions, ultimately leading to reports summarizing results and offering recommendations for strengthening individual and organizational effectiveness. Alvin Hoover, AAMC's Chief Executive Officer, was so pleased with the ease of the process and the usefulness of the information obtained that he asked Upstate AHEC to create and deliver an on-site leadership development curriculum built upon survey results and recommendations. Partial funding for this two-year project will come from the SC Office of Rural Health.

In 2007, Upstate AHEC will continue to adapt to the growing and changing population of its region by providing needed services to health care professionals and organizations alike.

Family Medicine Residency Training Programs

In 2002, eight national Family Medicine groups began formulating the “Future of Family Medicine Project,” designed to be implemented at the graduate medical education level in order to “transform and renew the discipline of family medicine to meet the needs of patients in a changing health care environment.” The South Carolina AHEC Family Medicine Residency Training Programs are recognized nationally for innovative leadership and for collaborative efforts in recruitment and education of the future family physicians for our state and nation. Brief highlights from the efforts of each program follow.

In Columbia, a mandatory two weeks of practice management education has been implemented. Residents spend time with billing, insurance, reception, office managers and hospital administrators in addition to the physicians during this rotation. They also attend a monthly business meeting for this multi-office practice.

The program in Spartanburg has developed an elective medical leadership track for residents. This program is designed to prepare future physicians as leaders in their communities, their hospitals, and in the political arenas where important decisions about the future of our country’s health care system are made.

In Greenville, “Open Access” scheduling means that most appointments are left open until the same day. Patients are

almost always seen on the day they request the appointment. Patients are more satisfied, and the number of emergency room visits and hospital admissions have been reduced.

In Anderson, group visits are offered for diabetic patients. This is part of a three year, grant-funded project to address quality improvement issues in people with diabetes. This is a collaborative effort that involves residency programs in Spartanburg, Columbia and two residencies in North Carolina.

In Greenwood, patient and employee satisfaction has been prioritized. The Fundamentals in Critical Care Course is an effort to improve residents’ knowledge in the care of critically ill patients. The program has also developed a full-time medication assistance resource for all indigent patients needing assistance with their medication.

In Seneca, daily office hours for every resident and faculty member permit patients to see their primary care physician within one day of a request for an appointment. Also, a quality improvement project initiated by the residents has resulted in improvements in the hospital care of critically ill sepsis patients in the Intensive Care Unit.

In Charleston, several innovations in patient care and graduate medical education have been introduced. Residents are assigned a consistent schedule for patient care activities



for the entire year, providing improved continuity of care for their patients. Also, the program is incorporating group visits for patients with diabetes mellitus and has incorporated practice guidelines into routine patient care. These initiatives have resulted in demonstrable improvement in several nationally recognized quality indicators.

In Florence, the practice received a grant to improve resident communication skills using the AMA Health

Literacy guidelines to impact blood pressure control. Once learned, these guidelines will be applied to all patient encounters to improve outcomes. In addition, electronic medical records are providing a better system to track the progress each resident's patient is making.

Results from these residency initiatives will provide useful information that will be shared among the eight family medicine residency programs.

2005 SC AHEC Residency Training Programs		
	Residents in Training	Graduates
Family Medicine	191	68
General Internal Medicine	61	21
General Pediatrics	54	18
General Surgery	41	9
Ob/Gyn	31	6
Emergency Medicine	28	8
Orthopedics	25	5
Psychiatry/General	16	4
Med/Peds ¹	16	0
<i>¹New Program Began 7/1/2002</i>		

Recruitment & Retention



The South Carolina AHEC has been committed to the recruitment and retention of health care professionals in the state through initiatives that have been ongoing and evolving for over 30 years. The following initiatives help to ensure access for all South Carolinians to quality health care providers in rural and underserved areas of the state.

FAMILY MEDICINE INTEREST DAY

The Family Medicine Interest Day was established in 1990 to encourage medical students to choose the specialty of Family Medicine. Medical students from throughout the southeast are invited to attend. Four years ago, the Family Medicine Residency Training Program Directors designed a unique experience whereby students could participate in hands-on workshops provided by the Family Medicine Residency Programs in South Carolina. This has become very popular and draws students from a number of medical schools. Many students have been recruited into South Carolina Family Medicine Residency Training Programs as a result of their attendance at this event.

LOCUM TENENS PROGRAM

The Locum Tenens Program provides assistance to family medicine and pediatric physicians who work in rural or isolated practice sites by allowing the physicians time away from their practices. One hundred fifty two (152)

days of coverage were provided during the 2005 fiscal year to family medicine and pediatric practices located in rural and underserved communities.

ANNUAL RESIDENTS' SYMPOSIUM

This is an opportunity for residents from all specialties to submit proposals to present the results of original research studies, case reports, clinical reviews, or quality improvement initiatives of interest to a primary care audience. A Chief Residents' Conference designed to impart skills on how to be an effective chief resident and an effective clinical teacher also occurs during this two-day meeting.

NOON CONFERENCES

Residency programs are visited twice each year to receive information about South Carolina AHEC Recruitment and Retention Programs. This is an opportunity to provide information to the residents about practice opportunities, incentives, events they can participate in, and updates regarding the statewide AHEC system.

RURAL PHYSICIAN PROGRAM AND NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS' STATE LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

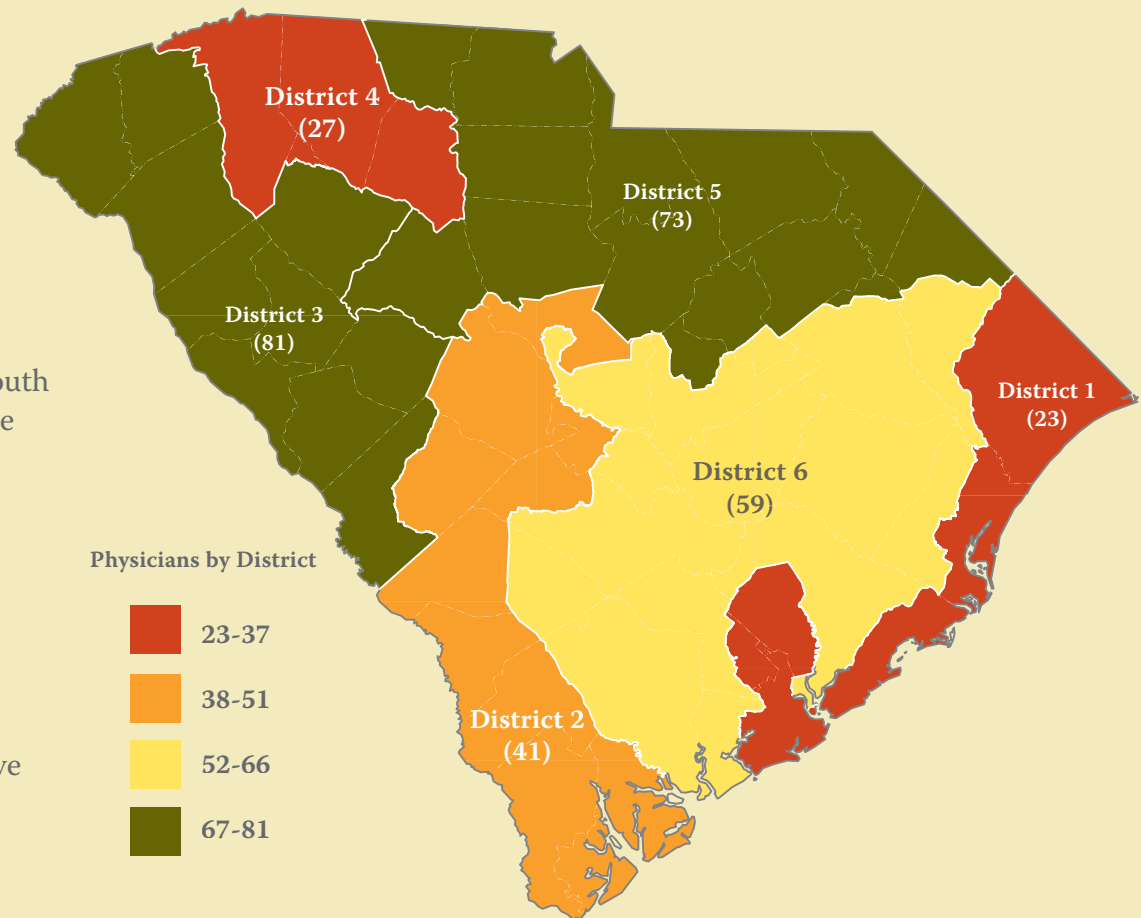
The Rural Physician Program and the National Health Service Corps' State Loan Repayment Program have greatly improved access for patients seeking health care

in the rural and underserved areas of the state by placing physicians and advanced level practitioners in these areas. Many of these providers would not have elected to go to these areas without the help of loan repayment and grant incentives. To date, 322 physicians and 31 advanced level providers have been placed in underserved areas, with an overall retention rate of 85% since 1989.

DENTAL LOAN REPAYMENT

The newest recruitment initiative for the South Carolina AHEC began in July 2005 when the South Carolina Legislature allocated funds to establish the Rural Dentist Program. This program allows dentists in Health Professional Shortage Areas to apply for funds to help them repay educational loans in exchange for a four-year commitment to an underserved area. Some of these funds are also used to help dental faculty repay student loans. These dentists might not have been able to join and remain on the MUSC College of Dental Medicine faculty without this financial support. In 2005, four rural dentists and four faculty members received loan repayment support.

Distribution of Rural Physician Program Grant Recipients from 1989-2005 by Congressional District



Disaster Preparedness & Response Training Network

Building on its first two successful years, the South Carolina AHEC Disaster Preparedness and Response Training (DPRT) grant achieved many exciting goals during its third year. This year saw the project move from awareness-based to competency-based training. Competencies were defined for each program area, pre- and post-tests were administered for all competency-based programs, and evaluations took a fresh look at outcomes.

Some of the more outstanding outcomes included the development of a PEACE card that provides information about how to prepare for emergencies and delivery of a highly successful training module on preparing a family's survival kit. This program has enjoyed great success and is in high demand from a variety of health professions disciplines.

This year's activity focused on the needs of special populations including the elderly and children. For the elderly, the focus was on long-term care facilities and training caregivers in



“This program should be seen by every person that might be involved in an incident.”

- Lowcountry AHEC DPRT Participant

that setting. A long-term care training module for certified nursing assistants was developed and was integrated into the curricula for all Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training programs in the state. This module will also be used to train CNAs currently working in nursing homes across South Carolina. For the children, grant activities focused on school nurses. An introductory program was presented to multiple school districts and at the annual South Carolina Association of School Nurses' meeting. In addition, grant funds were used to develop an emergency resource chart for schools which was distributed to 1,200 school principals across South Carolina.

As training moved toward more hands-on activities, a new curriculum for the pre-admission decontamination (DECON) of contaminated patients arriving at hospitals was developed and piloted with great success. A Mass Casualty module was also produced that contained triage instructions. The DECON and triage programs are being done in collaboration with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control



and the South Carolina Hospital Association.

Another exciting component of the DPRT grant is the creation of a resource library for all the national grantees. The resource library is designed to inventory all products developed by these grantees, thereby enabling the exchange of existing and future materials. The South Carolina AHEC was honored to be selected to provide this technical interface for the nation.



They both shared their personal stories and gave advice from their personal and professional perspectives on how to survive a catastrophic event during a series of workshops held in each of the South Carolina AHEC regions.

This coming year will see the DPRT grant redirecting its efforts to provide training to address 16 federally-defined preparedness capabilities. Each program will have a hands-on activity such as a tabletop exercise, mock drill, or skills demonstration. Performance will be assessed and level of learning will be demonstrated for all program participants in order to ensure a proper response in the event of a natural or man-made disaster.

A final highlight that brought an individual focus to the grant efforts was the sponsorship of two health professionals from the Gulf Coast region devastated by Hurricane Katrina to speak about lessons learned during and after the disaster.

Michel Deck was a New Orleans nurse with years of experience training health care professionals. She lost her home and practice during Katrina. Dr. Brian Anthony was a Gulf Coast physician who stayed behind to minister to the needs of the community in this disaster.



Learn more about the Disaster Preparedness & Response Training Network at www.scahec.net/prepares

Building Coalitions To Increase Workforce Diversity

The South Carolina AHEC has been fortunate to partner with The Duke Endowment on a project entitled, “Building Coalitions to Increase the Diversity of the South Carolina Health Care Workforce”. The focus for this initiative is to develop broad-based coalitions in each of the four AHEC regions. These coalitions, with members representing health care, education, government, business and industry, religious



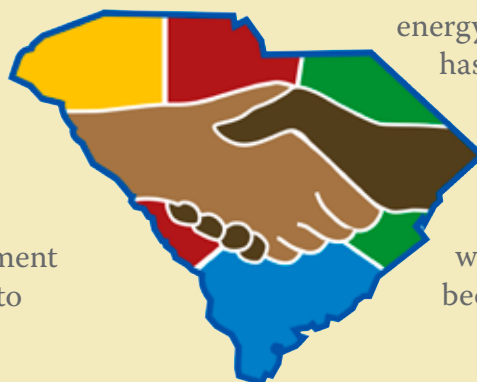
communities, and others are working to increase the number of young people interested in pursuing careers in health care.

The Duke Endowment awarded the South Carolina AHEC a one-year grant in 2005 to organize the coalitions. In 2006, the Endowment made an additional three-year commitment to

support this program. Each of the coalitions has become well organized and very active, all working together to plan new programs and services to identify and support middle school students who have an interest in health care. Areas of focus for this program include: Parental involvement, mentorship, academic achievement, student motivation, and information for teachers.



To our knowledge, this is a unique statewide program. The energy and enthusiasm within each of the coalitions has been most impressive. It is quite possible that a successful outcome from this program will serve as a national model for mobilizing communities on behalf of increasing the number of underrepresented minority students who are successful in achieving their goals of becoming health care professionals.



Coalitions for Health Careers

PROMOTING DIVERSITY IN HEALTHCARE

Information Services

The South Carolina AHEC Information Services website serves graduate medical education residents and faculty, health professionals, rural hospitals, and health clinics in rural and underserved communities of South Carolina. The Information Services website offers a rich variety of materials for medicine, nursing, and allied health consumers throughout South Carolina. During the period of July 2003 – June 2006, the most heavily used resources included online journals, PubMed for literature searching, medical textbooks, nursing materials, practice guidelines, and the popular Hands-On-Health website for consumer information.

In addition to the online materials, AHEC Information Services offers reference services, literature searches through online databases, and same-day document delivery through the National Library of Medicine's Loansome DOC Program. Information Services has 155 registered Loansome DOC users throughout the state. By using Loansome DOC, users have received 16,221 articles at a savings of \$178,231.



During the period of July 2003 – June 2006, the number of daily visits to the site has climbed from 221 to 474 and the number of unique users (individual computers) per month has risen from 363 to 540. Presently, there are 1,263 active accounts for individual users throughout the state. This changes each year as residents arrive and depart. Information Services also provides on-site training across South Carolina to help health care professionals start using this web-based interface.

Plans for 2006-2007 include contacting the CEOs, medical directors, and directors of nursing at small hospitals in South Carolina to make them aware of the services offered. In addition, community health centers and rural preceptors will be encouraged to take advantage of the services in order to better educate the next generation of health care professionals in South Carolina.

The Information Services website is housed in the Medical University of South Carolina Library and can be accessed at www.scahec.net and <http://ahec.library.musc.edu>.



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