

**Mississippi Area Health Education Center
Point of Service Maintenance and Enhancement Program**



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AHEC was established by the federal government in the late 1970's as programs designed to address health manpower distribution through community based initiatives. Established in 1998, the Mississippi Area Health Education Center– (MS AHEC) is partially funded by Health Resource and Service Administration (HRSA) and awarded under the Point of Service Enhancement & Maintenance (POS) awards. The MS AHEC is under the leadership of Dr. Stephen Silberman with Dr. Diane Beebe as Chair of the Department of Family Medicine linking the resources of university health science centers with local planning, educational, and clinical resources. This network of health-related institutions provides multidisciplinary educational services to students, faculty, and local practitioners to improve the health care delivery in medically underserved areas.

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 provided new emphasis for developing a health care workforce that meets the needs of communities for primary care. Under the law, there are new opportunities for developing and implementing strategies to provide community-based education to individuals seeking careers in health professions. There is renewed interest in recruiting individuals from underrepresented minority populations or people from disadvantaged backgrounds or rural backgrounds into health careers and recognition of the variety of health professions who provide primary health care. For example, participation in interdisciplinary training involving physicians, nurse practitioners, nurse midwives, dentists, psychologists, pharmacists, optometrists, community health workers, public and allied health

professions or other health professionals is not only encouraged but a required activity for the Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) program.

Enhancing the Practice Environment

Mission:

Mississippi Area Health Education Centers Program (AHEC) at the University of Mississippi Medical Center aims to increase the number of graduates in the health professions, with specific emphasis in underrepresented minority and/or disadvantaged students in primary care, to ultimately practice in medically underserved communities. The Mississippi Area Health Education Centers are academic community-based partnerships focusing on results that improve the supply, distribution, diversity, and quality of health care providers followed by an increase in access to health care services by consumers, provide training sites in medically underserved areas, and programs responsive to both State and local community health care delivery needs.

Developing Access to Statewide Community Healthcare

The Mississippi Area Health Education Center at the University of Mississippi Medical Center is a statewide health professions network dedicated to improving access to health care in Mississippi's rural and underserved communities. Under the Point of Service Maintenance and Enhancement award, MS AHEC Program is charged to respond to health workforce needs reflected in local, State or Federal priorities. These efforts address the goal of increasing the number of primary care providers and increasing access to care for consumers who reside in rural and other medically underserved areas.

GOAL 1: Improve the quality and availability of health care in medically underserved areas.

Objective 1: Provide multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary practice opportunities in medically underserved areas for health care students/Residents in primary care.

Objective 2: Expand continuing education and professional training/development opportunities that improve the proficiency of Mississippi's health care providers.

Objective 3: Expand recruitment and retention programs with emphasis in primary care throughout the state.

3a: Underrepresented minority, disadvantaged students, and/or health care professionals in primary care in rural and underserved areas.

3b: health care professionals in rural and underserved areas

Objective 4: Provide educational programs for students in grades K-12 and college that increase their knowledge about opportunities in health care careers.

Goal 2: Enhance population based information system into a comprehensive primary care database for Mississippi (which is 100% MUA).

Objective 1: Collect, analyze, and disseminate health workforce data for the state.

Objective 2: Collect, analyze, and disseminate healthcare data for the state

Objective 3: Use the collected health care and workforce data to raise awareness of healthcare status to impact state health policy development.

Goal 3: Collaborate in expanding health career training programs in the state

Objective 1: Build a health career ladder for unemployed, low income, and dislocated workers