Community-Academic Partnerships to Improve Health in Greater Minnesota

A Collaboration with the University of Minnesota Academic Health Center • Established September 2002
Minnesota Area Health Education Center (Minnesota AHEC) is a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Bureau of Health Professions cooperative agreement # 1U76-HP00599-01 funded through Title VII of the Public Health Service Act. State and local funding to support Minnesota AHEC is made possible through the substantial contributions of its academic and community partners.

For an extended version of this report, see the Minnesota AHEC Report for the period September 2002 - December 2005 at http://www.mnahec.umn.edu/img/assets/11440/2005FINAL.pdf

This publication can be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities. Please direct requests to Minnesota AHEC, MMC 501, 420 Delaware Street S.E., 612-626-2380.

The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer.
© 2006 by the Regents of the University of Minnesota
Message from the Director

Welcome to Minnesota Area Health Education Center (Minnesota AHEC), a network of community and academic partners committed to meeting the health professional workforce needs of greater Minnesota.

Minnesota AHEC exemplifies the University of Minnesota Academic Health Center’s “Greater Minnesota Strategy,” which proposes community-academic partnerships at a regional level to address health professions workforce issues and meet the health care needs of greater Minnesota. The Greater Minnesota Strategy supports the Academic Health Center’s Strategic Plan, which calls for:

- preparing the next generation of Minnesota’s health professionals;
- preparing professionals who can apply new knowledge to improve care delivery; and
- reducing health disparities and addressing the needs of the state’s diverse populations.

Since initiating Minnesota AHEC in 2002, we have established two regional AHECs, selected a site for a third, and are developing a fourth. The regional AHECs work to meet the unique health professional workforce needs of greater Minnesota by nurturing youth as they explore health careers, providing community-based, interprofessional training for health professions students, and supporting continuing education for health care professionals and community members.

Minnesota AHEC’s primary academic partner, the University of Minnesota Academic Health Center, plays a unique role in the state of Minnesota. The Academic Health Center educates two-thirds of Minnesota’s health professionals (dentists, physicians, advanced nurse practitioners, pharmacists, public health professionals, and veterinarians). The evolving Center for Allied Health Programs (CAHP), a part of the Academic Health Center, responds to increasingly serious workforce shortages of allied health professionals in Minnesota.

As part of the University’s strategic positioning process, an Academic Health Center task force recently completed a report on the status of the health professional workforce, a process that allowed us to further explore the complex issues facing health professions education. This report’s recommendations will further the work of Minnesota AHEC as it strives to meet the state’s health professional workforce needs. I invite you to review this timely report.

Yours sincerely,

Barbara F. Brandt, Ph.D.
Director, Minnesota Area Health Education Center
Assistant Vice President for Education
University of Minnesota Academic Health Center
Our mission is to support the health professional workforce needs of greater Minnesota through strong community-campus partnerships between academic institutions, health care agencies, communities, and others committed to improving the health of the people of Minnesota.

Minnesota Area Health Education Center (Minnesota AHEC)

Minnesota Area Health Education Center (Minnesota AHEC) is a network of community and academic partners committed to meeting the health professional workforce needs of greater Minnesota.

Minnesota AHEC works in partnership with communities to address their unique health professional workforce needs. Since initiating Minnesota AHEC in 2002, we have established regional AHECs in the Northeast and Southern regions, selected a site for a third in the Central Minnesota region, and are developing a fourth AHEC in the Northwest region.

Together, we promote rural health educational experiences for students across a continuum, addressing the needs of K-12 students, undergraduates, health professions students, health professionals, and community members. Our goals are to:

- nurture an interest in health careers among youth;
- support disciplinary, interprofessional, and community-based education for health professions students;
- support continuing education for community-based faculty and other health professionals in greater Minnesota; and
- share information and resources that enrich the vitality of health care sectors in medically underserved areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>743</th>
<th>K-12 students participated in health career educational activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>524</td>
<td>Health professions students participated in clinical training, internships, and other activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2050</td>
<td>Health care professionals and community members took part in continuing and community education activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Minnesota’s Health Care Needs: Why an AHEC?

Minnesota is one of the healthiest states in the nation—yet it faces significant health risks and workforce shortages. Why the disparity in health and health care access?

Health professions workforce shortages

Many Minnesota counties lack sufficient health care providers to meet the needs of their residents. In fact, nearly ninety percent of Minnesota counties, many of them rural, are federally designated Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) or Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs).

Changing demographics and health disparities

Rural residents have higher poverty rates, tend to be in poorer health, and have access to fewer health professionals than urban residents. And as rural areas are home to a growing concentration of older residents, local health care systems are struggling to meet their complex health care needs.

Rural areas also are experiencing rapidly changing demographics, with significant new populations of Latino, Hmong, Somali, Vietnamese, Russian, Laotian, Cambodian, and Ethiopian residents. Communication differences and cultural barriers may affect the quality of care some of these residents receive. Others may have difficulty accessing quality health care due to cultural barriers.

A growing educational achievement gap

Minnesota’s growing achievement gap—educational achievement disparities among racial groups—has real implications for Minnesota’s future workforce needs, as students of color now make up twenty-one percent of Minnesota’s total K-12 student population, according to the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership. As the achievement gap increases, fewer Minnesota students will be adequately prepared for the rigorous requirements of postsecondary health professions education. And that means the health professionals of the future won’t reflect the diverse communities they serve.

In rural areas, other factors contribute to this educational disparity. Rural students may lack access to advanced mathematics and science curricula that will prepare them for health professions education. That has implications for the state’s workforce, as health professions students who come from rural areas tend to return to those areas to practice.
Improving Health Through Community Partnerships

Better prepared students = better health for all

Minnesota AHEC works to address the state’s health workforce needs by creating partnerships that combine the knowledge and capacity of academic institutions with that of local communities. Our activities nurture youth as they explore health careers, provide community-based, interprofessional training for health professions students, and support continuing education for health professionals and community members.

Minnesota AHEC’s statewide network

The Minnesota AHEC Program Office collaborates with the regional AHECs to address locally identified health professions workforce needs.

Regional AHECs in the Northeast and Southern regions are actively working in their respective regions. Two others are in development: the Central Minnesota AHEC has completed the community host site selection process and chosen Fergus Falls as its host site; the Northwest Minnesota AHEC will be launched in fall 2006.

Together, the four regional AHECs serve 64 of Minnesota’s 87 counties, nearly all of which carry at least one health professional shortage designation.
Minnesota AHEC Program Office

The Minnesota AHEC Program Office creates and coordinates programs that broadly support the goals of the regional AHECs. Research indicates that students who participate in rural health experiential learning are more likely to return to rural areas for practice after they graduate. As a result, we create programs that promote rural health experiential learning across a continuum, addressing the needs of K-12 students, undergraduates, health professions students, health professionals, and community members.

A continuum of support

- **K-12 Students**
- **Health Professions Students**
- **Health Professionals and the Community**

**Community videos and online profiles** showcase communities and help to raise student awareness about unique clinical rotation opportunities in greater Minnesota.

**Preceptor resources** assist community health professionals in accessing up-to-date research.

**Stipends and housing identification** provide support for health professions students.

**Experiential Education Directors** collaborated with Minnesota AHEC to develop disciplinary and interprofessional educational opportunities.

**Online rural health curriculum** allows health professions students to learn about rural health systems, community assessments, culture, and leadership.

**Continuing and community education activities** provide life-long learning for community-based faculty, local stakeholders, and community members.

Development of statewide **interprofessional education sites** supports community-based providers and health professions students as they implement interprofessional educational practices.

With support from Minnesota AHEC, the **Rural Physician Associate Program (RPAP)** provides 9-month community-based experience for UM third-year medical students.

**Minnesota AHEC Program Office Leadership**

Sara Axtell, Ph.D., the *Community-Campus Health Outreach Liaison*, works with the Minnesota Extension Service, the Academic Health Center, and health-related programs and departments across the campus to promote community-based health professions education and outreach.

The *Faculty Leadership Council*, made up of representatives from the University of Minnesota Academic Health Center schools, provides strategic guidance for program development and student experiential learning in greater Minnesota. The Leadership Council cultivates academic programs, engages students for rural health clinical education opportunities, and develops interprofessional education opportunities for health professions students in rural areas.
Leading Change
*Minnesota AHEC hosts conference on workforce strategies*

In 2005, the University of Minnesota hosted a conference focused on seeking community-based, regional strategies for invigorating and supporting the next generation of the health professions workforce. The two-day conference, called “Leading Change: Strategies for a Vital Health Professions Workforce,” drew nearly 200 people representing more than 20 different greater Minnesota communities.

Conference attendees heard from keynote speakers, attended in-depth breakout sessions, and took part in group activities aimed at improving the sustainability of local health care sectors. Change and partnership emerged as key themes. Speakers encouraged the development of new models to address problems in health care and in health professions workforce issues, discussed the state’s changing demographics and economic environment, and explored the use of new technologies.

Conference attendees also had an opportunity to work together to explore common issues, develop possible points of collaboration, and identify next steps.

The proceedings provide a valuable resource to communities and practitioners seeking to engage in ongoing health professional workforce discussions. To view conference proceedings, which include a detailed analysis of conference outcomes, visit http://www.ahceducation.umn.edu/. Click Minnesota Workforce Resources, then Conferences and Seminars.
Northeast Minnesota AHEC promotes rural health educational opportunities and addresses health workforce challenges unique to the region.

Located in Hibbing, Northeast Minnesota AHEC serves the ten-county Northeast region, known for superb recreational opportunities and striking natural beauty. The area features more than 1600 lakes, towering pines and hardwoods, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, and the shores of Lake Superior. Our host facility in Hibbing, Fairview Range Regional Health Services, is a regional medical campus providing a full spectrum of health services.

Northeast Minnesota AHEC serves the counties of Cook, Lake, St. Louis, Koochiching, Itasca, Aitkin, Carlton, Pine, Kanabec, and Mille Lacs. Every county in this region is a federally designated Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) in primary care, mental health, or dentistry. Communities range in population from 61 to 86,125 and are spread across 20,731 square miles.

As a not-for-profit, independent organization governed by a community-based board, we work closely with the University of Minnesota, health care agencies, and others committed to improving health in Minnesota.

Our mission is to sustain and strengthen the Northeast Minnesota health care workforce through collaboration between communities and academic institutions.
Northeast Minnesota AHEC Board

The Northeast Minnesota AHEC Board of Directors is comprised of health care providers, civic and educational leaders, public health professionals, University of Minnesota faculty and staff, and other interested citizens who are representative of the region. The Executive Director serves as an ex-officio member of the Board.
Activities for K-12 Students
Innovative programming that helps elementary and secondary students explore health careers

Exploring health care, discovering health careers

Brittany Morgan is passionate about working with K-12 students. “Northeast Minnesota AHEC has a program for every grade level to expose, excite, and reinforce the opportunities in health care careers,” says Morgan, who is Northeast Minnesota AHEC’s health career specialist. Students mix ingredients into milkshakes to learn how a pharmacist prepares compounds. They press flexible material into dental molds to find out about careers in dentistry. Or they test cholesterol levels, using their own blood samples, to learn about a lab technician’s duties.

These students are participating in the Northeast Minnesota AHEC Health Occupations Today (H.O.T.), a three-day immersion experience unique to northeast Minnesota that uses hands-on activities to help high-ability eighth through eleventh graders explore health career options. H.O.T. students get in-depth information on rural health career opportunities in medicine, pharmacy, nursing, emergency medicine, public health, dentistry, and other fields. They learn about educational requirements, scholarships, salaries, and rural practice options from local health care providers, postsecondary faculty, and health professions students. With support from Iron Range Resources and the local community, H.O.T. now serves students along the Iron Range, the North Shore, and Grand Rapids/Aitkin.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES
An unequaled K-12 Health Careers Lending Library.

Health Careers Puppets help K-5 students learn about basic health safety and health career opportunities.

The Hibbing Medical Explorers, a part of the Boy Scouts of America, meet with health care providers and health professional students, tour hospitals, and mentor H.O.T. students.

Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) chapters help students explore health career opportunities with an emphasis on rural health care outreach.

The Moose Lake Health Occupations Program introduces students to health professions while providing hands-on first responder and nursing assistant training.

The Summer Health Care Intern Program supports senior high school students as they shadow health care providers.

Star of the North Technical Education Consortium (SONTEC) participants learn about health care career opportunities and complete a Certified Nursing Assistant training.

The day-long program Across the World in Your Own Backyard gives high school students the opportunity to tour the U’s laboratories and meet with students and faculty who specialize in rural medicine.

PARTNERS FOR THIS INITIATIVE
• Iron Range Resources Hands on Health Care Committee
• Hibbing Community College
• Hibbing Fire Department
• Independent School District 695
• Independent School District 701
• Mines & Pines Tech Prep and Carl Perkins Consortia
• Range Regional Health Services
• University of Minnesota Medical School, Duluth Campus
• University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy, Duluth
Activities for Health Professions Students

*Introducing health professions students to rural health care and community life*

**Living and learning in rural communities**

Medical student Darin Skaudis wanted to learn more about community public services during his month-long stint in Hibbing, Minnesota. Part of what he got was a lesson in communication. “It would benefit everyone if there were some system in which different service areas could sit down and talk about community issues,” says Skaudis.

Skaudis was a participant in our summer internship program, which immerses medicine, pharmacy, and dentistry students in the life of a rural community. In this program, students complete rotations of 2-8 weeks and work in both clinical and community-based settings. They meet with local health care providers and other professionals whose work impacts their own. Students also spend time with members of the community and experience first-hand the satisfaction of living and working in a rural setting.

Host communities benefit as well. “This is a tremendous long-term recruitment strategy. The summer internship programs continue to be worthwhile experiences for our hospitals, clinics, and communities,” says Brendan Ashby, Northeast Minnesota AHEC Executive Director. “The students gain a strong appreciation for rural health.” Medical students in Hibbing, for example, helped promote the Governor’s Fit City program, which encourages more physical activity for all residents.

Skaudis had the opportunity to observe, and sometimes participate, in the daily work experiences of professionals working in parks and recreation, fire and ambulance services, public health, dentistry, police, pharmacy, and social work. He appreciated getting an insider’s look at public services. “It’s nice to know what services are available to the people in the community you work with,” he says. “And I loved the police and ambulance ride-along.”

**ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES**

The Rural Physicin Associate Program (RPAP) offers third-year medical students an opportunity to participate in a nine-month, community-based educational experience in rural Minnesota primary care.

Students in medicine, nursing, pharmacy, dentistry, and public health participate in *Disciplinary Clinical Rotations*.

Dental and dental hygiene students help staff the Hibbing Community Dental Clinic, which provides dental services to uninsured and underserved local residents.

*Wilderness Health Interprofessional Program (WHIP)* organizes visits to rural and frontier counties of northeastern Minnesota.

Students learn about loan repayment options through sessions conducted by the National Health Service Corps Ambassadors.

**PARTNERS FOR THIS INITIATIVE**

- Iron Range Resources
- Rural Physician Associate Program (RPAP)
- Rural Health Resource Center
- University of Minnesota Medical School, Duluth Campus
- University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy, Duluth
Continuing and Community Education

*Life-long learning for community-based faculty, health care professionals, and the community*

**Battling meth abuse through interprofessional education**

Students were given this case study: a woman has used methamphetamine and arrives in the emergency room, hallucinating, accompanied by a police officer. She appears unkempt and much older than her stated age. Her medical history reveals a long history of drug abuse and several abusive relationships. A relative has picked up the woman’s four children. Now that she is in the emergency room, what can be done to help her?

Working together and drawing on community experts, health professions students from disciplines as diverse as dentistry, family social science, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, physician assistants, and social work roleplay this scenario. In the process, they learn how to work as an interprofessional team while tackling the difficult problem of methamphetamine abuse.

This interprofessional event attracts faculty, local health providers, and experts from government health departments, hospitals, and community organizations. That breadth of participation means the students learn how to tap into resources they otherwise might not have considered, such as law enforcement or public health. Service and health care providers also benefit from their interaction. “I was comforted by the knowledge that we have multiple methods of recognition and treatment for this very difficult addiction,” says Raymond Christensen, M.D., assistant dean for rural health and a family medicine physician who also practices in the emergency room. “I was also reminded of the need for the team approach to this and other illnesses. I was impressed with the knowledge and the education we received from community members and former addicts.”

**ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Community members participate in the U’s *Mini-Medical School*, a five-week series that covers topics from anatomy to pharmacology, taught by expert faculty and physicians.

The *Health Professions Library* provides DVDs, games, train-the-trainer manuals, and CPR and other medical models to instructors and community members who present health care-related programs.

*Continuing Education Programming* supports local and regional conferences, organizes training for community-based preceptors, and works with regional and statewide organizations with similar goals, such as the Minnesota Mental Health Action Group (MMHAG).

Preceptors, health care providers, and health professions students participate in training through *Distance Technology Classroom Access.*
Northeast Minnesota AHEC Key Partners

**Regional healthcare agencies**

Range Regional Health Service, Hibbing  
Mayo Clinic, Rochester  
St. Mary’s Duluth Clinic Health System (SMDC)  
Range Mental Health Center  
Riverwood Health Care Center, Aitkin  
Cloquet Community Memorial Hospital & C&NC, Cloquet  
Mercy Hospital & Health Care Center, Moose Lake  
Cook County North Shore Hospital, Grand Marais  
Northern Itasca Health Care Center, Bigfork  
Deer River HealthCare Center, Deer River  
Grand Itasca Clinic and Hospital & C&NC, Grand Rapids  
Kanabec Hospital, Mora  
Falls Memorial Hospital, International Falls  
Pine Medical Center, Sandstone  
White Community Hospital & C&NC, Aurora  
Cook Hospital & C&NC, Cook  
Ely-Bloomenson Hospital & Nursing Home, Ely  
Virginia Regional Medical Center, Virginia

**Community-based agencies and local units of government**

Iron Range Resources  
Rural Health Resource Center  
Minnesota Department of Health  
Minnesota Department of Education  
Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development  
City of Hibbing  
Hibbing Fire Department  
Minnesota Health Occupations Students of America  
Carlton-Cook-Lake-St. Louis Community Health Board, Duluth  
Eveleth Economic Development Authority, Eveleth

**Academic institutions**

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities and Duluth campuses  
St. Scholastica  
Lake Superior College, Duluth  
True North, Northeast Higher Education District  
Hibbing Community College  
Hibbing High School  
Itasca Community College  
Rainy River Community College  
Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College  
Proctor High School, Proctor  
Esko High School, Esko  
Moose Lake High School, Moose Lake  
Falls High School, International Falls

**National organizations**

National AHEC Organization  
National Libraries of Medicine  
National Health Service Corps  
Healthcare Education-Industry Partnership  
3Rnet  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources Services Administration
Southern Minnesota AHEC works to promote rural health educational opportunities and address health workforce challenges unique to our region. Our activities support K-12 students, health professions students, health care professionals, and the community.

We serve 26 counties in the southwestern corner of the state, many of which are federally designated Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs). Our host facility, Rice Memorial Hospital, located in Willmar, is the largest city-owned hospital in Minnesota.

The Southern Minnesota AHEC region features breathtaking scenery and rich cultural and historical traditions. Lakes, vast stretches of prairie, and the Minnesota River Valley offer exceptional recreational opportunities, including windsurfing, hiking, biking, and more. Festivals and other gatherings highlight the region’s rich cultural and historical traditions.

The region’s largest employers are in agriculture and in agricultural-related industries such as ethanol production, food processing, and agricultural research. Education and health care also employ significant numbers of people.

Established in the spring of 2004, Southern Minnesota AHEC is a not-for-profit, independent organization governed by a community-based board that works closely with the University of Minnesota, health care agencies, academic institutions, and others committed to improving health in Minnesota.
Southern Minnesota AHEC Staff

Kathleen R. Huntley, M.S.,
Executive Director
320-231-4375
khunt@rice.willmar.mn.us

Wendy Foley, B.A., B.S.,
Health Careers Specialist
320-231-4376
wfol@rice.willmar.mn.us

Amy Tersteeg,
Program Assistant
320-231-8944
ater@rice.willmar.mn.us

Southern Minnesota AHEC Board

The Southern Minnesota AHEC Board of Directors is comprised of health care providers, civic and educational leaders, public health professionals, University of Minnesota faculty and staff, and other interested citizens who are representative of the region. The Executive Director serves as an ex-officio member of the Board.
Activities for K-12 students
Innovative programming that helps elementary and secondary students explore health careers

Beyond doctors and nurses: discovering careers in health care

Wendy Foley wants students to get excited about pursuing health care careers. “I like to showcase opportunities available in health care fields beyond doctors and nurses,” says Foley, who is Southern Minnesota AHEC’s Health Careers Specialist.

Foley uses a hands-on presentation that grabs students’ attention. They learn about occupational therapy by using a “sock aid” to put on their socks. They manipulate surgical tools and a ball-and-socket joint to understand a nurse’s role in surgery. They try out a pulse oximeter to measure the oxygen level in their blood as they learn about respiratory therapy. Foley even shares a sonogram—of her own twins—to demonstrate the tools of a sonographer and a radiologist.

Foley gives customized, age-appropriate presentations and appears at career fairs and schools throughout the Southern Minnesota AHEC region. She enjoys promoting health careers to students in rural Minnesota. “I want them to return to their own communities for practice,” says Foley. “I want to open their minds to what is possible.”

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Kids’ Summer Camps, four-day events held at Ridgewater College, offer sixth through ninth grade students an opportunity to engage in hands-on activities and meet practicing health care professionals.

The day-long program Across the World in Your Own Backyard gives high school students the opportunity to tour the U’s laboratories and meet with students and faculty who specialize in rural medicine.

At “career day” events sponsored by local school districts and colleges, students participate in interactive presentations on health careers.

High school and college students participate in job shadowing, observing the work of health professionals practicing in fields such as nursing, laboratory work, radiology, emergency medicine, anesthesia, and physical therapy.

PARTNERS FOR THIS INITIATIVE

• All public and private schools in the region
Activities for Health Professions Students

Introduction: Introducing health professions students to rural health care and community life

The Rice Regional Dental Clinic: an innovative dental education model to improve community health

The Rice Regional Dental Clinic, now in development, promises to significantly increase access to dental care for uninsured and underserved residents in the Southern Minnesota AHEC region. Once it is fully operational, the Dental Clinic will serve about 8,000 patients each year at its new site on the campus of Rice Memorial Hospital in Willmar. Currently, many of these residents receive no dental care at all.

The Dental Clinic features a unique dental education model. Under the supervision of the Dental Clinic’s staff, six University of Minnesota dental and dental hygiene students at a time will rotate through the clinic and provide patient care. In addition to gaining valuable clinical experience, the students will participate in community education activities, such as speaking at schools and at community events, while learning about rural life and rural health care.

“In addition to providing needed care to an underserved part of our population, I think the clinic will encourage dental personnel to consider working and living in the rural areas.”

– Michael Gardner, DDS
Willmar area dentist

Additional Activities

Health professions students from the University of Minnesota, Augsburg College, and Kansas City University held clinical rotations and internships of between one week and nine months throughout the region.

The Rural Physician Associate Program (RPAP) offers third-year medical students an opportunity to participate in a nine-month, community-based educational experience in rural Minnesota primary care.

The Pharmacy Residency Program establishes a residency for a recently graduated pharmacist; AHEC participates in the program by promoting pharmacy careers to area youth.

PARTNERS FOR THIS INITIATIVE
• Rice Memorial Hospital
• University of Minnesota School of Dentistry
• University of Minnesota Academic Health Center
• Kandyohi Public Health
• Countryside Public Health Service
Partnership in action: training foreign language medical interpreters

The Southern Minnesota AHEC region is home to a growing immigrant population. Latino, Hmong, Somali, Vietnamese, Russian, Laotian, Cambodian, and Ethiopian residents have settled in the region for the employment opportunities. Providing adequate care to residents who have little or no fluency in English can pose a challenge for some health care providers, who occasionally must rely on English-speaking family members to translate.

“Relying on family members to translate can be problematic,” says George Gordon, M.D., an emergency physician at Rice Memorial Hospital in Willmar, Minnesota. “Although they may be well intentioned, family members may expand or modify the patient’s response to questions. They also may be unfamiliar or uncomfortable translating medical terms and personal questions.”

Using a professionally trained medical interpreter can help avoid these problems. That’s why Southern Minnesota AHEC teamed with Century College to create a three-day medical interpreter training. With financial support from Rice Health Foundation and Affiliated Community Health Foundation, the pilot medical interpreter training took place in Willmar, Minnesota, in May 2006. Twenty-four foreign language interpreters learned about verbal, telephone, and written translation, as well as about ethics, confidentiality, and HIPAA regulations. These interpreters have improved their knowledge and skills for interpreting in a variety of health care situations—assuring better care for all of Minnesota’s residents.

Plans are underway for additional medical interpreter trainings in the Southern Minnesota AHEC region, as well as for other greater Minnesota communities.
Southern Minnesota AHEC Key Partners

**Regional healthcare agencies**

- Rice Memorial Hospital, Willmar
- Affiliated Community Medical Centers, a system of 10 clinics in Western and Southern Minnesota
- Family Practice Medical Center, Willmar
- Immanuel St. Joseph’s Mayo Medical Center, Mankato
- Open Door Health Center
- New Ulm Medical Center
- Chippewa County Montevideo Hospital
- Madison Hospital
- Johnson Memorial Hospital, Dawson
- Hendricks Community Hospital
- Avera Marshall Medical Center
- Glencoe Regional Health Services
- Granite Falls Municipal Hospital
- Hutchinson Community Hospital
- Fairmont Medical Center
- St. Peter Regional Treatment Center
- Worthington Regional Hospital
- Redwood Area Hospital
- Renville County Hospital
- Appleton Municipal Hospital
- Swift County Benson Hospital
- Waseca Medical Center Mayo Health System
- Madelia Community Hospital

**Academic institutions**

- University of Minnesota, Twin Cities and Duluth campuses
- University of Minnesota Family Practice Residency Program, Waseca and Mankato
- Augsburg College, Minneapolis
- Ridgewater College, Willmar and Hutchinson
- MN West Community College, Granite Falls
- Century College, White Bear Lake
- University of Wisconsin, Madison
- Kansas City University Medical School
- Minnesota State University Mankato
- South Central Community and Technical College, Mankato
- Gustavus Adolphus College
- Mankato East and West High Schools

**Community-based agencies and local units of government**

- Willmar Public Schools
- New London/Spicer High Schools
- ACGC High School, Grove City
- BBE High School, Belgrade
- KMS High School, Kerkhoven
- MACCRAY High School, Clara City
- BOLD High School, Olivia
- Marshall High School
- St. Peter High School
- Prinsburg Central Community Christian School
- Springfield High School
- Lac Qui Parle Valley High School

**National organizations**

- National AHEC Organization
- National Health Service Corps
Minnesota AHEC is a federal-state matching funds cooperative agreement funded through Title VII of the Public Health Service Act through the Bureau of Health Professions, Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. State and local funding to support Minnesota AHEC is made possible through the substantial contributions of its academic and community partners.

(1) Minnesota AHEC has developed a funding strategy to attract and provide assistance to students who are participating in new programs or new experiential education opportunities. Thus, one criterion for funding is to support students who otherwise would not be participating in rural experiential practice rotations. This ultimately increases student involvement in disciplinary or interprofessional clinical education in medically underserved areas of the state.

(2) The funding listed in this report as “University of Minnesota Resources” is from tobacco endowments.

(3) The cost to deliver clinical education to higher education and health and community settings is substantial. Revenue and cost recovery in Minnesota takes the form of direct site compensation from the state’s Medical Education and Research Cost (MERC) funds. MERC supports graduate level Nursing, Medicine, Dentistry, and Pharmacy students and residents at a variety of clinical sites throughout the state.

For additional information, visit the Minnesota AHEC Report for the period September 2002 - December 2005 at http://www.mnahec.umn.edu/img/assets/11440/2005FINAL.pdf
Minnesota Area Health Education Center
University of Minnesota Academic Health Center

Office of Education

Barbara F. Brandt, Ph.D.
Director,
Assistant Vice President for Education
Academic Health Center
MMC 501
420 Delaware Street S.E.
Minneapolis, MN 55455
612-625-3972
Fax: 612-626-2111
E-mail: mnahec@umn.edu

Minnesota AHEC Program Office

Mary Schmidt, M.A.,
Deputy Director
Gwen W. Halaas, M.D., M.B.A.,
Associate Director
Sara Axtell, Ph.D., Community-Campus Health Outreach Liaison
Angela Bowlus, M.A.,
Program Manager
MMC 501
420 Delaware Street S.E.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455
Phone: 612-626-2380
Fax: 612-624-0493
mnahec@umn.edu

Northeast Minnesota AHEC

Brendan L. Ashby, M.P.H., C.H.E.S.,
Executive Director
750 E. 34th Street
Hibbing, Minnesota 55746
Phone: 218-362-6153
Fax: 218-362-6647
bashby1@range.fairview.org

Southern Minnesota AHEC

Kathleen R. Huntley, M.S.,
Executive Director
301 SW Becker Avenue
Willmar, MN 56201
Phone: 320-231-4375
khunt@rice.willmar.mn.us