

Medical Air Operations



January 2009

MEDICAL AIR OPERATIONS

North Carolina's nine Area Health Education Centers (AHECs) are strategically located to cover the entire state. The 500 miles between the coast and the mountains present a challenge to faculty from the university health science centers who conduct consultation clinics and continuing education activities in the AHECs while maintaining their teaching, research, and service responsibilities "at home."

Since its early beginnings in 1968, AHEC's Medical Air Operations, or Medical Air service, has transported health science faculty, medical residents, health science students, and university officials to all areas of the state for educational activities. Medical Air and its fleet of six twin-engine aircraft is based at UNC-Chapel Hill's Horace Williams Airport, and is flown by five full-time professional pilots.

In 2007-2008, Medical Air logged more than 538,000 passenger miles, transporting 4,499 passengers to more than 75 destinations. These include North Carolina's AHEC centers, community hospitals, health departments and universities. Medical Air flights make it possible for faculty to reach very remote sites in the state on a daily basis while maintaining a full slate of professional activities. Medical Air has logged approximately 19 million passenger miles since 1978.



Medical Air operates in a highly sophisticated air traffic control system. Its fleet of twin-engine Beechcraft Barons utilize state-of-the-art weather avoidance equipment and satellite navigational systems comparable to those found on any major airline. With these aircraft, most locations in the state can be reached in an hour or less, including small municipal airports inaccessible to commercial airlines.

As the "wings of AHEC," Medical Air helps maintain a close partnership between the universities and communities around the state. The Medical Air staff takes pride in its contributions toward improving health care access for all North Carolinians.

TYPICAL DAY

Medical Air flies between five and seven flights per day, averaging one to three passengers per flight. About 80% of its flights are scheduled during the daytime, transporting health science faculty, students and medical residents to clinics around the state. Night flights are usually scheduled for faculty to conduct continuing education classes.

On a typical day, Medical Air pilots may fly medical faculty and residents to Wilmington to see patients at a consultation clinic. A professor in the UNC School of Nursing may travel to Area L AHEC in Rocky Mount to teach a continuing education workshop, and UNC-Chapel Hill School of Dentistry faculty may conduct an evening continuing education program in Asheville after a full day of teaching students and treating patients in the dental clinic.

HIGH TECHNICAL STANDARDS

Medical Air's standards for pilots and equipment maintenance exceed Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requirements. All pilots possess Airline Transportation Pilot Certificates and have flown an average of 10,000 hours in both civilian and military aviation. A team of three full-time certified mechanics maintain the aircrafts' readiness, performing eight inspections per aircraft each year, and other routine maintenance procedures in a modern, fully equipped hangar. In addition, two experienced air transportation coordinators schedule Medical Air flights.

Gordon Kramon, Medical Air's Director of Operations, is justifiably proud of his crew and its outstanding safety record. During the more than 40 years of Medical Air's flights, there have been no major incidents or accidents on the ground or in the air.

Medical Air Statistics 2007-08

Destinations	75
Passengers	4,499
Passenger Miles	538,757

For more information contact:

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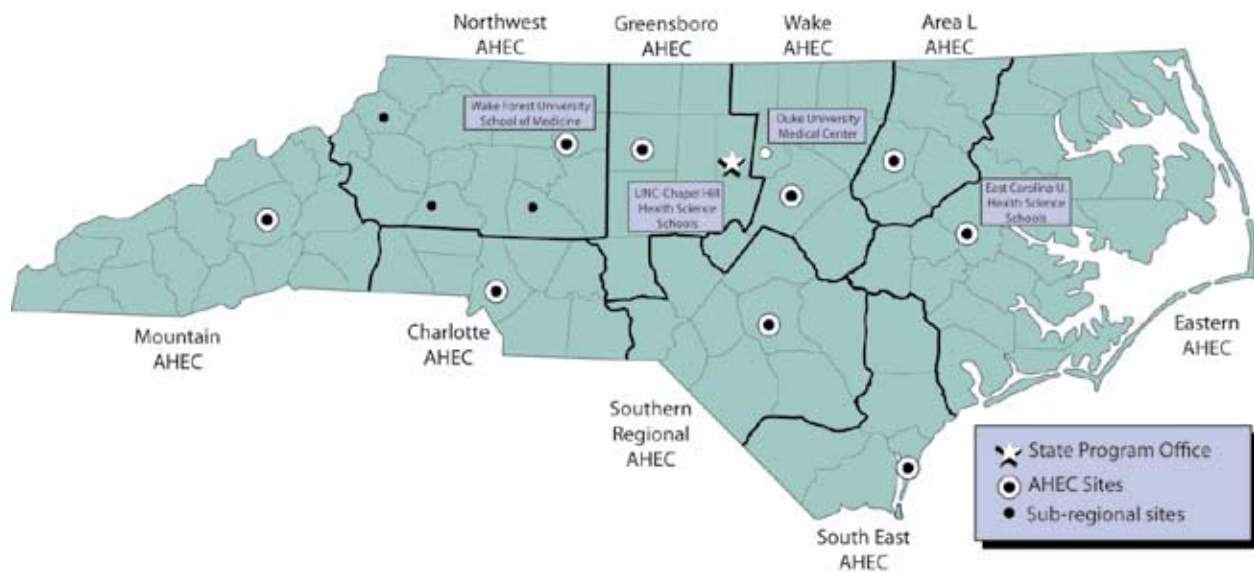
THE NORTH CAROLINA AHEC PROGRAM

The NC Area Health Education Centers Program began in 1972 with federal funding and is administered by the University of NC at Chapel Hill School of Medicine. In 1974, with funding from the NC General Assembly, it became a statewide program. Today, nine regional AHECs comprise the AHEC system and are supported primarily by state and local funds.

The mission of the North Carolina AHEC Program is to meet the state's health and health workforce needs by providing educational programs and services in partnership with academic institutions, healthcare agencies, and other organizations committed to improving the health of the people of North Carolina.

The AHEC Program provides education and training to students and practitioners in health professions across NC. It is a unique partnership between university health science centers and local communities.

www.ncahec.net



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