

Dentistry



November 2006

AHEC AND THE SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY

A collaborative partnership between the University of North Carolina School of Dentistry and the NC Area Health Education Centers Program helps address the oral health needs of North Carolinians and the major issues confronting the dental profession. Through this partnership, AHEC explores and responds to the many changes in dentistry in an effort to enhance dental education, expand access, and improve the quality of dental care.



North Carolina is currently experiencing an acute shortage of dental health professionals, especially in rural and underserved areas of the state. The unmet dental needs of many populations are dramatic. As the state's population grows with the influx of new immigrants, the number of geriatric patients continues to increase as the population ages. In addition to tooth decay and gum disease, oral health concerns of medically-compromised patients—those with HIV,

hepatitis, and other infectious diseases—pose a greater challenge to the dental profession than ever before.

AHEC dental education programs focus on student rotations that provide training opportunities in a variety of settings as well as continuing education programs that help dentists and dental team members stay abreast of the latest advances in patient care. AHEC and its partners in dentistry endeavor to provide North Carolina's dental professionals with the educational opportunities and the training programs that will help to ensure quality oral health care for the people of the state.

STUDENT TRAINING

The UNC School of Dentistry at Chapel Hill works collaboratively through the statewide AHEC Program to provide dental continuing education and special training programs. The School of Dentistry also offers a wide range of training opportunities in the AHEC regions through rotations and externships for dental students and residents. Working with dentist preceptors, these extramural programs provide supervised training in the delivery of dental care to special and underserved populations in settings such as county health departments, state institutions and correctional facilities, mental health centers, and the Veteran Administration hospitals. These important experiences satisfy the requirements of the curricula and broaden the students' perspectives related to the practice of dentistry. Students report that these experiences are among the most valuable and rewarding in their dental school curriculum.

More information about continuing education through NC AHEC and the UNC School of Dentistry can be found at <http://www.dent.unc.edu/ce/ahec/>.

Continuing Education

The AHEC Program works diligently to offer programs to ensure every licensed professional can satisfy their CE requirements and responds to the ever-changing needs of dental professionals throughout the state. Continuing education activities are developed based on the needs expressed by the North Carolina Dental Society, the State Board of Dental Examiners, the North Carolina Dental Hygienists Association, the North Carolina Dental Assistants' Association, the North Carolina Dental Laboratory Association, and the local AHEC dental advisory committees.

Dentistry Statistics 2005-2006

Continuing Education

Programs	205
Hours	1,811
Attendance	6,869

Student Rotations (Months)

Students	118.6
Graduate Students	9.0
Residents	50.7
Hygienists	26.9
Total	205.2

For more information contact:

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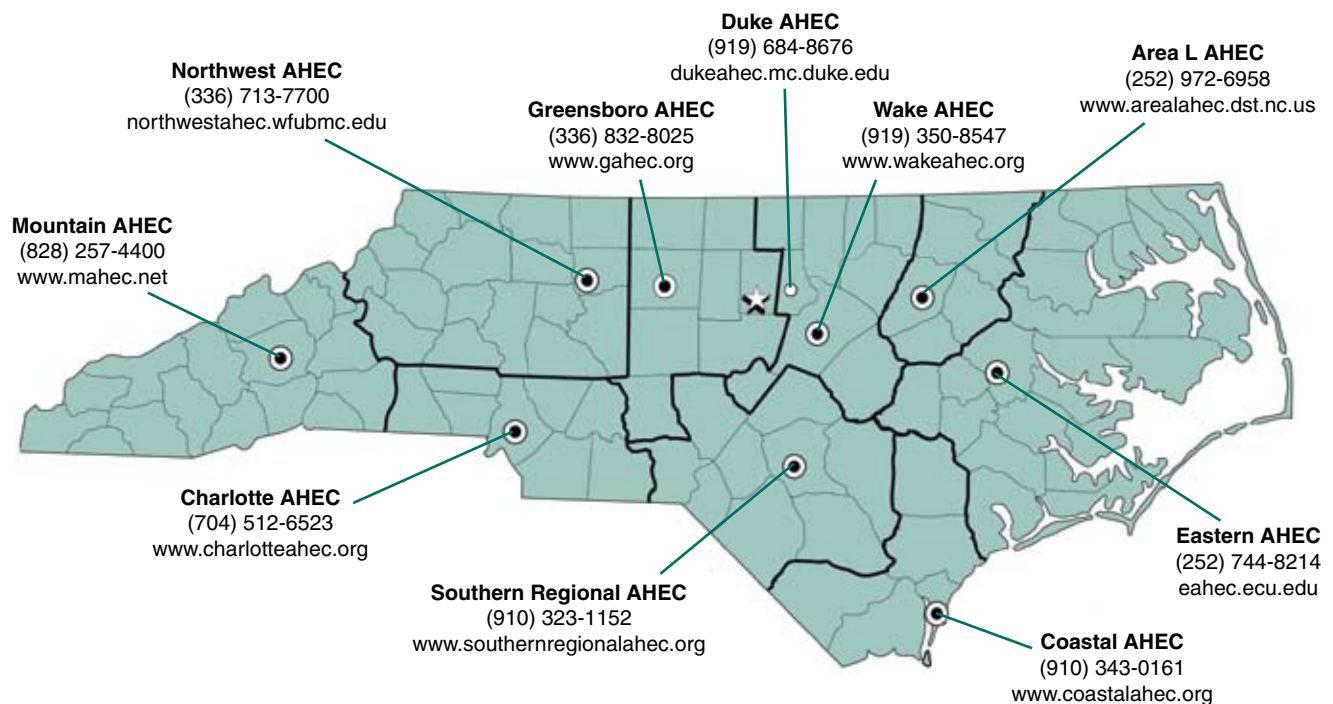
THE NORTH CAROLINA AHEC PROGRAM

The NC Area Health Education Centers Program began in 1972 with federal funding and is administered by the University of North Carolina 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



For additional information, contact your AHEC's Dental Director or

North Carolina AHEC Program

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