



Student/Resident Experiences and Rotations in Community Health (SEARCH) Program

The Wisconsin Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program, in partnership with the Primary Care Office (PCO) at the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and the Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association (WPHCA), has been awarded a contract to develop a SEARCH program in Wisconsin. This is a one-year, \$200,000 contract, renewable for two additional years subject to availability of funds.

SEARCH is a program administered through the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in the Department of Health and Human Services. The program was defunded in 2007, but reactivated in 2009 with Recovery Act funding. While Wisconsin had an NHSC fellowship program many years ago, it has not previously had an award under the SEARCH program.

The SEARCH program offers an opportunity to work with academic programs and community partners at health care delivery sites located in underserved areas or providing care to underserved populations, to expand the opportunities for NHSC scholars, as well as other students in primary care disciplines who are interested in practice in rural and urban underserved areas, to complete regular curriculum or elective clinical training requirements at these sites.* In particular, SEARCH seeks to develop opportunities for health professions students and residents to serve on inter-professional health care teams in underserved communities.

The Wisconsin SEARCH program will concentrate on development of three types of sites:

- federally qualified health centers and other safety net providers,
- rural health clinics, and
- other community sites in or adjacent to underserved areas that offer excellent opportunities for the student to experience healthcare delivery in multi-professional community healthcare teams, particularly locations moving toward implementation of a primary care medical home model, and locations adopting health information technology systems for better care management.

Where appropriate, students will also have opportunities to work at critical access hospitals and local health departments.

In addition to providing excellent training opportunities for students who are NHSC scholarship recipients and academic linkages for NHSC scholars and loan repayers practicing in underserved communities, Wisconsin SEARCH program priorities include:

- Providing assistance to primary care training programs seeking to develop opportunities for students to fulfill core curriculum requirements through rotations at underserved community sites. Several health professions programs are eager to partner with these sites, but have been unable to arrange student placement due to the burden of travel and housing cost for the students.
- Attracting students in all the targeted primary practice professions* to elective rotations at underserved area sites, where excellent training opportunities exist, by providing travel and housing assistance.
- Developing the capacity of Wisconsin's federally qualified health centers to become "teaching community health centers," primary sites of education and residency training that are part of the health professionals' educational mainstream.

With a substantial contribution of time from partnering health professions programs for site development, and from community primary care providers for student precepting and mentoring, the Wisconsin SEARCH program expects to provide placements for approximately 69 health professions students annually, or 355 student-weeks of clinical training at about 47 participating sites.

Family Medicine sites	13 sites, 15 medical students or family medicine residents for 4-week rotations = 60 student-weeks of training	Sites open to visiting MED 4 students from other medical schools.
Physician Assistant program sites	10-20 sites, 20 students for 8-week rotations = 160 student-weeks	Sites initially limited to UW-PA program students.
Community Health Center dental student experiences	6 sites, 6 students for 2-week rotations = 12 student-weeks of training	Developed for Marquette dental students; assistance may also be available for students from other schools interested in experiences at CHC dental sites.
Social work and other mental health professions sites	6 sites, 6 students for 2 day per week semester-long assignments = 36 student-weeks	Initial work will be with the UW-Madison Social Work program to explore opportunities to utilize sites distant from Madison.
Inter-professional sites	5 total sites (3 of which already included above), 10 students for 4-week experiences = 40 student-weeks	Disciplines will depend upon the capacity and staffing of selected sites.
AHEC community health internship program at local health department sites.	Up to 5 sites filled by NHSC qualified students, 5 students for 8-week internships = 40 student-weeks	Health professions students who are Wisconsin residents or attending schools in Wisconsin are eligible to apply.
AHEC <i>Wisconsin Express</i> cultural immersion sites	Up to 7 NHSC qualified students receiving assistance - 7 students for 1-week experiences = 7 student-weeks	Health professions students who are Wisconsin residents or attending schools in Wisconsin are eligible to apply.

**Individual participants supported through this program must be students in good standing who have matriculated into and/or begun health professional training in one of disciplines eligible for NHSC scholarship or loan repayment programs: medical students who are candidates for the MD or DO degree, medical residents in family medicine, general internal medicine, geriatrics, general pediatrics, obstetrics/gynecology, or general psychiatry; primary care certified nurse practitioners (NPs) who specialize in adult, family, pediatric, psychiatry/mental health, geriatrics, or women's health; certified nurse-midwives (CNMs); physician assistants (PAs) who specialize in primary care; general practice dentists (DMD or DDS); pediatric dentists; dental hygienists; health service psychologists; licensed clinical social workers; psychiatric nurse specialists; marriage and family therapists; and licensed professional counselors.*