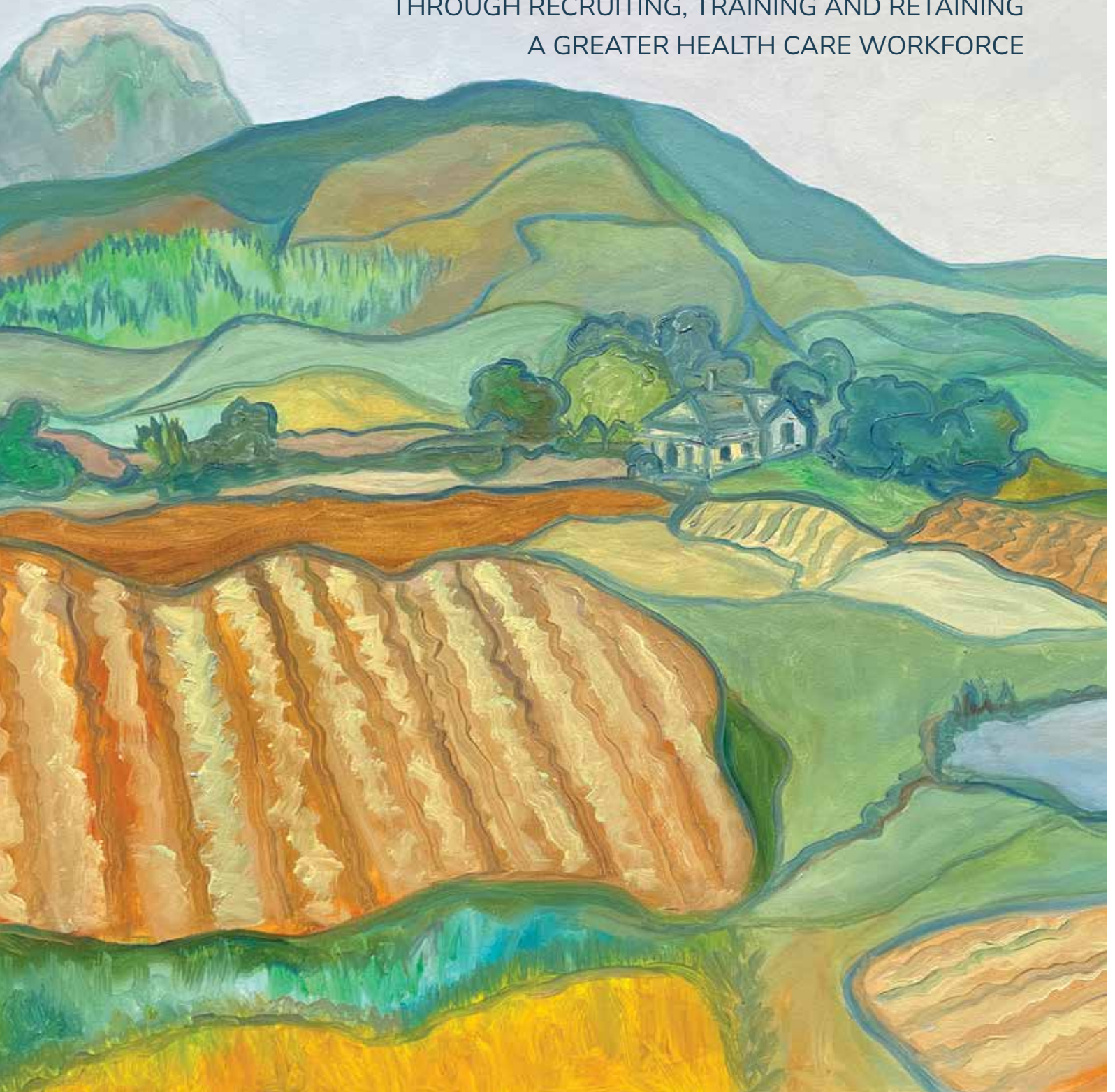


HEALTH FOR ALL

THROUGH RECRUITING, TRAINING AND RETAINING
A GREATER HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE





At Northwest AHEC,
we remain committed
to empowering
communities by
bringing more health
care opportunities
and expertise to
all in Northwest
North Carolina.

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Artwork by Sarah Katherine, Thunderhill Overlook.

OUR MISSION

The Northwest AHEC of Wake Forest University School of Medicine provides and supports educational activities and services with a focus on primary care in rural communities and those with less access to resources to recruit, train and retain the workforce needed to create a healthy North Carolina.

Our method of *partnership and collaboration*

At Northwest AHEC, partnership is about process and accountability. We look for organizations and communities to work with to develop activities based on specific, clearly defined goals and responsibilities. Rather than being a source of funding, we collaborate to prioritize and develop training, educational content and resident activities to create solutions for the shortage of health care options.

Guiding objectives for partnerships and collaborations

Every collaboration starts with the following set of guiding objectives. These give all parties a clear understanding of roles, responsibilities and expectations moving forward.

MISSION ALIGNMENT: While individual organizations have their own missions, partnership means investing where missions combine to create a shared vision of the future.

SHARED RESOURCES: When everyone brings something of value to the table, the shared human and material resources can accomplish so much more.

SHARED RELATIONSHIPS: Extending existing relationships and establishing new ones broadens the visibility and value of each organization's activities.

MUTUAL BENEFIT: Each organization must gain from collaboration in terms of opportunities to improve their ability to pursue their mission.

LEVERAGED IMPACT: Results work harder for all partners when they are leveraged to enhance or further develop resources.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES: Clearly demonstrating effectiveness is critical. Building in metrics up front makes for more straightforward accountability for all.

HELP CELEBRATE

CONTINUING EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS DAY IN 2026

Northwest AHEC and the Office of Continuing Medical Education (OCME) are proud to recognize and celebrate Healthcare Continuing Education Professionals Day — dedicated to honoring the individuals who ensure that health care providers remain informed, skilled, and prepared to deliver exceptional care.



We would love your input! Scan the QR code to answer a quick question online. We plan to use the responses for special recognition of this important day in January 2026.

Please respond no later than Wednesday, December 10, 2025.

NORTH CAROLINA AHEC

Developing the Workforce to Create a Healthy North Carolina.

VISION

Every North Carolinian is healthy and supported by an appropriate and well-trained health workforce that reflects the communities it serves.

VALUES

EXCELLENCE We deliver quality activities and services that our customers and partners value.

INTEGRITY We act with fairness, transparency and the highest level of ethics.

COLLABORATION We value partnerships and support interprofessional approaches.

IMPROVEMENT We continuously innovate and improve our work.

CORE SERVICES

1. Health Careers and Workforce Development
2. Student Services
3. Graduate Medical Education and Patient Services Support
4. Continuing Professional Development Activities and Services
5. Practice Support Services
6. Library Services and Information Technology





*Michael P. Lischke, EdD, MPH,
FCPP, Richard Janeway, MD,
Distinguished Director
of Northwest AHEC*

Letter to Stakeholders

Welcome to the Northwest Area Health Education Center (Northwest AHEC) Annual Report for 2024-2025.

Our theme for this year's report comes from our belief in doing everything we can to improve health for all. Our work is defined by the ever-changing needs of the communities throughout our 17-county region and beyond. Each year, our team continues to adapt and evolve in what we offer, and how we deliver it to best fit the educational and health care demands of our region and state.

This past academic year presented our team and our partners across the community with unique challenges and opportunities to make a positive impact in affecting the ongoing health care workforce shortage across different locations and disciplines. I am pleased to report that our region's health care professionals, students, educators and partners rose to the occasion with tremendous commitment and resolve from one community to the next.

In this report, you will find several examples of the programs, services, resources and collaborative efforts to recruit, train, and retain health care professionals. You will also see how we made our efforts more efficient, leveraging resources of our associated health care organizations and partnering with our fellow North Carolina AHEC colleagues to share the load and combine initiatives.

While this report includes activities we conducted in all 17 of the Northwest North Carolina counties, we have chosen to spotlight specific examples in three counties — Yadkin, Surry and Stokes — to provide greater insight into the reach and impact of our core services in specific areas. However, I'd like to briefly share two examples that exemplify how initiatives are developed and supported through Northwest AHEC in different communities.

In Ashe County, a group of physicians who recently completed their residencies decided to open a new practice, Seven Peaks Family Medicine, in West Jefferson to help fill a gap in health care services in this rural community. Northwest AHEC partnered with the group to get started and support their continuing development.

In Winston-Salem, the Share the Health Fair at the Downtown Health Plaza is an annual, student-run event providing care to those in need. With guidance from Northwest AHEC, students from Wake Forest University School of Medicine expanded services at the event by engaging Winston-Salem State University's physical and occupational therapy programs to assist with gait and balance assessments.

These efforts show the engagement and dedication of future and emerging health care professionals to fulfilling needs in their communities. It also shows the impact that Northwest AHEC can have on building and enhancing services and programs throughout the region.

I am encouraged by the initiative shown by our newest and next generation of health care professionals. But, as we all know, there is much more work to be done. Together with the community leaders, schools, universities and organizations across our region, we look forward to helping recruit, train and retain the needed professionals to nurture better health for ALL across the Northwest AHEC region.

Michael P. Lischke, EdD, MPH, FCPP
Richard Janeway, MD, Distinguished Director of Northwest AHEC

CORE SERVICE 1

Health Careers and Workforce Development

Northwest NC regional educators are producing 616 RNs each year, leaving an annual deficit of 459 nurses.

NC Health Talent Alliance 2024 Regional Data

Artwork by Candice Martin, Doughton Park.

Inspiring through hands-on experiences.

Over the past year, the North Carolina AHEC Scholars Program at Northwest AHEC welcomed 37 students — returning and new — from Wake Forest University (WFU), Winston-Salem State University (WSSU), and Salem College. The program also included a cohort from Livingstone College and one student from UNC-Charlotte. The scholars fulfilled 40 hours of local and statewide didactic and clinical modules to develop a better understanding of health issues in our communities.

Twenty of the hours came through the Second Annual Emerging Leaders in Healthcare Conference in Concord in February 2025. The event gathered scholars from across the state for networking and learning about current health care topics. A visit to UNC-Charlotte enhanced the educational experience with additional speakers and simulations.

We once again partnered with the Wake Forest University School of Medicine Center for Experiential and Applied Learning (CEAL) Simulation Team for the STEAM Expo at the Wilkes Motor Speedway in March. Over 1,200 middle and high school students attended hands-on simulations by state and local schools, industries and community groups focused on STEAM careers. Additionally, we teamed up with CEAL and our AHEC colleagues to host the South Piedmont AHEC Hero's Club in March, which included simulations, a tour of the Primate Center and engaging experiments on DNA for 26 local high school students from the Charlotte area.

Our relationship with the Health Occupational Students of America (HOSA) remained strong in 2025. HOSA supported our Camp Med program this summer, while Northwest AHEC supported the Piedmont Triad and the Northwest HOSA Regional meetings in November. We partnered to host two regional conferences, where many of the counties fall within our Northwest AHEC region. More than 1,100, mostly rural, students were exposed to health career programming while competing in health-focused competitions.

Sisters in Science, a partnering exploratory program with the Wake Forest University School of Medicine (WFUSM) chapter of the American Medical Women's Association, introduced 100+ female high school students to careers in health care and biomedical sciences.

NORTHWEST AHEC HEALTH CAREERS OUTPUTS

TOTALS	45*	870	3,123
	ACTIVITIES	HOURS	PARTICIPANTS
Exposure	22	182	2,702
Pipeline (20-40 hrs)	21	488	369
Intensive (>40 hrs)	2	200	52

*Includes three activities that did not list their program hours or participant numbers.

Northwest AHEC Camp Med 2025

Camp Med is designed to spark interest and expand understanding of the health care field while students are still in high school. This year we had students from all 17 counties in the Northwest region. Programs were held throughout the region and virtually.

84

Virtual Camp Med
unique participants

504

In-person Camp Med
unique participants

20+

Hours per
unique participant



Surry County Camp Med: An unforgettable week at Northern Regional Hospital

In June, Northern Regional Hospital in Mt. Airy hosted 30 high school students from across three counties for a week of career exploration and hands-on learning. This five-day, 40-hour program gave students an early and immersive introduction to the world of health care.

Throughout the week, participants rotated through interactive learning stations led by hospital staff from skilled nursing, labor and delivery, respiratory therapy, and more. Beyond technical skills and community service, students connected with skilled nursing residents, participated in team-building activities, and gained insights into clinical and non-clinical roles that often get overlooked.

NC Health Talent Alliance

The NC Health Talent Alliance was created to address the state's critical health care talent shortages through partnerships with North Carolina AHEC regions. Leveraging regional data reports from the 2024 talent alliance survey, we were able to self-fund the start of the Northwest AHEC Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) Initiative. We launched our employer collaborative group in May of that same year to engage 27 employers, educators and other stakeholders. We look forward to the implementation of the promised extramural funding to start in AY26.

Our regional goals and activities for AY25 included:

- ▶ Maintaining >75% of 2024 participation levels from employers, educators, and regional stakeholders, while valuing representation in a regionally appropriate manner.
- ▶ 2024 data collection yielded participation from a broad cross-section of provider types.
- ▶ The Northwest AHEC collaborative group decided to focus on creating solutions regarding the nursing field (CNA, LPN, CMA and RN) to close the region's annual nursing shortage.
- ▶ The collaborative has begun identifying and sharing regional and state resources to help close the health care talent gap.
- ▶ Continuing to foster ongoing dialogue with community partners to understand their evolving needs.
- ▶ The 2025 survey was deployed in March 2025. We are currently reviewing the results.

Northwest AHEC Scholar sends research to space

A'nya Buckner, a Northwest AHEC Scholar and senior pre-med student, was one of three WSSU students selected to participate in Blue Origin's historic all-female space mission. The group's research project, involving plant biology, was included on board and launched into space. The project was part of a collaboration between WSSU and Blue Origin's nonprofit, Club for the Future.

"This experience means everything to me... I'm looking forward to applying what I've learned from my labs and lectures to real-world research — and seeing our seedlings in space."

— A'nya Buckner, Northwest AHEC Scholar, WSSU student

CORE SERVICE 2

Student Services

Putting students in the hearts of our communities.

Making housing available to students is critical to ensure serving the community is a fulfilling and meaningful experience. The housing partnerships with our affiliated universities helps reduce student expenses during community-based education activities, allowing this invaluable experience to continue for the training and retention of future health care practitioners in all communities.

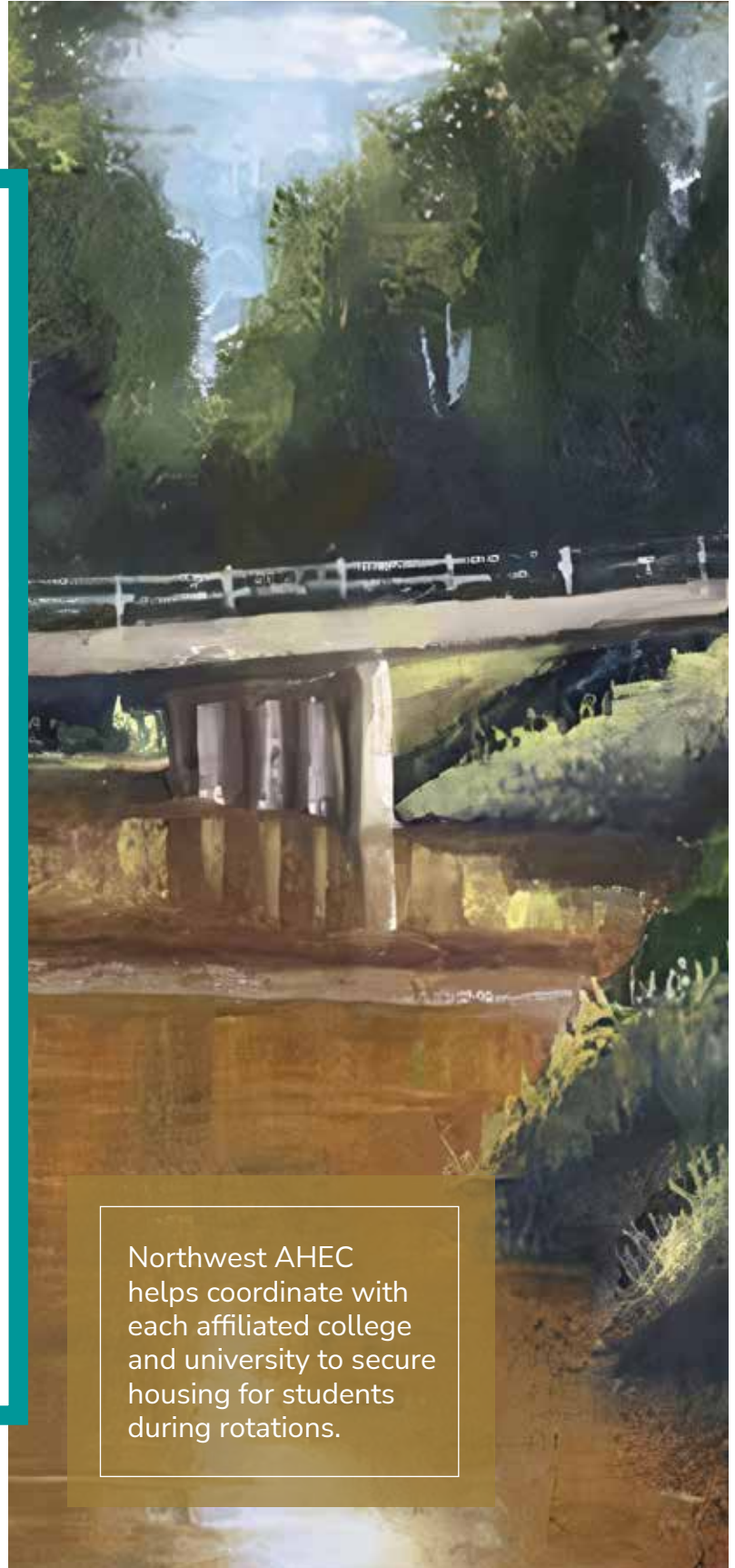
Northwest AHEC helps coordinate with each affiliated university to secure housing for students during rotations. Academic Year 2025 marked the first full year students were provided single-occupancy bedrooms in order to preserve personal space within housing they are already sharing with other students. Providing all students with a better environment for studying and preparing assignments means a better clinical experience.

More housing for more opportunities.

We saw a dramatic rise in housing numbers across the board in Academic Year 2025. The number of nights provided jumped 131% versus AY24, with 51% more students housed and averaging over 17 more nights per student. We received 117 more housing requests, as well.

All of the affiliated colleges and universities from last year signed on again, giving us a total number of 20 schools that span the entire state of North Carolina.

Northwest AHEC helps coordinate with each affiliated college and university to secure housing for students during rotations.



Artwork by Craig Richards, River Bridge.



STUDENT SUPPORT HOUSING TOTALS:

6,155

NIGHTS PROVIDED

140

STUDENTS HOUSED

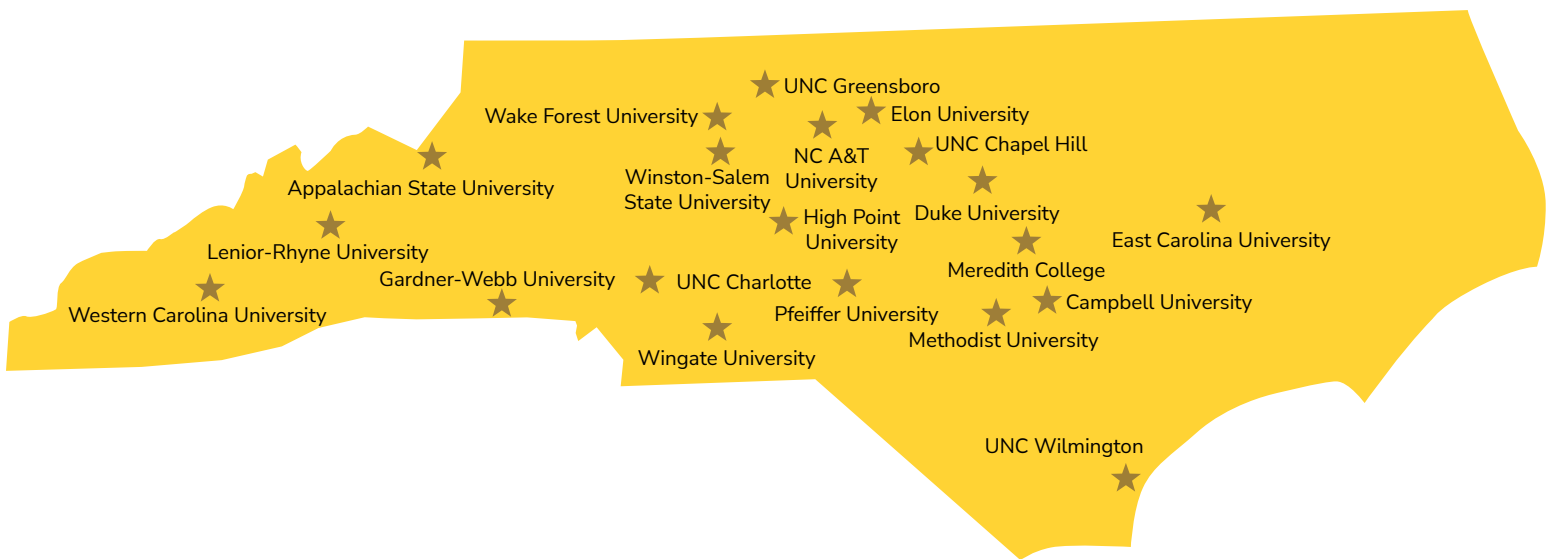
44

NIGHTS PER STUDENT (AVG.)

317

HOUSING REQUESTS

HOUSING SUPPORTED COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES:



CORE SERVICE 3

*Graduate Medical Education
and Patient Services Support*

Creating environments to make an impact for all.

Northwest AHEC leverages educational experiences to help residents and medical students recognize and determine how to best serve the people in our communities who need it most. By supporting graduate medical education, we develop training and retention opportunities to keep health care professionals thoughtfully and expertly serving communities across North Carolina today and for future generations.



Artwork by Sarah Katherine, *Wading Along*.

Of the Northwest AHEC-supported Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist residents who graduated in AY25:

55%
chose to stay
in NC (36 of 66)

Total estimated number of indigent/underserved patients served by the residents during AY25:

47,905

Family and Community Medicine:

15,000

Internal Medicine:

12,780

Psychiatry and Behavioral Health:

13,764

Pediatrics*:

6,361

Stokes County: Family medicine resident rotations

Each family medicine resident from WFUSM spends a few days during their eight-week community medicine rotations working at the Stokes County Health Department. It is an opportunity for them to experience rural health, from seeing the positive impact of Medicaid expansion to the negative outcomes of limited resources and substance disorders. They get to work alongside a very knowledgeable, dedicated staff and WFUSM faculty while meeting a remarkable patient population.



* Using Pediatrics AY24 data. Pediatrics AY25 data not available at time of publishing.

Graduate Medical Education and Patient Services Support provides training in under-resourced communities and treatment of vulnerable populations. Examples of these Academic Year 2025 community-based rotation initiatives included:

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY MEDICINE

- ▶ OB rotation at the Stokes County Health Department providing prenatal care in a rural community.
- ▶ Providing general outpatient care at the Bethesda Center for the homeless population.
- ▶ Elective rotation providing outpatient medical and behavioral health care to underserved patients at the Highland Avenue clinic.
- ▶ Providing obstetrical, gynecological and general care at four Federally Qualified Health Centers and surrounding communities.
- ▶ Refugee clinic at United Health Center, Peters Creek, where residents assist a family medicine faculty member in providing care to the area's Syrian refugee population.
- ▶ School-based health alliance allowing residents to provide care in Title 1 schools.
- ▶ The Community Care Clinic (Centro Clinico) where residents provide general care to an underserved and mainly Latino population.
- ▶ Providing care at Dragonfly House, a clinic for pediatric victims of abuse.
- ▶ Providing obstetrical care in a rural practice in Wilkesboro.

INTERNAL MEDICINE

- ▶ Residents rotate at the VA Clinic in Kernersville.
- ▶ Residents and faculty provide continuity clinics and urgent care visits for underserved populations in the Outpatient Department and Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Downtown Health Plaza (DHP) or Winston East.
- ▶ Strategically located in a health care manpower shortage area, the DHP has a unique attachment to the underserved east Winston-Salem community.
- ▶ The DHP is the largest primary care outpatient department in the Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Health system. Through three large clinics (Pediatrics, Adult Medicine and Ob/Gyn), more than 25,000 patients offered primary care, acute care and post hospital services.
- ▶ Integrated behavioral health, counseling, legal and food pantry services, and a community garden are available to families served by the DHP.
- ▶ Community health workers and care managers are provided in partnership with Population Health and a Transportation Coordinator. Ongoing collaboration with the Northwest Community Care Network provides on-site case managers to patients in pediatrics and internal medicine.
- ▶ The DHP patient population has a Medicaid enrollment of 15,109 (August 2018) and an aged, blind, and/or disabled cohort of 3,361 — the largest of any N.C. Medicaid site.

PSYCHIATRY AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

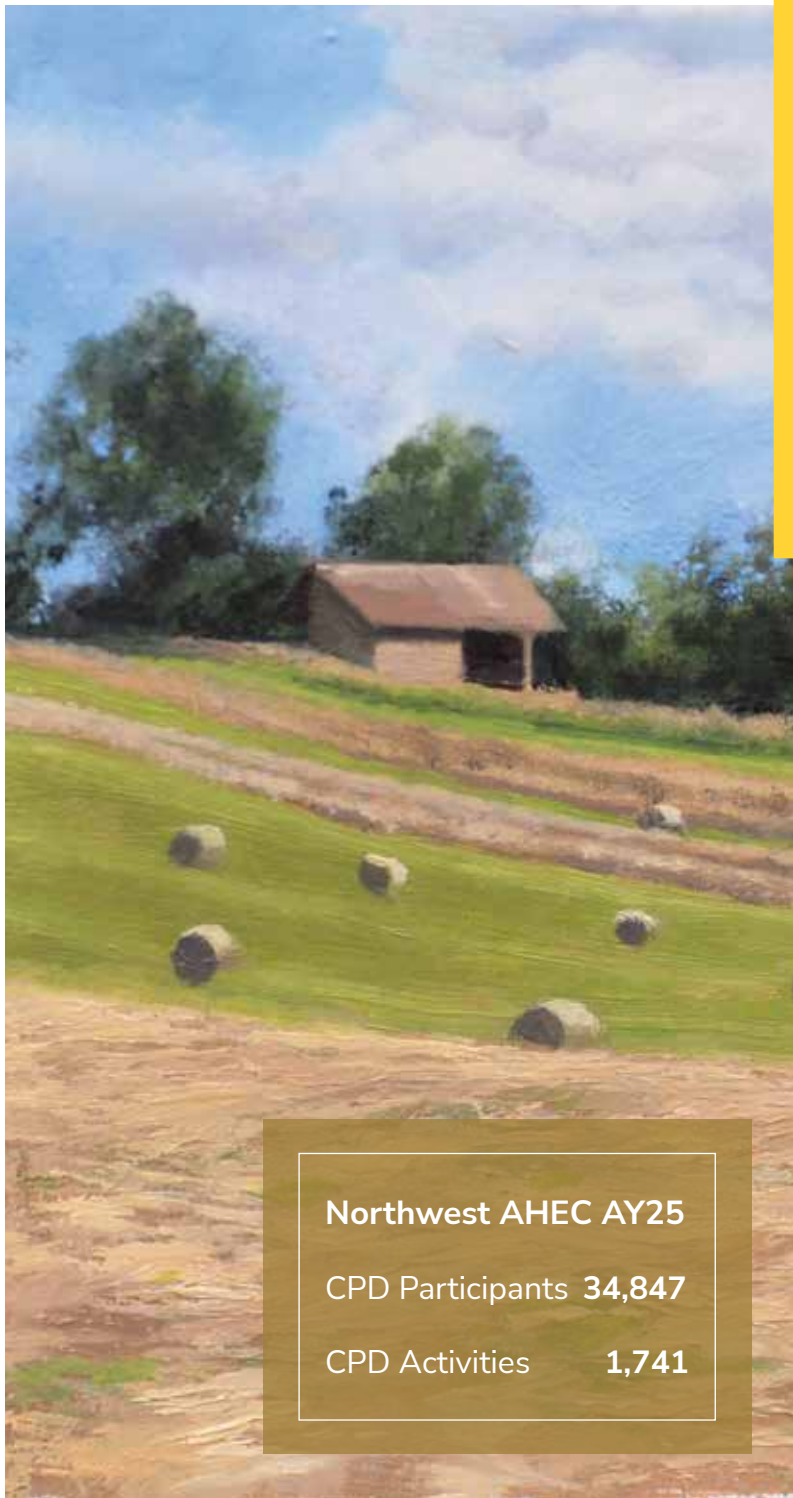
- ▶ Tele-Psychiatry Services are available to provide behavioral health services to hospitals in underserved areas in Lexington as well as Wilkes and Davie counties.
- ▶ Opioid group therapy and treatment are offered through Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Behavioral Health.
- ▶ Behavioral health consultations are provided through a specialized outpatient clinic at the Downtown Health Plaza.
- ▶ School Health Alliance, Crossnore School and Children's Home in Winston-Salem allow fellows to provide psychiatric care to elementary and middle school-aged students, as well as services to children living in the Children's Home.
- ▶ The Children's Law Center in Winston-Salem provides fellows with forensic experience in the family court system.
- ▶ University-Based Student Health provides psychiatric care to young adults in a university setting.
- ▶ Funded through the United Way, Child & Adolescent Psychiatry provides behavioral health services to indigent children.

PEDIATRICS

- ▶ Pediatric residents and medical students have been involved in projects relating to the Forsyth Refugee Health Collaborative, including advocacy, quality improvement initiatives, research, and efforts to expand the initiative to meet emerging needs.
- ▶ The projects are related to the Health Equity and Global Health certificate programs of the Wake Forest University School of Medicine designed to provide health equity education and training in addressing local and global health needs for residents and medical students. Work with refugees is part of a partnership between several medical practices, the Forsyth County Department of Public Health, the refugee resettlement agency (World Relief), and other community partners. Residents rotate to a twice-monthly clinic at the Community Care Center for uninsured, immigrant adolescents.
- ▶ The DHP evaluates newly arrived immigrant children from under-resourced settings, offers expanded resources for legal referrals, conducts refugee health assessments for children, and has a medical-legal partnership available for immigrant patients who are victims of human trafficking or domestic violence.
- ▶ The DHP screens children for assistance for food insecurity, transportation, basic needs, legal assistance, housing, caregiver depression or substance use.
- ▶ On-site and co-located specialists and programs are available through the DHP, Imprint Cares, Inc., and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).
- ▶ Integrated behavioral health providers within the DHP assist residents in learning how to screen, diagnose and manage behavioral health disorders.
- ▶ The DHP has been certified by the National Committee for Quality Assurance as a Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home and continues to see the largest number of Medicaid visits in the state of North Carolina.

CORE SERVICE 4

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Activities and Services



Northwest AHEC AY25

CPD Participants **34,847**

CPD Activities **1,741**

Refining training opportunities for all professionals.

Northwest AHEC offered continuing professional development opportunities throughout the region with a significant shift in our grand rounds series of events. WFUSM department chairs and leaders reduced broadcasting grand rounds to encourage more faculty face-to-face interaction. Access to Advocate Health Continuing Medical Education resources allowed us to fulfill this important need more efficiently through an enterprise-wide jointly accredited provider group. These changes account for much of the decrease in participation and activities specific to Northwest AHEC over last year. Other factors include the completion of several grant-funded programs, discontinuation of some activities and a few canceled activities due to an executive order.

Highlighted CPD Activities

NORTHWEST AHEC VISITS SURRY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

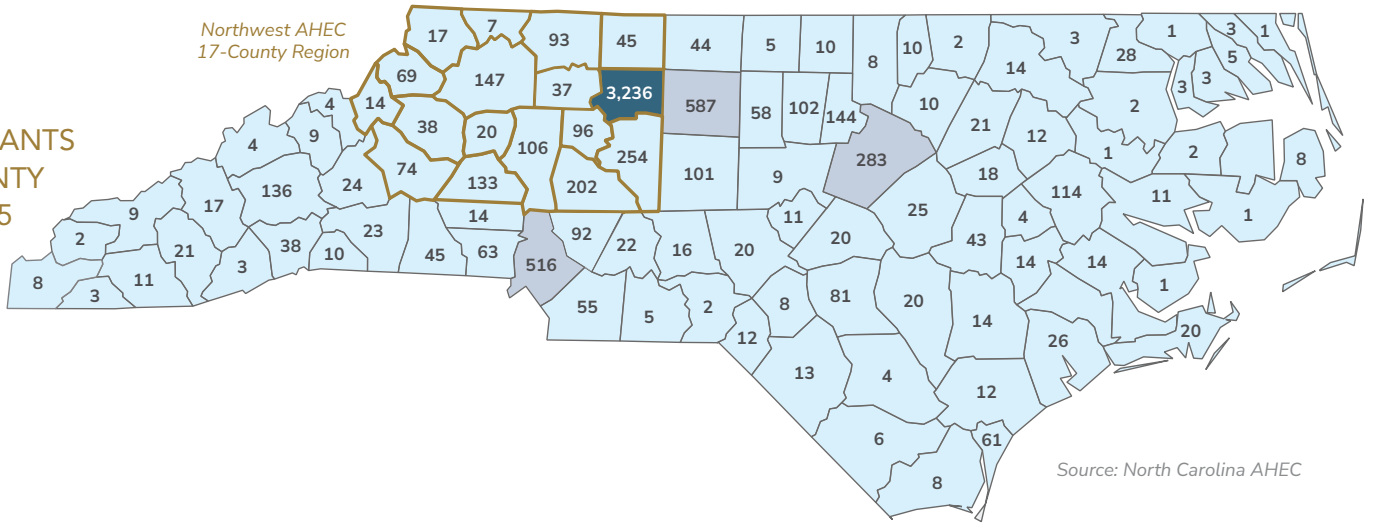
In December, Nurse Educators from Northwest AHEC visited Surry Community College. The visit, led by team members Alana Dodson, Stephanie Poindexter, and Ellen Zimmerman, was a valuable opportunity to connect with the college's Director of Nursing and faculty.

The visit allowed the team to engage in meaningful dialogue with nursing faculty, conduct a needs assessment, explore opportunities for future collaboration, and discuss funding opportunities, including the Clinical Site Development (CSD), and Clinical Instructor Partnership (CIP) grants. The meeting also provided the opportunity to share additional information about the North Carolina AHEC Nursing Clinical Instructor Partnership Program, designed to increase the number of clinical nursing faculty across the state.

Northwest AHEC is excited about the future of this collaboration and looks forward to supporting Surry Community College's mission to prepare the next generation of compassionate, competent nurses.

Artwork by Louis Guidetti, Farm.

UNIQUE PARTICIPANTS BY COUNTY FOR AY25



2,203 new participants	8,410 total unique participants	55% from Northwest AHEC 17-county region	42% from the rest of the state	3% from outside of NC
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NORTHWEST AHEC'S INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION EVENT CONNECTS 320+ STUDENTS

In April, an Interprofessional Education (IPE) event brought together a diverse cohort of over 320 students from multiple institutions and health care disciplines. This collaborative experience centered around a simulated patient case, designed to foster interprofessional communication, critical thinking, and team-based problem-solving within a realistic clinical scenario. The event is a partnership between Wake Forest University School of Medicine (WFUSM) and Winston-Salem State University (WSSU).



Participants represented a broad spectrum of health care education programs, including students from WSSU's Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Nursing, Healthcare Management, Therapeutic Recreation, Rehabilitation Counseling/Services, Social Work, and Clinical Laboratory Science departments. The event also welcomed students from WFUSM's Physician Assistant Studies program (both campuses — Winston-Salem and Boone/Appalachian State University) and Forsyth Technical Community College's Nursing program.

This initiative highlights the value of interprofessional education while reinforcing the importance of preparing future health care professionals to work in team-based environments. We look forward to the continued evolution of this initiative and the positive impact it will have on the development of competent, compassionate, and collaborative health care professionals.

AGING WELL CONFERENCE: EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES, TRANSFORMING CARE

Nearly 200 health care professionals, advocates, and caregivers gathered in May at Appalachian State University for the 2025 Aging Well Conference — a two-day event dedicated to improving the quality of care for older adults, hosted by Appalachian Institute for Health and Wellness and Northwest AHEC.

Now in its second year, this interprofessional and collaborative conference featured expert-led sessions covering a wide range of critical topics, including: healthy aging strategies; cognitive health; dementia care; medication optimization; mobility and fall prevention;

CORE SERVICE 4 (continued)

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Activities and Services



Artwork by Louis Guidetti, Farm.



and patient-centered decision-making. Breakout workshops allowed for deeper discussion and hands-on learning, while also fostering networking across disciplines.

An interprofessional lineup of speakers created a dynamic learning environment where attendees could share insights, discuss real-world challenges, and explore innovative approaches to aging care. The timing of the conference aligned perfectly with Older Americans Month, as we celebrated and empowered the older adults in our communities.

“This is one of the greatest conferences I have ever attended and I can’t wait to attend next year!”

– 2025 Aging Well Conference Attendee

HEALING TOGETHER: 16TH ANNUAL NC “ONE COMMUNITY IN RECOVERY” CONFERENCE

The North Carolina “One Community in Recovery” Conference is dedicated to fostering recovery, resilience, and advocacy in mental health and substance use. Planned by a statewide committee of behavioral health providers and advocates — many with lived experience — this annual event continues to be a beacon of hope and progress.

This year, over 200 participants came together for three days in March under the theme “Healing Together: Building Stronger

Communities.” The conference provided a platform for insightful discussions, innovative strategies, and shared experiences that continue to shape the future of recovery in North Carolina.

One of the standout sessions was “Addressing the Connection of Brain Injury, Public Health, and the Legal System in North Carolina” presented by Desireé Gorbea-Finalet of Disability Rights NC. This thought-provoking discussion shed light on how brain injuries intersect with public health and justice systems, emphasizing the need for comprehensive support and policy changes.



Save the Date: Join us for the 17th Annual NC ‘One Community in Recovery’ Conference — Rooted in Resilience: Reimagined through Change — March 4-6, 2026, in Greensboro.

39TH ANNUAL RESPIRATORY CARE CONFERENCE

The 39th Annual Northwest AHEC Respiratory Care Conference, held in February, brought together 127 respiratory care professionals from six states (CA, FL, NC, SC, TN, TX) and 46 North Carolina counties for two days of education and professional development.

The conference featured expert-led sessions on critical and emerging topics in respiratory care, including: AI Use in Respiratory Care; Advancing Respiratory Therapy Practice and Professional Advocacy; Conundrums in PFT Interpretation; Pharmacology Updates for RTs; Pediatrics for RTs; ECMO Perspectives from Patient and Provider;

HFNC; Long COVID and Pulmonary Fibrosis; Update in Advanced Diagnostic Bronchoscopy; From Primary Care to Sleep Medicine: The Expanding Role of Respiratory Therapists, and GOLD 2025 Updates.

With a strong emphasis on advancements in technology, clinical practice and interdisciplinary collaboration, the conference provided respiratory therapists with valuable insights and practical applications to enhance patient care. Save the Date: The 40th Annual Northwest AHEC Respiratory Care Conference will be held February 25-26, 2026.

13TH ANNUAL BREASTFEEDING FORUM

In March, lactation consultants, peer counselors, nurses, and breastfeeding advocates gathered at the Hickory Metro Convention Center for the 13th Annual Breastfeeding Forum. This event welcomed 120 attendees for a full day of education, networking, and meaningful discussions aimed at strengthening support for families.

Presentations addressed medication safety for lactating individuals, explored the complexities of using human milk, and postpartum issues — with an emphasis on the critical role of mental health and the value of community-based support systems for new parents. The day concluded with a session examining barriers to breastfeeding across different groups, along with practical strategies to better support these families.

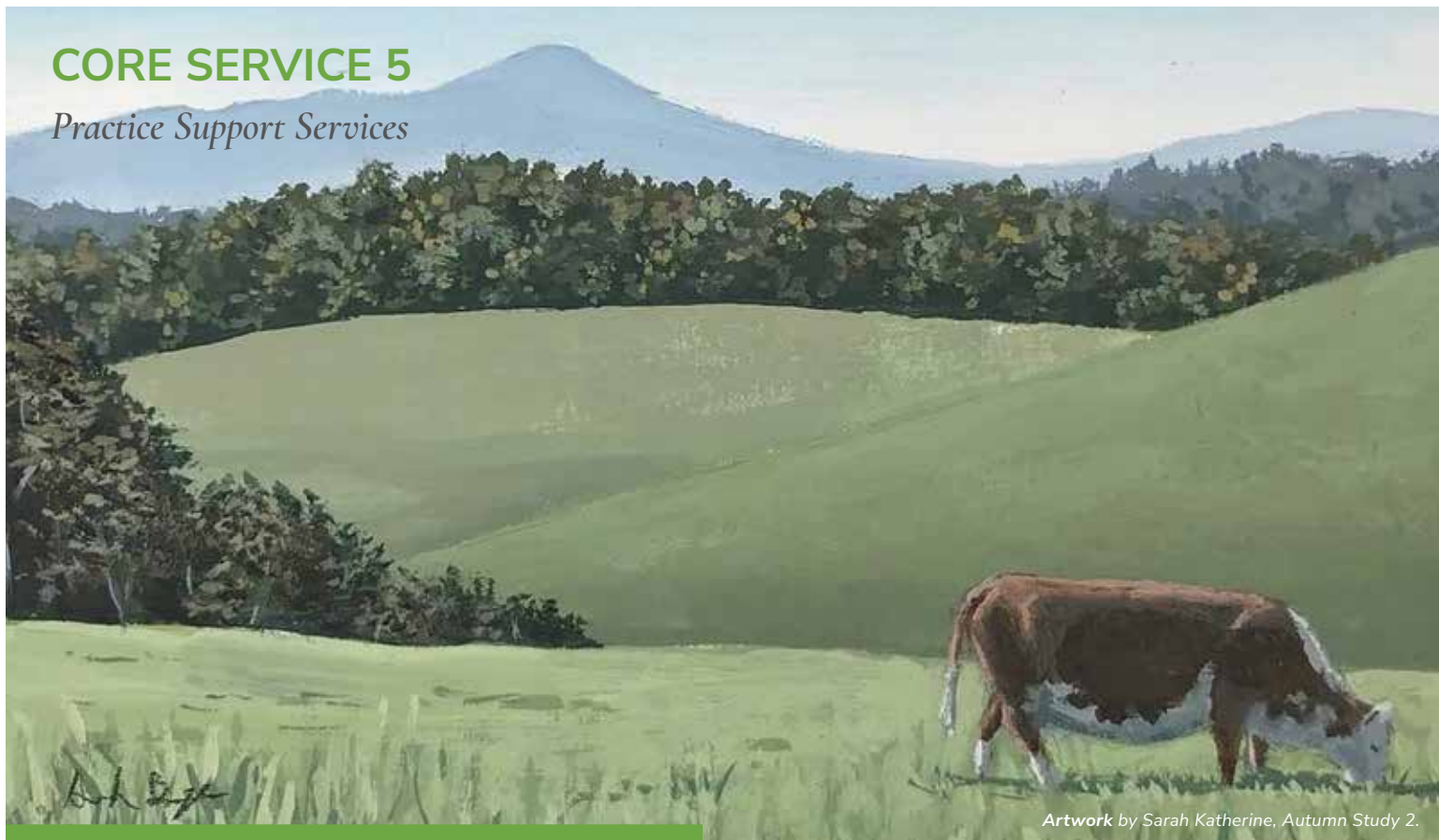
NC AHEC RN Refresher Program

From April 2024 to March 2025, Northwest AHEC maintained a strong enrollment, with 39 students enrolled at any given time. The program’s three-year average enrollment of 37 students demonstrates its ongoing impact and commitment to nursing workforce development.

For over 50 years the program has been empowering nurses with expired, lapsed, or encumbered licenses, and nurses that have been away from clinical practice, to successfully return to the nursing workforce.

CORE SERVICE 5

Practice Support Services



Artwork by Sarah Katherine, Autumn Study 2.

Sharing support and expertise across the region and state.

Northwest AHEC Practice Support partnered with health care practices in Academic Year 2025 to implement key initiatives, including the Collaborative Care Model (CoCM), Primary Care Reverse Integration, and new EHR systems. The team provided 2,312 regional encounters and extended its reach with 292 additional engagements beyond the Northwest AHEC region. Support included billing and coding assistance, workflow optimization, and staff training — delivered through online modules and personalized in-person coaching.

Notably, the team led innovative projects such as AI Scribe technology and AEYE diabetic retinopathy workflow enhancements, reinforcing its commitment to integrated, efficient care and provider success.

NORTHWEST AHEC PRACTICE SUPPORT IS ACTIVE IN ALL 17 COUNTIES

PROJECTS

Adv. Med. Home	25
Behavioral Health	250
Billing and Coding	374
Care Management	23
Community Health Worker Project	47
Medicaid Managed Care (MMC)	45
Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH)	32
Practice Management	1,429
Quality Improvement (QI)	87

ENROLLMENT IN NORTHWEST AHEC PRACTICE SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

	COACHING ENCOUNTERS	PRACTICES
Alexander	12	2
Alleghany	29	1
Ashe	158	6
Avery	59	3
Burke	97	8
Caldwell	53	7
Catawba	283	22
Davidson	169	5
Davie	37	3
Forsyth	403	22
Iredell	149	22
Rowan	57	4
Stokes	26	2
Surry	290	12
Watauga	182	11
Wilkes	66	3
Yadkin	43	2
Total*	2,113	135

* This total does not include encounters outside of the Northwest AHEC 17-county region.

Highlighted Projects

YADKIN COUNTY DSS: STRENGTHENING SERVICES THROUGH COLLABORATIVE EVALUATION

The Yadkin County Department of Social Services (DSS) and Health Department partnered with the Northwest AHEC Practice Support Team to evaluate administrative support services across their consolidated human services agency.

Recognizing the importance of streamlined workflows in delivering high-quality public health and social services, Yadkin County leadership reached out for expert guidance. Practice Support Team

members Lara Dickerson and Medina Wilson led the initiative, conducting in-depth workflow studies across three facilities.

Their comprehensive analysis resulted in a series of actionable recommendations aimed at optimizing job performance and enhancing client interactions. These insights have already begun to inform internal strategies, helping to build a more responsive and efficient service environment for the residents of Yadkin County.

2025 HPEI CONFERENCE: CONNECTING EDUCATORS AND COMMUNITIES

In June, Charlotte hosted the 7th annual Health Professions Education Institute (HPEI) Educator Conference, a dynamic event co-sponsored by Wake Forest University School of Medicine Office of Faculty Affairs and Medical Education. The conference brought together faculty, staff, students, residents, fellows, physicians, and health care providers passionate about advancing teaching and training.

The conference showcased cutting-edge best practices and evidence-based teaching strategies. Attendees enjoyed engaging breakout sessions, original research presentations, and valuable networking opportunities.

Northwest AHEC Leadership Team member Christopher A. Jones, DrPH, MHA — Assistant Professor and Assistant Director of Quality and Informatics — presented a poster highlighting insights from the Community Plunge program, showcasing Northwest AHEC’s ongoing efforts to strengthen community engagement and foster meaningful connections. A study exploring the transformative effects of the program was recently published in the *Journal of Clinical and Translational Science*.

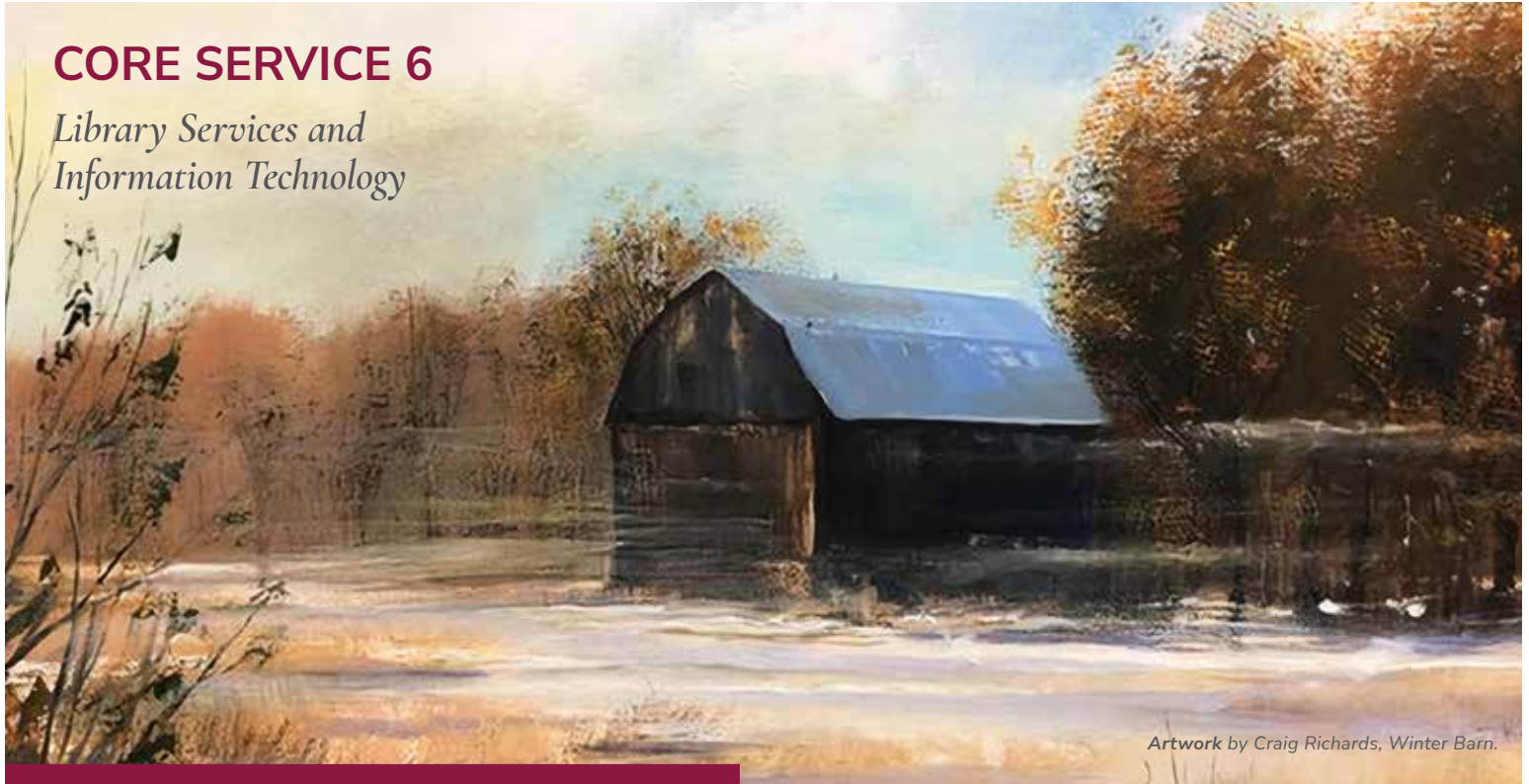
Surry Medical Ministries Recognized at Annual Rural Health Meeting

Congratulations to Surry Medical Ministries for being awarded “Practice of the Year” at the 2025 State Designated Rural Health Center End of Year Meeting in New Bern, NC, in June. This accolade reflects the outstanding collaboration between Northwest AHEC and rural health practices, and the tangible impact of dedicated coaching and quality improvement initiatives.

Medina Wilson, MBA-HM, CPC, CPPM, CFD, Senior Practice Support Specialist with Northwest AHEC, delivered a compelling presentation on the Practice Support Program’s Change Package.

CORE SERVICE 6

Library Services and Information Technology



Artwork by Craig Richards, Winter Barn.

Guiding all learners and leaders to knowledge and support.

Library Services and Information Technology are essential to Northwest AHEC's success in connecting learners with training, resources and programs. These two services continually work to evolve how program educators and learners discover, access and share information. Efforts focus on streamlining marketing communications, enhancing tools for accessing high-quality information, and creating simple, effective pathways for support. We emphasize evidence-based resources to avoid the misinformation found through basic internet searches. The goal is to help all students and health care professionals maximize opportunities to become exceptional providers in the communities they serve.

In June 2025, we launched a new and improved ADL. The ADL introduced a simplified and more efficient search function that works more intuitively.

ENGAGEMENT WITH LIBRARY SERVICES

Service Interactions:

601

Proactive Alerts¹:

427

Copyrights:

24

LibGuides:

16

Document Delivery Requests:

333

Interlibrary Loans:

6

Mediated Searches:

25

CPD Activities:

21

¹ Current Literature Awareness Service

Web Activity: Site, Blog, Email and Social Media

Northwest AHEC's approach to technology is about eliminating obstacles to reaching, engaging, training and retaining health care professionals. We continue to enhance online resources to meet learners and providers where they are through our Learner Relationship Management (LRM) system, interactive tools and other resources. Working with each of Northwest AHEC's core services, we focus on outreach and content for a more enriching, enlightening educational experience for all.

— Total emails sent: **1,002,713**

— Social media follower growth: **+14.6%**

- ▶ Our email campaign tools allow us to keep refining our marketing communication, targeting 152 email campaigns for 1,002,713 emails.
- ▶ Our targeted promotional emails continue to show strong readership with open and click-through rates way above sector averages and continue to increase year over year. Engagement rate remained strong at 41% on average, with a high of 50%.
- ▶ Social media followers grew nearly 14.6% from AY24, finishing AY25 with 2,827 total followers across all channels.
- ▶ We updated our online course catalog and course detail pages with a modern responsive interface to improve usability for our learners.
- ▶ The Northwest AHEC blog continues to drive additional website traffic. The blog attracted 16,352 total views (versus 11,829 in AY24), including nearly double the number of practice support update page views (8,552 versus 4,380 in AY24). The blog is available at nwahec.org/blog.
- ▶ Our Healthcare Insights Podcast on Soundcloud garnered 2,993 plays in AY25, with 65 people enrolled in the Podcast Learning Series since the beginning of AY24. The podcast is available at soundcloud.com/nwahecwebmaster.
- ▶ We use Twillio for Attendance SMS tracking and there were 1,561 sessions with 24,574 participants (mostly grand rounds).

ENGAGEMENT RATES:



41% of our contacts in our 17-county region engaged with Northwest AHEC



53% of our contacts overall engaged with Northwest AHEC

Connect with us online



facebook.com/nwahec



[@northwestahec](https://twitter.com/northwestahec)



[@northwestahec](https://www.instagram.com/northwestahec)



linkedin.com/company/nwahec



nwahec.org/blog



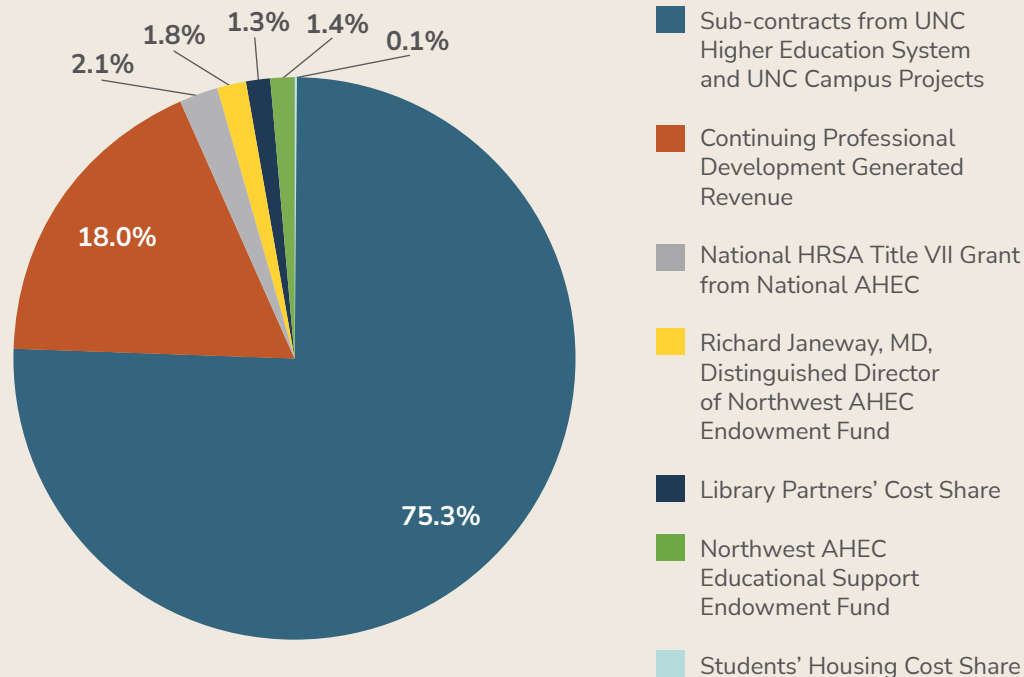
youtube.com/northwestahec



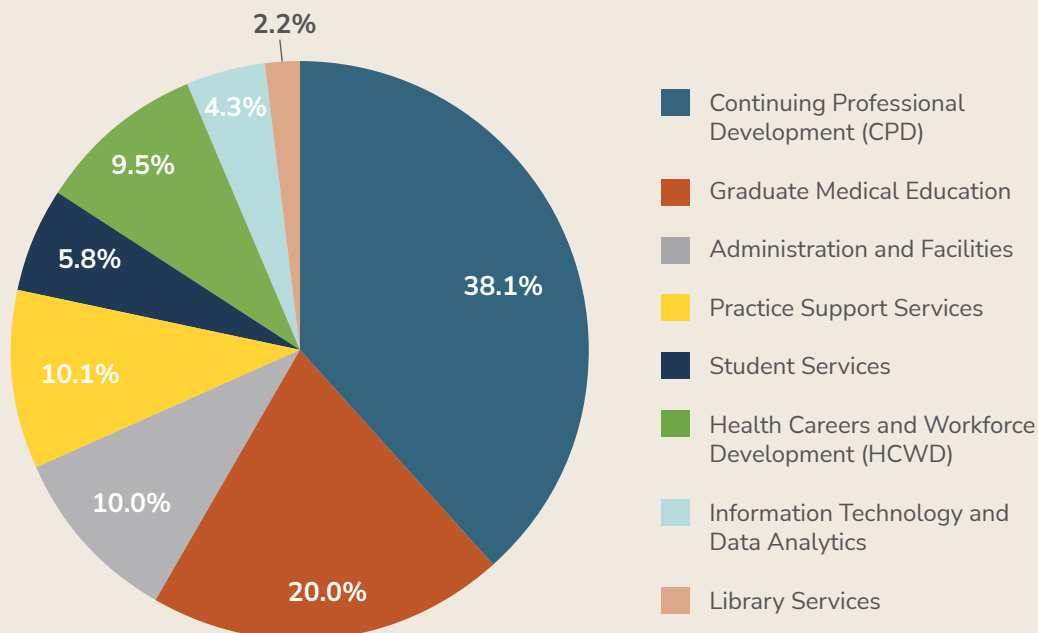
Join our email list at nwahec.org/email

FUNDING SOURCES AND EXPENDITURES

TOTAL ANNUAL BUDGET
OF \$6,075,000



CORE SERVICE ALLOCATION





The Northwest AHEC Team

Michelle Adams; Megan Mills Anderson; Amy Basham; Andrew Brewer; Reed Burger; Christina Clarke; Lara Dickerson; Alana Dodson; Nedra Edwards Hines; Samantha Garvens; Angela Hodges; Lee Howard; Chris Jones; Ellen Kesler; Brooke Kochanski; Michael Lischke; Lindsey MacLean; Leslie McDowell; Melanee Mills; Janice Moore; Amanda Pearson; Stephanie Poindexter; Marie Simos; Lisa Thomas; Leigh Watkins; Medina Wilson; Ellen Zimmerman

Not pictured: *Cherelle Blakely; Michael Hulme; Gail Pawlik; Jasmine Mickens*

Photo taken June 2, 2025 at Wally's Service Station, Mount Airy, NC

PARTNERS

Northwest AHEC is grateful to have had the opportunity to collaborate with the following organizations, providers and agencies during AY25.

Access Healthcare
 Advance Family & Sports Medicine Center
 Alexander County
 Alexander County Schools
 Alleghany Chamber of Commerce
 Alleghany County
 Alleghany County Memorial Hospital
 Alleghany County Schools
 Alleghany Memorial Hospital
 Appalachian Regional Healthcare System
 Appalachian State University
 Beaver College of Health Sciences
 Department of Psychology
 Appalachian District Health Department
 Appalachian Family Practice PA
 Appalachian Regional Healthcare System
 Appalachian Regional Medical Associates
 Ardmore Family Practice, P.A.
 Ashe County
 Ashe County Schools
 Ashe Memorial Hospital
 Ashe Pediatrics
 Atrium Health Behavioral Division; Davidson
 Atrium Health Blue Ridge
 Atrium Health Carolinas Medical Center
 Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist
 Brenner Children's
 Brenner FIT®
 CareNet Counseling
 Clinical Ethics Committee
 Comprehensive Cancer Center
 Downtown Health Plaza
 Avery County
 Avery County Schools
 Benson Area Medical Center; Inc.
 Bethany Medical Center
 Black River Health Services
 Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina
 Blue Ridge Medical Group
 Nephrology & Hypertension Center
 Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine
 Women's Center
 Boone Dermatology Clinic, P.A.
 Broughton Hospital
 Burke County
 Burke County Schools
 Burke Primary Care

Cabral Internal Medicine
 Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute
 Caldwell County
 Caldwell County Schools
 Caldwell UNC Health Care
 Campbell University
 Jerry Wallace School of Osteopathic Medicine
 School of Pharmacy
 Cardiology Associates of the Carolinas
 Care Ring
 CareNet, Inc.
 Caring Community Clinic
 Catawba College
 Department of Nursing
 Catawba County
 Catawba County Department of Social Services
 Catawba County Public Health Department
 Catawba County Schools
 Catawba Pediatric Associates
 Catawba Science Center
 Catawba Valley Behavioral Healthcare
 Catawba Valley Community College
 Catawba Valley Medical Center
 Catawba Valley Psychiatry Services
 Catawba Women's Center, P.A.
 Cedar Creek Family Medicine
 Challie Minton, M.D.
 Charles W Jones, M.D., P.A.
 Children's Hope Alliance
 City of Winston-Salem
 Clay Comprehensive Health Services
 CLECO Primary Care Network
 Cleveland Pediatrics
 ClubHaven Family Practice
 College Foundation of North Carolina (CFNC)
 Collettsville Medical Center
 Community Care Clinic
 Community Care Clinic of Highlands-Cashiers
 Community Care Clinic of Rowan County
 Community Care of North Carolina
 Compassionate Care
 Consortium for Southeast Healthcare Quality
 Cove Creek School
 Crisis Control Ministry
 Crossnore School & Children's Home Center
 for Trauma Resilient Communities
 Crossriver Cardiology
 Crossroads Counseling Center, Inc.
 Crossroads Family Medical Care, P.A.
 Crown Health Care, P.A.
 Davidson College
 Davidson County
 Davidson County Community College
 Davidson County Schools
 Davidson Medical Ministries Clinic
 Davidson-Davie Community College
 Davie County
 Davie County Schools
 Davis Regional Medical Center
 Department of Veterans Affairs
 WB "Bill" Hefner Medical Center Salisbury
 Kernersville Outpatient Clinic
 Winston-Salem Outpatient Clinic
 Desantis Family Practice

Digestive Health Specialist
 Douglas D Pritchard, M.D., P.L.L.C.
 Duke University Medical Center
 Duke University
 School of Medicine
 East Carolina University
 Brody School of Medicine
 ECHO Clinic
 Elkin City Schools
 Elkin Pediatric & Adult Medicine
 Elliot Morgan Parsonage, P.A.
 Elon University
 Evergreen Health Promotion
 Fairgrove Primary Health
 Family Care Center, P.A.
 Family Healthcare Practice
 Fifth Street Ministries
 Forsyth County
 Forsyth County Department of Public Health
 Forsyth, Stokes, and Davie County Medical Society
 Forsyth Technical Community College
 Career Center
 Free Clinic of Our Towns
 Frye Regional Medical Center
 Full Circle Community Wellness
 Gardner-Webb University
 Gastroenterology Associates of the Piedmont
 Good Samaritan Clinic
 Grace Clinic of Yadkin Valley
 Granite Falls Family Medical Center
 Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministry
 Hardee Family Medicine
 Hart Family Practice
 HealthReach Community Clinic
 Helping Hands Clinic of Caldwell
 Hickory Chest, P.L.L.C.
 Hickory Public Schools
 High Country Community Health
 High Country Family Medicine
 High Point University
 Congdon School of Health Sciences
 Fred Wilson School of Pharmacy
 Workman School of Dental Medicine
 & Oral Health
 High Rock Internal Medicine, P.A.
 Housing Authority of the City of High Point
 Hugh Chatham Memorial Hospital
 Integrated Care of Greater Hickory
 Iredell County
 Iredell Health System
 Iredell Physician Network
 Iredell-Statesville Schools
 Kaleideum Science Center
 Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust
 Kernersville Primary Care
 Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP
 Lake Norman Community Health Clinic
 Lake Norman Regional Medical Center
 Lee Physician Group
 Lenoir-Rhyne University
 Lexington City Schools
 Lexington Family Physicians, P.A.
 Lexington Internal Medicine Clinic, P.A.
 LifeBrite Community Hospital of Stokes

Livingstone College
 LliBott Consultorios Medicos
 March of Dimes of Northwest North Carolina
 Marshall C. Murrey, M.D. dba Greenway Medical
 MBB Affiliates, LLC
 Mental Health Association in Forsyth County
 Meridian Resources, Inc.
 Meredith College
 Methodist University
 Mitchell Community College
 Modern Treatment Healthcare Services
 Moore Free Care Clinic
 Mooresville Graded School District
 Morganton Internal Medicine, P.A.
 Mountain Community Health Partnership
 Mountain Laurel Family Practice
 Mountain Laurel Internal Medicine, P.A.
 Mountain View Pediatrics, P.A.
 Mt. Airy City Schools
 National Board of Certified Counselors
 Nephrology Associates
 Newton Conover Schools
 Newton Family Physicians, P.A.
 North Carolina AHEC
 Area L AHEC
 Duke AHEC Program
 Eastern AHEC
 Mountain AHEC
 Piedmont AHEC
 South Piedmont AHEC
 Southern Regional AHEC
 South East AHEC
 Wake AHEC
 North Carolina AIDS Education and Training Center
 (NC AETC)
 North Carolina American Indian Health Board
 (AIHB)
 North Carolina Association for the Management
 and Treatment of Sex Offenses (NCAMTSO)
 North Carolina Association of Free &
 Charitable Clinics
 North Carolina Association of
 Professional Psychologists
 North Carolina A&T State University
 North Carolina Board of Nursing
 North Carolina Community Health
 Center Association
 North Carolina Culture Change Coalition
 North Carolina Department of Health and
 Human Services
 North Carolina Department of Public Instruction/
 Health Science Education
 North Carolina Healthcare Association
 North Carolina HOSA - Future Health Professionals
 North Carolina Institute for Public Health (NCIPH)
 North Carolina Medical Group Managers Association
 North Carolina Medical Society
 Future Clinical Leaders College
 North Carolina Providers of Abuser Treatment
 (NCPAT)
 North Carolina Respiratory Care Board (NCRCB)
 North Carolina State University
 Northern Regional Hospital
 Northlake Pediatric Care

Northwest Region School Nurses Association
 of NC
 Novant Health
 Forsyth Medical Center
 Rowan Medical Center
 Thomasville Medical Center
 Old Vineyard Behavioral Health Services
 Partners Behavioral Health Management
 Pfeiffer University
 Piedmont Endocrinology, P.A.
 Promedical Healthcare, P.A.
 Randolph Health
 Reading Connections
 Reynolda House Museum of American Art
 Ronald McDonald House of Winston-Salem
 Rowan Cabarrus Community College
 Rowan County
 Rowan County Health Department
 Rowan Medical Center
 Rowan-Salisbury School District
 Salem Academy & College
 Salisbury Internal Medicine Associates
 Salisbury Pediatric Associates
 Scotland Community Health Center
 Senior Services, Inc. - Meals-on-Wheels Program
 Southside United Health Center
 St. Peter's Church and World Outreach Center
 Stokes County
 Stokes County Schools
 Surry Community College
 Surry County
 Surry County Schools
 Surry Medical Ministries Clinic
 Swisher Internal Medicine
 The Arc Davidson County
 The Child Health Center
 The Cognitive Connection
 The Duke Endowment
 The Enrichment Center
 The Open Door Clinic of Urban Ministries
 of Wake County
 The Salem Center
 The Salvation Army of Winston-Salem
 The Shalom Project
 Thomasville City Schools
 Thomasville High School
 Trellis Supportive Care
 Trevett Cristo
 Trinity Health Care, P.A.
 Trinity Medical Care
 UNC Chapel Hill
 Adams School of Dentistry
 Department of Health Sciences
 Eshelman School of Pharmacy
 Gillings School of Global Public Health
 School of Medicine
 Asheville Branch Campus
 Charlotte Branch Campus
 Wilmington Branch Campus
 School of Nursing
 School of Social Work
 UNC Charlotte
 UNC Greensboro
 School of Nursing

UNC Health Care
 UNC Wilmington
 Unifour Family Practice
 Unifour Pediatrics, P.A.
 United Health Centers
 University of Alabama at Birmingham
 Division of Infectious Diseases
 University of North Carolina School of the Arts
 Urban League of Winston-Salem
 Vaya Health
 Victor M. Rosado, MD, P.A.
 Viewmont Internal Medicine
 Wake Forest Institute for Regenerative Medicine
 Wake Forest University School of Medicine
 Center for Experimental and Applied
 Learning (CEAL)
 Clinical and Translational Science Institute
 DEAC Clinic
 Family and Community Medicine
 Infectious Disease
 Internal Medicine
 Maya Angelou Research Center for Health
 Pediatrics
 Physician Assistant Studies & Boone Campus
 Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine
 Public Health Sciences
 Share the Health Fair
 Student National Medical Association
 Wake Forest University School of Medicine -
 Charlotte
 Wake Forest University
 Department of Counseling
 Department of Psychology
 LGBTQ+ Center
 Scholars Office
 WakeMed Cary Hospital
 Watauga County
 Watauga County Schools
 Watauga Medical Center - App. Regional
 Healthcare System
 Watch Healthcare Program
 West Alexander Middle School
 West Caldwell Health Council
 Western Carolina University
 Western Piedmont Community College
 WHAP - Lyndhurst Gynecologic Associates
 Wilkes Community College
 Wilkes County
 Wilkes County Schools
 Willie Mason & Friends
 Wingate University
 Winston-Salem State University (WSSU)
 School of Health Sciences
 Winston-Salem & Kernersville Pediatrics
 Winston-Salem Fellows
 Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools
 Womble Bond Dickinson
 Yadkin County
 Yadkin County Schools
 YMCA of Northwest North Carolina



Our service area
encompasses 17 counties in
Northwest North Carolina:



Northwest Area Health Education Center (Northwest AHEC)
Wake Forest University School of Medicine
Medical Center Boulevard | Winston-Salem, NC 27157-3311
336-713-7700 | fax 336-713-7701

Northwest AHEC is a program of Wake Forest University
School of Medicine and part of the North Carolina AHEC System.



Artwork by Nick Bragg, Pilot Mountain Spring.