

Area Health Education Centers

FACTSHEET

Status:

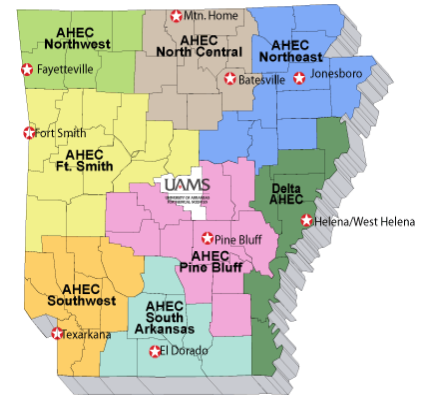
- Currently, the average population to family physician ratio in AR is **2,459:1**. If Area Health Education Center (AHEC)-trained physicians were removed from the equation, the average population to family physician ratio in Arkansas would be **4,888:1**

Program:

The UAMS Arkansas AHEC Program was founded as the primary educational outreach effort of UAMS and the principal means of decentralizing medical and other health professions education throughout the state. The AHEC training approach emphasizes primary care, which covers general health education and basic medical care for the whole family.

Impact:

- Of the AHEC Family Medicine Residency graduates in the 10 years from 1998 – 2008, 74% (307) remained in Arkansas to practice. Of these physicians, 154 (50.16%) chose to practice in communities fewer than 15,000 in population.
- A total of 573 AHEC-trained family physicians currently practice in 67 of our 75 counties.
- AHEC-trained physicians comprise 50% of all family physicians in the state.



How it Works:

- Each AHEC extends its programs into a multiple county service area, making programs and services accessible to more potential students and rural providers.
- Quality training experiences in community settings away from the academic medical center expose students and residents to practice opportunities and realities in underserved rural communities, helping to encourage rural practice choices.
- The teaching ambience that results, as well as AHEC library services and continuing education offerings, all serve to enhance the professional environments and support systems in participating communities, and aid in provider retention.

Administration/Oversight: The AHEC Network is a component of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Division of Rural Programs.

