



Quarterly Director's Update

Hello Everyone and Happy New Year! Part of our New Year's resolution at Oregon AHEC is to increase our communication with you: our key leaders, board members, community partners, and interested individuals. I personally believe good communication is the key to success. Therefore, you are receiving the first of what I am calling the Oregon AHEC Program Office "Quarterly Director's Update." This first update will provide a brief overview of what has been happening within Oregon AHEC, highlight a few key activities in our regional centers, and what we have going on in the first quarter of 2018 (January-March).

Funding: As many of you know we were awarded another 5-year federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant in September 2017. These funds, along with matching money from OHSU and the state, provide the majority of funding for Oregon AHEC. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) notified all grantees of potential lapse in funding if Congress cannot pass a continuing resolution bill in early February. Until we hear otherwise, we are moving forward in an effort to comply with all terms, conditions, requirements, and performance goals specified in our award.

Oregon AHEC Scholars Program: One of the central programs in our federal grant is the development of the Oregon AHEC Scholars Program (OASP). The OASP is an interprofessional group of health care profession students who have declared an interest in rural and/or underserved care. Cohorts of students from five different universities in Oregon, all containing well-established health professions education programs, will join together to create the first statewide multi-institutional rural and underserved "track" for health professions students. Participating universities include: Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU), Portland State University (PSU), Western University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific-Northwest (COMP-NW), Oregon State University (OSU) and Pacific University.

OASP students receive additional training in concepts of Interprofessional Education (IPE), patient safety, social determinates of health, behavioral health integration, cultural competency and practice transformation in a series of in-person and/or web-based didactic sessions designed to enhance their understanding of rural and underserved health care. Furthermore, OASP students will spend dedicated clinical training time in rural and underserved areas of our state.

This program will utilize our regional Centers as local ambassadors with centralization at the Program Office. To that end, we hired an AHEC Scholars Education Coordinator to assist with the overall organization of OASP participants. Linda Martin starts in early February and brings with her many years of experience working with health care professions students, curriculum, faculty, and community preceptors during her time at COMP-NW and now at the OHSU Campus for Rural Health. I am very excited to have Linda as part of our AHEC team utilizing her skills and experience to help build the OASP and be the point person for students, faculty, clinics, and hospitals. In October and December we held planning meetings with representatives from all of

the 5 institutions listed above including our regional Centers. These meetings have set the groundwork for developing the OASP and created buy-in from all involved.

HRSA Progress Report: We submitted our first quarterly progress report to HRSA in late December. This was based on the work we had done related to our grant from September through the end of 2017. In the last few weeks we received feedback from HRSA that our report was well-detailed and reflects the hard work we have been putting into the project, stating, “you are on track with fulfilling your goals and objectives so that you may have a productive year.” Additionally, in a recent conversation with our HRSA Project Officer, we have been selected as one of a few state AHEC offices to be featured in a March HRSA webinar highlighting the work we have done in building the Oregon AHEC Scholars Program. This is a huge honor and we look forward to sharing what we’ve done and learned so far with other AHECs across the nation.

AHEC Center Spotlight: (This section highlights a few key programs and activities our regional Centers are doing in their communities. Click on the Center’s name to read more):

[Northeast Oregon AHEC](#) (NEOAHEC) is co-sponsoring two Continuing Medical Education (CME) events this spring. In conjunction with the OHSU CME office, NEOAHEC is bringing CME to LaGrande through live-cast technology. This provides a valuable resource to the local health care community eliminating the expense of traveling to CME events. Additionally, NEOAHEC is partnering with the Oregon Office of Rural Health’s 2nd Annual Forum on Aging in Rural Oregon in Pendleton this May. This forum provides a place for health care professionals, care givers and anyone interested to discuss issues related to aging in rural Oregon.

[Oregon Pacific AHEC](#) (OPAHEC) partnered with Lebanon Samaritan Hospital, Oregon Veteran’s Home, Linn Benton Community College, Western University of Health Sciences, College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific-Northwest (COMP-NW), and other local businesses to offer “Meet Rural Health Care” in November at the COMP-NW campus in Lebanon. This was in observance of National Rural Health Day and featured college and career readiness trainings, information booths, a raffle, and presentations from COMP-NW faculty and current rural healthcare providers. OPAHEC presented Healthcare Hero awards to 17 healthcare professionals representing diverse disciplines in rural practice around the OPAHEC region. Over 40 community members attended and or contributed to this rural health event.

January-March Activities: Since the first of the year, our main focus area has been the development of OASP. We have been engaging in multiple conversations to discuss OASP with individual school/program faculty and begin the process of designing the program so it works with their curriculum. We have enjoyed learning about the student’s rigorous coursework and how OASP will fit into their busy schedules. In early February, the OASP Planning Group will meet for the third time to talk through the overall plan and start to arrange times for us to meet with students this spring. Also in February, I will attend the AHEC of Southwest Oregon Board meeting in Roseburg, and then the Northeast Oregon AHEC Board meeting in Pendleton this March. I have enjoyed attending our Center’s Board meetings as much as I am able as it gives me a chance to meet with members of the community, hear about how AHEC can help, and keep them informed in what is going on as a statewide system. In the end of March, all of the regional Center Directors will come to the Program Office for an in-person meeting to discuss progress on our grant and strategize how we move forward. This is an opportune time to strengthen our statewide outreach and reflect on our approach to improving the education, training, and distribution of health care professionals in Oregon.

I hope you found this update informative and insightful. Feel free to share it with anyone you know who is interested in hearing what is going on in Oregon AHEC. As always, thank you for all you have done and continue to do. Please let me know what we can do to help. If you have any questions, concerns, or updates for us, please do not hesitate to contact me via email or phone.

Best,

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