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From: Missouri Area Health Education Centers

Missouri Primary Care Summit: Working with Key Stakeholders in Healthcare

When Missourians have access to primary healthcare services and resources, their health problems are detected and treated earlier. However, access to primary healthcare is a struggle in both rural and urban Missouri and remains out of reach for many—even those who have insurance coverage and experience few financial limitations. Unfortunately, nearly every county in Missouri is a Primary Care Healthcare Professional Shortage Area.

One of the most critical roles of the Missouri Area Health Education Centers (MAHEC) is to collaborate with key healthcare stakeholders in our state to help grow and maintain the primary care provider pipeline and its distribution.

MAHEC has recently built upon an ongoing partnership with Missouri Hospital Association (MHA), Missouri Primary Care Association (MPCA) and Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (MO DHSS), with in-kind support from the MO State Board of Nursing, to host the first Missouri Primary Care Summit, on April 4, 2016, in Jefferson City.

The summit was based on ideas gained from similar models carried out by other states within the National AHEC Organization, which have led to increased and better coordinated statewide partnerships for healthcare workforce and healthcare education initiatives in those states.

The work carried out at the Missouri Primary Care Summit, by the 68 individuals in attendance across the state in educational, clinical, and organizational roles in healthcare, resulted in five Key Priority Areas. These priorities have begun to be addressed in smaller priority workgroups in "Year 1" and beyond. Identified areas of critical need include primary care preceptor incentives, statewide preceptor development, increased funding and collaboration in the areas of scholarships, loans, and graduate medical education programs, and ongoing support of the development and application of the recently passed legislation to create a Missouri Healthcare Workforce Database.

The collaboration among the groups convening the summit also led to the formation of the Missouri Healthcare Workforce Coalition (MOHWC), to help guide and collaborate with the work of the summit priority groups, and bring partners together in statewide advocacy efforts.

Disciplines of focus at the summit included physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners engaged in primary care practice and/or education across the state, along with healthcare association representatives with a vested interest in primary care. As collaborations grow, there is a desire to add other disciplines with a vested interest in primary care to the efforts in the future, such as behavioral health, dental, pharmacy and others.

MAHEC: Connecting students to careers, professionals to communities, and communities to better health



Primary Care Summit participants work together on a topic during a breakout session.

MAHEC is a partnership of seven locally-governed organizations and three university-based health professions education programs working statewide to increase the numbers of Missouri youth entering stable, high-paying jobs as healthcare professionals and the numbers of professionals caring for underserved populations.

The MAHEC partners include:

- A.T. Still University – Kirksville
- University of Missouri – Columbia
- Saint Louis University
- Northeast Missouri AHEC – Kirksville
- Northwest Missouri AHEC – St. Joseph
- West Central Missouri AHEC – Lexington
- Mid-Missouri AHEC – Rolla
- East Central Missouri AHEC – St. Louis
- Southeastern Missouri AHEC – Poplar Bluff
- Southwest Missouri AHEC – Springfield