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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)  
Bureau of Health Workforce  
Division of Health Careers and Financial Support  
Area Health Education Centers Program (AHEC)**

Project Period: September 1, 2017 through August 31, 2022 (5 years). Year-one is a planning year. Services will be delivered beginning year-two (September 2018).

Purpose: Develop and enhance education and training networks within communities, academic institutions, and community-based organizations.

Strategic priorities: a) increase diversity and distribution among health professionals, b) enhance health care quality, and c) improve health care delivery to rural and underserved areas and populations

AHEC Program: UTRGV School of Medicine, Dr. John Ronnau, Director, Principal Investigator; Dr. Shawn Saladin, Assistant Director, Co-PI

Location of AHECs: Cameron/Bob Clark Center; Hidalgo/San Carlos; Starr/La Victoria

**AHEC Program Components**

• **Community Advisory Board**

Each center will have a community-based governing or advisory board that reflects the diversity of the communities involved.

- **Center Personnel: AHEC Director (full-time), Office Assistant (full-time), Medical Assistant (part-time), Clinicians (part-time)**

The AHEC Center Director will be responsible for the development, coordination and day-to-day operation of the AHEC Center. The Community Advisory Board will play a role in the selection of the Director. **Office space will be needed in the AHEC facility for these personnel.**

• **Community-based Experiential Training**

Experiential training in rural and underserved areas through field placements and clinical rotations for health professions students outside of the AHEC Scholars Program. Each training experience must be team-based and include a formal, didactic component addressing one or more of the Core Topic Areas:

- |                                 |                                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ○ Inter-professional Education  | ○ Practice Transformation            |
| ○ Behavioral Health Integration | ○ Current and Emerging Health Issues |
| ○ Social Determinants of Health |                                      |
| ○ Cultural Competency           |                                      |

- **AHEC Scholars Program**

Teams of interprofessional health professions students enrolled in a longitudinal, interdisciplinary program that includes a defined set of clinical, didactic, and community-based training activities.

- **One Year Post-program Follow-up with Students**

One-year post-graduation follow-up to determine employment outcomes.

- **Increased access to primary health care**

Over the next 1-2 years, a primary health care facility will be developed in each of the AHECs. These facilities will provide the entire range of primary care services. Each facility will include: part-time licensed medical providers to provide health care to community members and to teach and supervise medical students and residents. Beginning in year-two the clinics will operate 1-2 days per week and increase the days of service over subsequent years of the project.

- **Pipeline Activities**

Recruitment, training, interactive, and/or didactic activities for high school students (grades 9-12), focused on exposing youth to health careers, including public health.

- **Continuing Education**

Didactic and experiential training activities focused on the Core Topic Areas developed for currently practicing health professionals.

- **Strategic Partnerships**

Effective partnerships that engage key stakeholders (e.g., federal, state, local, and national organizations) in order to implement, advance, and sustain the work of the AHEC Program.

- **Statewide Evaluation Activities**

A comprehensive outcome focused evaluation of all AHEC Program activities. The AHEC program office/award recipient must develop and implement a statewide evaluation in collaboration with the centers to ensure that consistent evaluation tools and protocols are used across the state.