

June 2021

Missouri AHEC Provides First In-Person Clinical Rural Immersion Experience

Clinical Rural Immersion gives students from multiple disciplines an opportunity to experience rural communities together to enhance each other's perspectives and potentially practice in these areas in the future. Studies show that the more exposure medical students have with a rural practice, the more likely they are to return to a rural practice."

MAHEC has established the first in-person Clinical Rural Immersion (CRI) Program provided 24 health care students rural health experience in Sedalia, Missouri. The 2021 group included 10 students from 10 UMKC School of Pharmacy, 9 from MU Sinclair School of Nursing, and 5 from MU School of Medicine.

Students received a number of different immersion experiences, including completing a community "windshield" survey of demographics and health/social service needs. Students also shadowed local nurses, physicians, or pharmacists, visited two farms in Pettis and Benton Counties to learn about agricultural safety, met with the EMTs in Warsaw to discuss farm hazards, conducted a rural health screening outdoors for employees at a local manufacturer, and met with a panel of healthcare professionals based in Sedalia to expand their understanding of Bothwell Regional Health Care and ways the interdisciplinary team approach enhances patient-centered care. On the last day, five student groups presented their public health findings to an audience to include Representative Brad Pollitt from District 52, Sedalia Chamber of Commerce members, and Bothwell Regional Health Care representatives. Faculty from the three disciplines led different aspects of the CRI Program and determined course credit for their students.

The CRI Program was made possible by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) funding the MU School of Medicine's rural medicine programs received in 2019 and an academic – community partnership with Sedalia's hospital and community. The next Clinical Rural Immersion Program will be scheduled in West Plains, Missouri for summer 2022.



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
- East Central Missouri
ECMO AHEC – St. Louis
- Mid-Missouri AHEC –
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- Northeast Missouri
NEMO AHEC – Kirksville
- Northwest Missouri
NWMO AHEC – St.
Joseph
- Southeastern Missouri
SEMO AHEC – Poplar
Bluff
- Southwestern Missouri
SWMO AHEC –
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- West Central Missouri
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