



University of Nevada
School of Medicine

Office of Statewide Initiatives Outline of Structure, Responsibilities and Accomplishments

1. **Mission** – To support the University of Nevada School of Medicine to train the next generation of physicians through active community engagement and programs which increase access to care statewide.

2. **Office Structure** - Office of the Associate Dean of Statewide Initiatives
 - a. Reno - Pennington Medical Education Building/ Nelson Building
 - Project ECHO Nevada (ECHO) Evan Klass, MD, Director
 - Nevada Geriatric Education Center (NGEC), Patricia Swager, Director
 - AIDS Education and Training Center (AETC), Jennifer Bennett, Director
 - Health Workforce Research and Policy Program, John Packham, PhD, Director
 - Nevada Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program, Gerald Ackerman, Director
 - High Sierra AHEC, Andrea Gregg, Director
 - Office of Rural Health (ORH), Gerald Ackerman, Director
 - Nevada Rural Hospital Flexibility Program (Flex/CAH), John Packham, Program Coordinator
 - Nevada Small Rural Hospital Performance Improvement Program (SHIP), John Packham, Program Coordinator
 - Nevada Rural Health Works Program, John Packham, Co-Director with Thomas Harris, PhD, University of Nevada, Reno
 - Physician Assistant Planning Group, Evan Klass, MD, Director

 - b. Las Vegas- 1701 Charleston St.
 - Regional offices of NGEC and AETC
 - Project ECHO broadcast facility

 - c. Elko- Griswold Hall, Great Basin College
 - Office of Rural Health (ORH), Gerald Ackerman, Director
 - Nevada AHEC Program (AHEC), Gerald Ackerman, Director
 - Northeastern Nevada AHEC, Keith Clark, Director
 - Nevada Health Service Corps (NHSC), Keith Clark, Director

3. **Project ECHO Nevada** - Project ECHO Nevada is a sanctioned replication of the pioneering program developed at the University of New Mexico School of Medicine by Sanjeev Arora. Nevada was an early adopter and one of the first replications. Thirty-nine (39) replication sites now exist worldwide including the University of Washington, Harvard University, and the University of Chicago. The program currently provides regularly scheduled specialty clinics in Sports Medicine, Gastroenterology, Diabetes and Endocrinology, Rheumatology, Antibiotic Stewardship, and eight (8) mental health supervisory clinics each month. Specialty series clinics have included Autism evaluation and treatment, geriatrics, dementia, and addiction.

ECHO clinics link UNSOM faculty in Reno and Las Vegas with primary care providers in rural and urban underserved communities by videoconference technology. Difficult patient management problems are presented by primary care providers and discussed by specialists. The first Clinical Coordinator of ECHO was an Orvis School of Nursing faculty member and Orvis APRN students and graduates are regular ECHO participants. Our current Clinical Coordinator is a recent Masters of Public Health (MPH) graduate of our School of Community Health Sciences.

4. **Nevada Geriatric Education Center (NGEC) and AIDS Education and Training Center (AETC)** - Both of these programs are federally grant funded. Each provides education to a broad variety of health care professionals via statewide teleconferences and sponsorship of annual meetings which draw participants from across the region. The NGEC is a consortium of partners from UNLV and Touro. Many of the programs developed by NGEC and AETC are coordinated by the staff in Las Vegas.
5. **Health Workforce Research and Policy Program** - The mission of the Health Workforce Research and Policy Program is to improve the quantity and quality of information and analysis of health care workforce supply and demand in Nevada. The vision of the program is to assist health education institutions and policymakers in Nevada understand Nevada's need for well-prepared health professionals, and to better inform investments in Nevada's health care workforce and health care system. The Health Workforce Research and Policy Program aims to be the most trusted source for health care workforce data and analysis in Nevada.
6. **Nevada Area Health Education Center Program (AHEC)** -
 - a. **High Sierra AHEC (HSAHEC)** - Located in Reno, the HSAHEC serves Washoe, Carson, Churchill, Douglas, Lyon, and Storey counties. The mission of AHEC is to advance high quality health care by providing outreach and education services. High Sierra AHEC provides a number of superb educational programs for K-12 students to foster interest in the health sciences. Of particular note is the "Summer of Discovery" program which brings junior high school students to the UNR campus for science oriented activities each year.

- b. **Northeastern Nevada AHEC (NEAHEC)** – Located in Elko, the NEAHEC serves Elko, Clark, Eureka, Esmeralda, Humboldt, Lander, Lincoln, Mineral, Nye, Pershing and White Pine counties. The Northeastern AHEC fulfills its mission of providing improved health care quality through active support of distance learning, support of broadband access expansion, sponsorship of Flex/CAH conferences, and nurturing of pipeline programs at smaller NSHE campuses. The NEAHEC is a key partner in the development of rural residencies including the Family Practice Rural Residency in Winnemucca and the new Internal Medicine Residency in Elko. Additionally, the NEAHEC provides support for the 3rd year clerkships and 4th year rural rotations in Elko, and internships for MPH and other health sciences students.
7. **Physician Assistant Program Planning-** The Office of Statewide Initiatives is creating the foundation for a Masters in Physician Assistant Studies Program within the UNSOM. This program, envisioned to be self-sustaining, is anticipated to matriculate its first class of 24 students in the summer of 2017. The Academic Pre-Proposal has been reviewed and accepted by the UNR Provost and the preparation of the formal Academic Program Proposal is underway. All necessary pre-accreditation applications have been completed.
 8. **Office of Rural Health (ORH)** - Established by the Nevada legislature in 1977, the ORH assists rural communities in obtaining health care. Supported by the US DHHS Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA), the Office of Rural Health supports community based health education and training, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) technical assistance and continuing education, telehealth and telemedicine services, as well as policy development and analysis. The Nevada ORH was the recipient of the 2013 National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health Award of Merit.
 9. **Nevada Health Service Corps-** Established in 1989, the Nevada Health Service Corps works aggressively with communities categorized as Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA), those in need of health care providers including physicians, dentists, mental health professionals, Advanced Practice Registered Nurses and Physician Assistants. Educational loan repayment is offered in return for a commitment of service to the community, generally for a period of two (2) years. Federal funds are matched 1:1 with state or local funding, limiting the consistent availability of opportunities. To date this program has placed more than 100 health care providers in underserved areas of Nevada, many of whom continue to practice in rural and underserved areas.
 10. **Nevada Rural Hospital Flexibility Program (Flex/CAH) and Nevada Small Rural Hospital Improvement Program (SHIP)** – In 1999, the Nevada Rural Hospital Flexibility Program or "Nevada Flex Program" was established by the Nevada State

Office of Rural Health, followed by the establishment of the Nevada Small Rural Hospital Improvement Program or “Nevada SHIP Program” in 2001. The mission of these two programs is to increase access to quality inpatient services, clinic and outpatient services, skilled nursing and long-term care services, and pre-hospital and emergency medical services for the 300,000 residents of rural and frontier Nevada. The vision of both the Flex/CAH and SHIP programs is to increase access to health care services for all residents of rural and frontier Nevada by improving the economic viability of health care providers and expanding the continuum of health services through the provision of technical assistance and support to rural and frontier communities in Nevada. During the current fiscal year, the Nevada Flex Program and its partners are undertaking proven and innovative activities to support: 1. Rural hospital quality improvement and patient safety, 2. Rural hospital financial, operational, and performance improvement, and 3. Rural health care systems development. Current program activities extend best practices and technical assistance that have been developed by the Nevada Flex Program and the Nevada SHIP Program over the past fifteen years. Key program partners include Nevada Rural Hospital Partners, Nevada Hospital Association, and HealthInsight Nevada (Nevada's Quality Improvement Organization), Nevada EMS Office, and Nevada Bureau of Health Care Quality and Compliance. Through Flex/CAH and SHIP funding, Nevada has been able to establish an effective, statewide technical assistance center for Nevada's eleven Critical Access Hospitals and their respective communities.