Pre-professional Health Programs

The Need: As a large portion of our population continues to age, access to all types of health care providers will become a challenge. But as only an estimated 75 percent of primary care graduates stay in North Carolina after their first five years of residency here, it is critical to meet the increasing demands on North Carolina’s health care system by not only recruiting the best and brightest students to health care careers but by retaining more health care providers within the state.

Serving the Need: Between 400 and 500 NC State University students apply to some type of health care program each year. To best serve this population, the university is taking several steps to help ensure applicant preparedness and help students appreciate the need for health care professionals in North Carolina. These include:

- Opening the Health Professions Advising Center (or Health PAC), dedicated to students and alumni interested in health care careers. It provides resources and counseling, workshops, presentations, clinical shadowing networks, employment opportunities and professional admissions test preparation courses to help prepare our students for the application process and to educate them on career choices.
- Developing the health care career advising Web site (cals.ncsu.edu/health_pac), which provides information on applicable topics. The site, which includes lists of resources, prerequisites, timelines and FAQs, is recognized by the National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions as a model for Web advising.
- Developing the Health PAC electronic application portfolio builder tool, which allows students to upload and track accomplishments, which they can use later for program applications. This system also provides a secure electronic recommendation system for graduate program recommendation submissions to a student’s file for subsequent review by the health professions review committee.
- Developing an annual state and nationally focused health professions career expo with more than 100 planned health care program participants.
- Expanding opportunities for the more-than-500-member Pre-Health Club by establishing seven special interest groups and providing a medical and dental honor society.

Impact beyond North Carolina: These efforts are helping College of Agriculture and Life Sciences students submit successful applications for post-graduate health care training programs.

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