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UNH Health Services Receives National Accreditation

Media Relations

March 2, 2016

UNH Health Services Receives National Accreditation

DURHAM, N.H. – The University of New Hampshire Health Services has been awarded national accreditation for the sixth consecutive time by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC). Status as an accredited organization means UNH Health Services has met nationally recognized standards for the provision of accreditation providing the highest quality of care to its patients/clients as determined by an independent, external process of evaluation. More than 6,000 ambulatory health care organizations across the United States are accredited by AAAHC. Not all ambulatory health care organizations seek accreditation; not all that undergo the rigorous on-site survey process are granted accreditation. The accreditation runs for three years.

“Being accredited shows that we have again succeeded in demonstrating our commitment to planning and delivering the highest quality health care and services possible for our campus community,” said Kevin Charles, assistant vice president for student life and executive director of Health Services. “By opening ourselves to this outside scrutiny yet again, we set the bar very high, and then proceeded to top it. This is the result of a total team effort by the entire staff, and I am exceedingly proud to be part of it.”

Ambulatory health care organizations seeking accreditation by AAAHC undergo an extensive self-assessment and on-site survey by AAAHC expert surveyors – physicians, nurses, and administrators who are actively involved in ambulatory health care. The survey is consultative and educational, presenting best practices to help an organization improve its care and services.

AAAHC accreditation is specifically for organizations providing medical or diagnostic services in settings where overnight stays are not required, including college and university health centers, group medical and dental practices, and community health centers.

“UNH Student Health Service was among the finest healthcare organizations that I have surveyed, staffed by clinicians and clinical support staff of the highest caliber, and run by an administration that emphasized quality at every turn and that consistently put the needs and values of the patients it serves first.” said David E. Newman, former director of the Hammond Health Center at Ithaca College and AAAHC surveyor. “The Health Education and Promotion and Quality Improvement programs were examples of excellence within their respective disciplines, both coordinated and staffed by talented, motivated people.”

UNH Health Services, which averages more than 20,000 visits a year from students, staff and faculty, is a health and wellness center. In support of the university’s academic mission, it is committed to promoting, maintaining and improving the health and well-being of the university community. Health Services also has primary responsibility for addressing public health issues impacting the UNH community. The staff includes physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, a physician assistant, a

medical assistant, laboratory and radiologic technologists, wellness educators/counselors, nutritionists, pharmacists, licensed massage therapists, and administrative staff. Services for students include primary medical care; women's, men's and transgender health; complimentary health including massage therapy, biofeedback for stress management, acupuncture, hypnosis; laboratory, radiology and pharmacy; and health and wellness services on a wide variety of topics including nutrition, alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, sexuality, chronic and acute illnesses, emotional and spiritual health, stress management and general wellness.

Health Services opened an employee clinic in 2012. Services include clinical appointments for infections, injuries, acute health problems, workplace injuries, pre-employment physicals and worker's compensation visits, allergy services, and immunizations (travel and others), laboratory, radiology and pharmacy. In addition, massage therapy, biofeedback, and light therapy are available.

"We are immensely proud of the fine work that our colleagues in Health Services do day in and day out to serve our students, as well as our faculty and staff, at UNH. The fact that the AAAHC has accredited us for the sixth time in a row is a welcome acknowledgement of that fine work by a national accrediting body," said John Kirkpatrick, senior vice provost for student life and dean of students. "The range of health and wellness services that we provide, including prevention and education efforts, is as impressive as the professionalism with which those services are delivered."

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