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DURHAM, N.H. -- The University of New Hampshire's Health Services, which serves more than 12,000 students, has been nationally accredited for the second consecutive time by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC). According to Kevin Charles, assistant vice president for student and academic services and director of health services, “this is the highest form of public recognition a health care organization could receive for the quality of service it provides.”

The AAAHC conducts its accreditation program on a national basis and has accredited more than 1,300 ambulatory health care organizations, including university health centers, same-day surgery centers, health maintenance organizations (HMOs), multi-specialty group medical practices, occupational health services and other health care organizations. "The dedication and effort necessary to achieve accreditation is substantial," notes AAAHC President Gerald Edds, M.D. "UNH is to be commended for this accomplishment."

Health Services, which opened in 1988, is a fully licensed educational health center. It is committed to promoting, maintaining and improving the health and well-being of the university community. The staff includes physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, laboratory and radiologic technologists, wellness educators, pharmacists, licensed massage therapists and administrative staff. Services provided include primary medical care, women's health services, laboratory, radiology and pharmacy services, and health and wellness services on a wide variety of health topics including nutrition, alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, sexuality, chronic and acute illnesses, emotional and spiritual health, stress management and wellness.

Health Services averages more than 22,000 visits a year from students, faculty and staff. Charles says “the staff began working on the voluntary process of reaccreditation many months ago, and that concluded with the site visit in January. But the quality and service that meets the standards is ongoing and happens every day at Health Services.”

Dr. Terry King, Director of Clinical Services at the University of South Carolina's Thomson Student Health Center, visited UNH for AAAHC in January to assess Health Services' programs and services. "The enthusiasm of the staff and their dedication to the delivery of quality care to the students was obvious during my visit," King notes. "They are all to be congratulated for undergoing accreditation and confirming once again that they meet the standards of a national accrediting body by receiving the full three-year accreditation decision. They share membership in a prestigious group of health care organizations with this accreditation."
“The certificate of accreditation is the most visible result of the process,” Charles explains, “but the ultimate value of accreditation is in the ongoing self-analysis, peer review and consultation the center gains in the AAAHC program.”

"This is an extraordinary achievement,” said Mark Rubinstein, UNH vice president for student and academic services. “The quality of health care available to our students is excellent, and I am happy that Health Services has been nationally recognized for their work."

For more information, contact Kathleen Grace-Bishop, Associate Director, Health Services, 862-3823. For more information on AAAHC, go to www.aaahc.org.