

# Conferences: A Strategy to Reach Rural Providers with HIV Training and Capacity Building Resources

Authors: Miller C, Walker S, and Prokop J, Albany Medical College

## Introduction

Albany Medical College (AMC) is the Upstate Regional Partner under the Northeast/Caribbean AIDS Education Training Center (AETC) serving 47 counties in New York State (NYS). As AMC's service area is vast and primarily rural, education and guideline dissemination is most effective in certain regions via annual conferences. Many disciplines that work along the HIV Care Continuum would be unable to access HIV programming if it were not for these conferences.

## Methods/Activities

For over a decade, AMC has implemented an annual "North Country" conference to be responsive to rural providers' HIV prevention, diagnosis, and clinical management training needs in remote and underserved counties of upstate NY. This conference targets staff based at Ryan White HIV/AIDS programs, as well as those working at other community and correctional sites.

## Results

Since 2009, 10 North Country conferences have occurred resulting in close to 800 providers being trained on priority topics identified through needs assessments and led by regional expert faculty. This interactive conference links providers to updated HIV guidelines and capacity building resources as well as information about the AETC's clinical consultation service and intensive preceptorship program.

## Lessons Learned

Conference implementation is a cost-effective means to deliver education to multiple sites in vast geographic areas. Based on the success of this conference model, AMC will provide another one in 2020 to continue its AETC capacity building efforts in rural, upstate New York.