



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Question:** Can I get National Health Service Corps (NHSC) service credit for teaching? What counts as “teaching” in a clinical setting?

**Answer:** The NHSC now allows service credit for time spent teaching, within certain rules. For all full-time participants, up to eight (8) hours per week may be spent teaching in the clinical setting at the NHSC-approved service site. These eight (8) hours may be considered a part of a provider’s direct patient care hours at the approved site.

In addition, the Health Resources and Services Administration’s (HRSA) Bureau of Health Professions has established a new Teaching Health Centers Graduate Medical Education Program with the designation of Teaching Health Centers (THC). Full-time NHSC participants teaching in these facilities will be allowed to count up to twenty (20) hours per week spent teaching towards their service obligation. Only full-time NHSC clinicians at HRSA-approved THCs will be allowed to claim the THC service credit; if a site was eligible but not approved as a THC, it does not qualify for the twenty (20) hour THC service credit. For more information about the THC program, please visit <http://www.hrsa.gov/about/news/pressreleases/110125teachinghealthcenters.html>

In the case of half-time participants, teaching must be conducted within the overall allotment for teaching and practice-related administrative activities, which are not to exceed 4 hours of the minimum 20 hours per week. This rule also applies to half-time participants serving an obligation in a THC.

In order to qualify as teaching, an NHSC member participant must be providing clinical education to students/clinicians in their area of expertise at the approved practice site. The clinical education may:

- 1) Be conducted as part of an accredited clinical training program;
- 2) Include the clinical supervision of a student/clinician that is required in order for that student/clinician to receive a license under state law; or
- 3) Include mentoring that is conducted as a part of the Student/Resident Experiences and Rotations in Community Health (SEARCH) program, the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) or the Centers of Excellence program, which are all funded through HRSA grants.

All teaching must be conducted at the NHSC-approved practice site specified in the participant’s practice agreement.

Note that if the NHSC participant is actually providing the service while a student/clinician observes, the activity should be treated as direct clinical care, not teaching, since the NHSC clinician is treating the patient.

FAQs provide current information on specific topics. An FAQ does not create or confer any rights for or on any person or entity and does not operate to bind BCRS or the public. Applicable statutes and guidances must be satisfied. The use of the word "must" means that something is required under the Public Health Service Act. For further information on this topic please contact the Division of Program Operations at (301) 594-4200 or [gethelp@hrsa.gov](mailto:gethelp@hrsa.gov). (January 2011)