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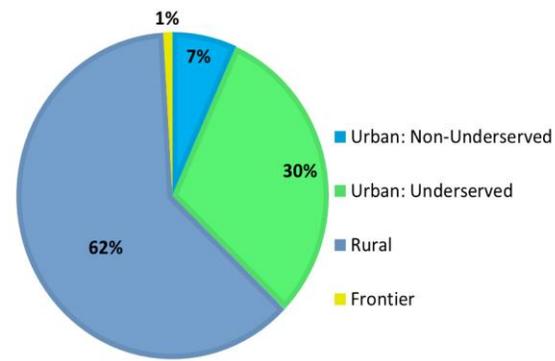
**Missouri AHEC’s HPV Immunization Project**

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is the most common sexually transmitted disease in the United States. This extremely common virus is known to lead to multiple types of cancers in men and women such as cervical, vaginal, vulva, penile, anus, and oropharyngeal (back of the throat, including the base of the tongue and tonsils). The HPV vaccination protects against the strands that most commonly cause cancers and can prevent an estimated 92% of those cancers caused by HPV.

Northeast Missouri (NEMO) AHEC has served as the State Entity in Missouri for National AHEC Organization’s (NAO) HPV Immunization Project. The goal of this project has been to provide HPV training activities in an effort to educate health professionals and health professions students to increase awareness about the HPV vaccine and surge HPV vaccination rates. Objectives of the educational training include describing the burden of HPV, defining the importance of HPV vaccinations for cancer prevention as well as the rationale of vaccinating at ages 11 or 12, giving recommendations for girls and boys, providing useful and compelling information about the HPV vaccine to parents, and locating resources relevant to current immunization practice.

The two highest reported reasonings for low HPV immunization rates have been a lack of strong provider recommendation and lack of knowledge. To combat low HPV immunization rates while utilizing the unique service niche of rural and underserved areas, Missouri AHEC was able to reach health professionals and health professions students who did not have access to large-scale quality improvement projects most often available in urban settings. Throughout the five-year project, HPV related educational trainings reached 1,124 participants in Missouri alone. Of those trained in Missouri, 93% reported serving rural locations or serving locations focusing on underserved populations *as illustrated in the graph titled at top right.*

Missouri continues to see a steady increase in the percentage of males and females who have received the HPV vaccine. While the NAO HPV Immunization Project comes to a close, we look to you to make an effective recommendation for the HPV vaccination because You Are the Key to Cancer Prevention!



*Population Served by Missouri AHEC's HPV Immunization Project (2014-2019)*

*MAHEC is a partnership of seven locally governed organizations and three university-based health professions education programs working statewide to increase the numbers of Missouri youth entering stable, high-paying jobs as healthcare professionals and the numbers of professionals caring for underserved populations.*

*The MAHEC partners include:*

- A.T. Still University – Kirksville
- University of Missouri – Columbia
- Saint Louis University St. Louis
- Northeast Missouri AHEC Kirksville
- Northwest Missouri AHEC St. Joseph
- West Central MO AHEC Lexington
- Mid-Missouri AHEC Rolla
- East Central MO AHEC– St. Louis
- Southeastern MO AHEC Poplar Bluff
- Southwest Missouri AHEC Springfield

***MAHEC: Connecting students to careers, professionals to communities, and communities to better health***