



NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact: Jennifer Maurer
External Communications Manager
jennifer.maurer@mahec.net
828-257-4445

MAHEC Announces New Chair of Department of Family Medicine

Blake Fagan, MD, will assume family medicine leadership role on January 1

Asheville, NC (Dec. 2, 2021)—This week, the Mountain Area Health Education Center announced Blake Fagan, MD, will chair MAHEC's Department of Family Medicine beginning January 1, 2022, building on the successful tenure of Steve Hulkower, MD, who has guided the department's growth for 13 years in addition to treating patients for more than 30. This past spring, Dr. Hulkower announced his plans to step down as chair in order to focus on patient care.



In his new role, Dr. Fagan will provide strategic leadership for the rapidly growing department affiliated with the UNC Department of Family Medicine. MAHEC's full-scope family medicine teaching practice employs 300 faculty and staff serving approximately 30,000 patients through 90,000 visits annually at six clinical sites in Asheville, NC.

Dr. Fagan will ensure the quality and success of clinical care; guide the department's research and scholarly activities; and provide support for MAHEC's numerous residency and fellowship programs including family medicine residencies in Asheville, Hendersonville, and Boone and addiction medicine and sports medicine fellowships. He will also work closely with leadership at UNC Health Sciences at MAHEC to advance

rural health initiatives across Western North Carolina while maintaining his own patient panel.

"Dr. Fagan has been with MAHEC for over 20 years and has served in many leadership roles within our organization and at the state and national level," notes MAHEC President Dan Frayne, MD. "His dedication to service and education is palpable. I have no doubt he will capably lead our family medicine department in addressing the needs of our patients, learners, and the region as a whole."

Dr. Fagan was selected after a rigorous national search process that recognized his expertise in innovative clinical care and medical education. He currently oversees office-based opioid treatment services at MAHEC's family health centers and leads the organization's interprofessional innovations team. He is a professor for the UNC School of Medicine and trains healthcare providers at medical residency programs statewide in the treatment of opioid use disorders. In 2019, Dr. Fagan served as the clinical consultant for the opioid crisis at the CDC Foundation in North Carolina. He has also served as interim medical director for MAHEC's Department of Family Medicine and director of MAHEC's Family Medicine Residency Program in Asheville. Dr. Fagan is board certified in both family medicine and addiction medicine.

"I am honored and look forward to leading MAHEC's family medicine initiatives," shares Dr. Fagan. "MAHEC has a long history of providing exceptional patient care in Western North Carolina and training the next generation of healthcare providers to do the same. I'm excited to further our mission to improve access to care across our region. I know I have big shoes to fill from my friend and mentor, Steve Hulkower. Luckily, he trained me well."

Mountain Area Health Education Center

121 Hendersonville Road • Asheville, NC 28803 • Phone (828) 257-4400 • www.mahec.net

For more information about MAHEC's Department of Family Medicine and other programs and services, please contact Jennifer Maurer at jennifer.maurer@mahec.net or 828-782-0142.

###

ABOUT MAHEC

Mountain Area Health Education Center was established in 1974 and is a national leader in innovative team-based primary care and medical education. Located in Asheville, MAHEC serves a 16-county region in Western North Carolina and is one of nine [Area Health Education Centers](#) in North Carolina. MAHEC's mission is to recruit, train, and retain the workforce needed to create a healthy North Carolina with a focus on primary care in rural and underserved communities. In addition to family medicine, MAHEC's graduate medical education programs include internal medicine, ob/gyn, psychiatry, surgery, dental, and pharmacy residencies and fellowships and a state-of-the-art medical simulation center. MAHEC's campus is also home to [UNC Health Sciences at MAHEC](#), a vibrant academic health center that promotes interprofessional education and practice through programs affiliated with UNC's top-ranked schools of medicine, public health, pharmacy, and dentistry.