$75K Awarded to HBCUs to Assess Student Health and Wellness

Data from an American College Health Foundation survey will provide insights into the health needs of HBCU students.

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The American College Health Foundation (ACHF) awarded $75,000 to the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Health Equity Data Consortium (HBCU HEDC) to assess health and wellness among HBCU students, according to a news release.

The HBCU HEDC will administer and analyze the ACHF's National College Health Assessment, which collects data on health and wellness issues impacting students and their academic performance.

The initiative aims to provide insights into the health needs of HBCU students.

"It is an honor for the Foundation to contribute financial support to this important HBCU HEDC pilot research project. Data drives innovation, and we need data from HBCUs, Hispanic-serving institutions, tribal colleges and universities and community colleges to maximize health, well-being and success across the entire spectrum of college students. This pilot project is a first step, but it will not be the last," said Michael Huey, MD, chair of the ACHF board of directors, in the release.

According to the release, the survey will collect data on student health habits, behaviors and perceptions related to:

- Mental health, including thoughts of suicide, eating disorders and relationship difficulties;
- Sexual and intimate partner experiences;
- Incidents of exclusion, harassment and racism;
- Substance use, smoking habits and contraception use;

- Exercise habits and preventive health practices;
- Impediments to academic performance.

Survey data will help students and faculty identify the most significant health priorities and trends within their student body.

For example, data can support evidence-based health promotion programs with targeted educational and environmental initiatives and evaluate the effectiveness of campus wellness programs or health services.

According to ACHF, survey data can also help:

- Create social norms marketing campaigns by comparing students' actual behaviors to their perceptions about peer behavior;
- Allocate monetary and staffing resources based upon defined needs;
- Provide needs assessment data for campus task forces on issues like sexual assault, alcohol use and mental health;
- Have readily available graphs and data for policy discussions and presentations with faculty, staff, administration and board members.

HBCU institutions participating in the survey include North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Shaw University, Winston-Salem State University, Elizabeth City State University and Johnson C. Smith University.

"The HBCU HEDC brings together the expertise of member institutions to tackle public health disparities in underserved communities across North Carolina," said Yolanda M. Nicholson, DNP, MSN, FNP-C, director of health and wellness at North Carolina A&T State University, in the release. "By raising awareness of critical health risks and enhancing providers' cultural competence, the HBCU HEDC improves access to care and promotes equitable health outcomes."

The HBCU HEDC project will continue through spring 2026.

To read more, click #Grant. There, you'll see headlines such as "Bloomberg Gifts $600M to HBCU Endowments," "Black Health Equity Group Awarded $1.5M Grant to Diversify Medical Boards" and "American Diabetes Association Grants to Enhance Research and Health Equity."

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