



FEATURED MEMBER



The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) builds healthy communities by supporting qualified health care providers dedicated to working in areas of the United States with limited access to care. More than 40,000 primary care medical, dental, and mental and behavioral health professionals have served in the NHSC since its inception. Today, there are more than 10,000 NHSC members providing culturally competent care to more than 10.5 million people. We provide this care at more than 14,000 NHSC-approved health care sites in urban, rural, and frontier areas. The following story demonstrates the impact our members are having every day.

Jamie Bell, PA — Physician, Cooper Green Hospital, Birmingham, AL

HER STORY: At a young age, Dr. Jamie Bell idolized her pediatrician – a woman who cared for her and for the children of her community in Jefferson County, Alabama. Thus, she began volunteering at her doctor’s office at the age of 11, filing papers and shadowing to learn more about working in primary care. She was fascinated with the direct way the clinic helped the people in her community, and she decided to study medicine. She decided to focus on primary care because of its breadth of opportunities and the impact she could have on her community.

Committed to working in primary care and serving in underserved communities, Jamie heard the site she had been working with, the Cooper Green Hospital in Birmingham, Alabama, was an NHSC-approved site, applied to the NHSC Loan Repayment Program, and was overjoyed when she was accepted.

“In my line of work, I get to make my practice and my career what I want them to be,” she said. “I have the opportunity to work on all types of conditions, with people from all walks of life. And because of this, my education never stops.”

Jamie enjoys strong, trusting relationships with her patients, and she believes in being tough, but honest. By educating the community about preventative care and direct communication, she has seen members of her community turn their lives around.

In fact, in one month, Jamie saw a man transform himself completely. During his first visit, Jamie’s patient suffered from such high blood sugar levels that they could not be read on the monitor. He told her he had been experiencing shortness of breath and weight loss – after which Jamie told him honestly, “If you do not change your lifestyle, you will die. It is your decision, and in your hands, to take control of your health.”

Taking her advice and expertise to heart, in just 30 days this same patient was able to walk into her office registering some healthy weight gain, normal blood sugar levels and perfect blood pressure readings. He looked her in the eye and said, “I want to be here. Thank you for being real with me.”

Jamie can see the potential for making quality health care services accessible to all members of her community. “It goes back to education – when people genuinely understand what they need to do and why they are taking measures to live a healthy life, they start a cycle that impacts their children, grandchildren, spouses, and everyone around them.”

Jamie plans to continue working in underserved communities and is proud to have brought her expertise and education back to the residents of her hometown who need her most.