Health care began at North Carolina College (now North Carolina Central University) in 1949. From the beginning, health services were administered through the Infirmary, first located in three rooms of the Hoey Administration Building. In 1950, the Health Building was completed and the Infirmary moved into one half of that facility.

In the 1950s special emphasis was placed on the nutritional and personal health habits of students. Communicable disease control was also a priority. Toward achieving a positive outcome on these issues, the college physician, working with President Alfonso Elder, established a health education course that was taught to all freshmen. Two nurses and three physicians were employed to provide medical services for students. On the second floor, the Infirmary accommodated seventeen beds for in-patient use. X-ray equipment, laboratory equipment, dental equipment, a whirlpool, an area to sterilize supplies, a kitchen to receive and serve food to students temporarily admitted, general medical areas, a front office, and a storage room. Services available included laboratory testing, physical therapy, radiological evaluations, and tetanus shots.

During the 1960s services were provided by one full-time director and two part-time physicians with specialty services in General Practice; Ear, Nose, and Throat; Obstetrics and Gynecology; and General Surgery. Nurses, on duty twenty-four hours a day, cared for students admitted to the in-patient area.

In the 1970s services included health examinations, treatment of acute injuries and illnesses, counseling for health-related issues, and treatment for pre-existing health problems. A pharmacy technician was employed.

There were two major initiatives during the 1980’s: a psychiatrist was added to the staff and family planning became an additional service. Students were admitted to the Infirmary for observation but were referred to Durham County Regional Hospital for evaluation and treatment of problems unmanageable at the Infirmary. With the implementation of the State Immunization Law, nurses reviewed health records and administered immunizations.

The 1990s saw the name changed from the Infirmary to the Student Health Service. Services consisted of general medical care, gynecological evaluations, minor sports injury care, minor dermatological care, allergy injections, immunizations, physiotherapy, limited laboratory services, limited pharmacy treatment, counseling, after-hours care, and referral when necessary. North Carolina Central University joined the national trend of shifting from inpatient to outpatient services on campus, and the inpatient unit was closed. A full-time pharmacist, to manage the Pharmacy, and a full-time medical technologist, to manage the Laboratory, were employed.

Health care delivery in the year 2000 and beyond has stressed the importance of educating patients about their illnesses, in addition to providing medical services. While providers educate their patients on self care and treatment at each visit, they also review information on broader health issues. Many changes have occurred in health care which affect Student Health Services, and to meet these new challenges, the overall program of care has been expanded, including staffing and the facility. In addition, there have been revisions in the way some services are provided. For example, a holistic approach (mind, body, and spirit) has been adopted, and partnerships and collaborations have been added in health education/wellness, prevention, mental health, recreation, and nutrition. The current mission and projected vision are as timeless as was the philosophy of the ancient Greeks: to promote healthy minds in healthy bodies.

Directors of the Infirmary during the early decades were Dr. Marcona Hines, Dr. Sampson Harrell, and Dr. Lillian Horne. In more recent years, Directors have been Mrs. Carolyn Rogers, RN, MSN (1995-2002) and Mr. Charles E. Bowen, RN, MBA (2003-present).

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(with contributions from
Mr. Charles E. Bowen and
Mrs. Wilhemenia Hollingsworth)
March 2009