Agreements signed Tuesday will make it easier for community college students in the Roanoke and New River valleys to enroll in the Jefferson College of Health Sciences.

Through the articulation agreements, students at Virginia Western Community College and New River Community College will be able to “seamlessly enter” programs at the Roanoke-based Jefferson College, the schools announced.

The agreements will allow associate degree students to continue their health care education to the bachelor’s level and beyond at Jefferson, an affiliate of Carilion Clinic with a student body of more than 1,000.

“These kinds of collaborative partnerships are important not only to Jefferson, Virginia Western and New River, they are also vital to students seeking a clear path to their higher education goals,” said Jefferson President Nathaniel Bishop.

Jefferson offers master’s degrees in health care administration, nursing, occupational therapy and physician assistant programs, and bachelor’s degrees in nursing, biomedical sciences and a range of other health care fields. It also offers associate degrees in several fields.

Forming alliances with regional schools is not new for Jefferson, which already has articulation agreements with Hollins University, Ferrum College, Roanoke College and Mary Baldwin College, among others.

In reaching out to community colleges, the school is tapping into a major feeder system. Last fall, 69 percent of the students at Jefferson had attended a community college. School officials say they hope to form more agreements with additional schools in the future.

The agreements announced Tuesday apply to the health care management and respiratory therapy programs at New River and the respiratory therapy, health and exercise science and health psychology programs at Virginia Western.

Students who have completed those programs and meet basic admission requirements at Jefferson will qualify for expedited enrollment.