

THE 27th ANNUAL EAST COAST MIGRANT STREAM FORUM

This year the North Carolina Community Health Center Association (NCCHCA) was excited to host the 27th annual East Coast Migrant Stream Forum in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania is the host of many agricultural workers, including workers in the apple and mushroom industries, and one large and historic Migrant Health Center, Keystone Health. We were especially grateful for a strong partnership with the Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health, facilitated by the Pennsylvania Association of Community Health Centers. This collaboration afforded participants from Pennsylvania with financial assistance to attend the conference and receive training stipends. We'd like to give the Office of Rural Health and the PA Primary Care Associations a big "thank you" for supporting the continuous professional development of frontline staff, outreach workers, and farmworker advocates along the East Coast.

Every year since its inception in 1988, the East Coast Migrant Stream Forum has brought together a broad spectrum of migrant health professionals from outreach workers and promotore/as to clinicians and administrators representing Migrant/Community Health Centers, community-based and faith-based organizations, as well as government officials from across the nation. The East Coast Migrant Stream Forum is an important opportunity to connect with colleagues and acquire new skills and knowledge that could be useful to improve the services provided to migrant and seasonal farmworkers. This year, the forum continued to offer intensive trainings to ensure participants received skills-based knowledge that could be implemented at their organizations.

CONTENT

The 27th East Coast Migrant Stream Forum was held at the Sheraton Station Square from October 23-25, 2014. The hotel had an impressive view of the river and downtown skyline. The conference program included specific tracks to facilitate choosing topics that related to participant interests and roles at their centers. The tracks included: Programmatic/Administrative, Outreach/Lay Health, Policy, Clinical, and Research. The program included sessions that addressed the Bureau of Primary Health Care's 2014 HRSA/BPHC Overarching Priorities for the Migrant Stream Forums, including two intensive trainings and one educational session on supporting insurance enrollment for farm - workers, one intensive training on the Patient-Centered Medical Home and mobile populations, and one educational session on behavioral health integration and farmworkers. The forum included six intensive trainings and 12 concurrent educational sessions offered over the course of the three-day conference. All of the intensive trainings were well-attended. "H-2A Agricultural Workers, the Affordable Care Act, and Best Practices for Enrollment" had an especially high number of participants. In the overall conference evaluation, four of the five sessions listed as most engaging were intensive trainings. The educational session which participants ranked as most engaging was "Migrant Health 101: An Introduction to Migrant Health."

PARTICIPANTS

The 175 forum participants were a diverse group and represented 23 different states. Fifteen out of the 18 states of the Eastern Stream were represented. This year, an impressive 54% were attending the conference for the first time, while 30% of participants were loyal participants and had attended the conference three times or more (Chart 1). Thirty-nine percent of participants at this year's conference classified themselves as outreach workers or outreach coordinators. "Other" comprised the next largest percentage of conference participants, totaling 16%. Common responses for job title or conference role associated with "Other" included enrollment specialists, presenters, exhibitors, and miscellaneous clinic roles. The conference also had good representation by administrators, Executive Directors, and providers (Chart 2). Regardless of attendee classification, sessions were geared towards training and developing all levels of the workforce and the integration of skills-based techniques. The Forum is an important training ground for staff new to farmworker health: 54% had worked less than a year in farmworker health, or 1-3 years in the field. Seasoned veterans were also well-represented with 22% present having worked 11 or more years in farmworker health. (Chart 3).

Chart 1: Attendance

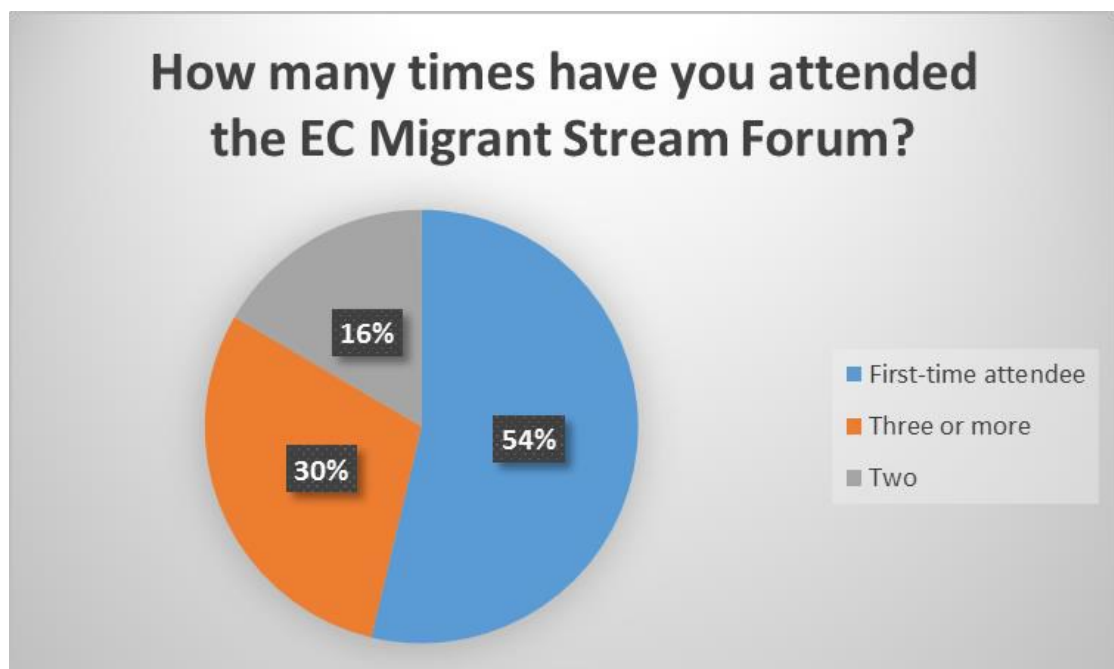


Chart 2: Attendee Occupation

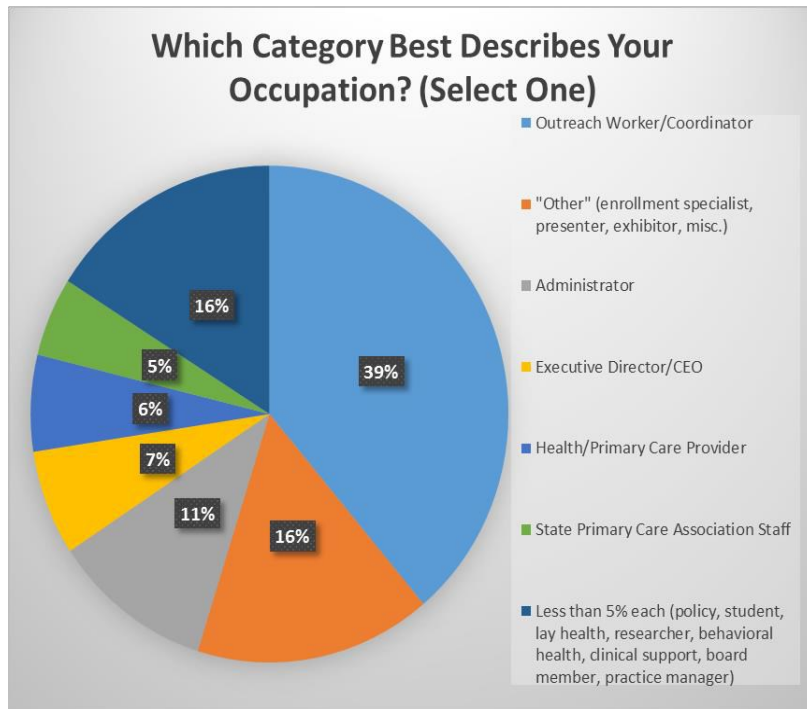
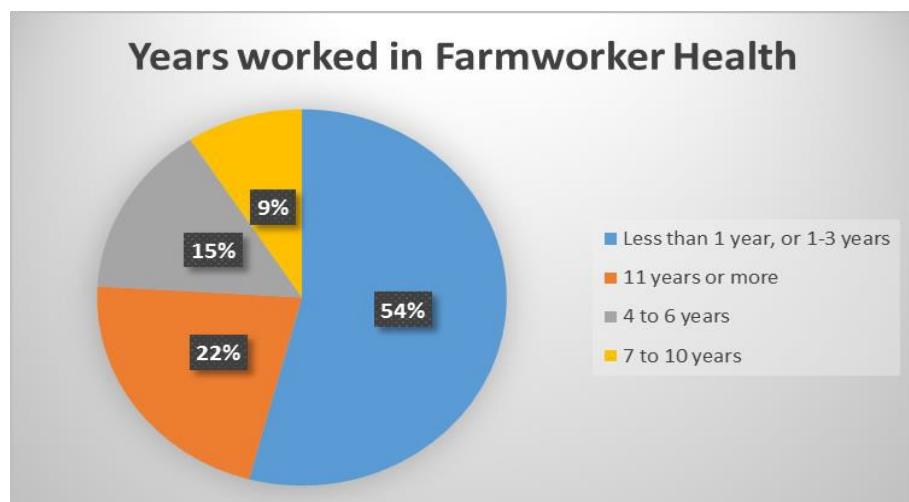


Chart 3: Participant Experience



PROCEEDINGS

The conference started on Thursday afternoon with 3 three-hour Concurrent Intensive Training Sessions offered; these sessions included “Implementing Patient Centered Medical Homes for Mobile Populations,” “The Nuts and Bolts of Health Center Management: Skills for New Managers,” and “H-2A Agricultural Workers, the Affordable Care Act, and Best Practices for Enrollment.” Also during Thursday afternoon, almost 20 participants went on a bus trip to visit Soergel Orchards, 25 minutes outside of Pittsburgh, to get a firsthand look at an operating family farm and agri-entertainment center. The participants enjoyed a hay ride of the orchards and fields of other crops (including berries, vegetables, pumpkins, and flowers), and got to speak at length with one of the owners afterwards about their temporary guest workers, as well as financial challenges of a family farm. After the tour, participants had the opportunity to visit Soergel Orchards gift shops and purchase locally made products.

Following the afternoon’s tour and intensive trainings, participants were given the opportunity to network and enjoy each other’s company at the Welcome Reception, with a view of the waterfront and skyline of Pittsburgh. Participants also enjoyed viewing and discussing photos of farmworkers taken and displayed by Jose Galvez, the keynote speaker. (See Photo #1).

Friday morning’s Opening Plenary began with a welcome by Rosa Navarro, Director of Training and Technical Assistance at NCCHCA, and a local greeting from the Pennsylvania Association of Community Health Centers and the Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health. The plenary then continued with the Awards Ceremony and included the presentation of the Steve Shore Community Catalyst Award by the North Carolina Health Center Association, and the Sister Cecilia B. Abhold Award presented by Health Outreach Partners, Inc. The Steve Shore Award is awarded annually to an individual, program, or agency, directly or indirectly involved in farmworker health, whose work has incited positive change in the health and wellness of the farmworker community in the “host state” or cluster of states where the East Coast Migrant Stream Forum is being held that year. This year’s recipient was Mary Englerth, Administrator and Clinical Director of Keystone Farmworker Health. (See Photo #2). During her 26 years of service at Keystone, the program has grown to serve farmworkers in 29 counties in Pennsylvania and one county in Maryland. Health Outreach Partners presents the Sister Cecilia B. Abhold Award each year to comprehensive and effective outreach programs. This year’s recipient was the NC Community Health Center Association in recognition of “their leadership in, advocacy for, and advancement of outreach programs both at the East Coast Migrant Stream Forum and beyond.” (See Photo #3).

The Friday morning plenary closed with “The Increasing Role and Importance of Outreach in the New Health Care Environment”, which included a presentation and activity led by Oscar Gomez, CEO of Health Outreach Partners. The activity invited tables to work together to draw a symbol which represented the role health outreach plays in communities. Participants were very engaged in creating their artwork and had the chance to present their symbols to their peers at the end of the session. (See Photo #4). This networking activity was conducted in place of the Wall of Wonder this year.

After the conclusion of Friday morning’s plenary, participants were offered a variety of Concurrent Educational Sessions, including “Nutritional Strategies and Physical Activity Habits of Latino Farmworker Families with Preschool-age Children: Identifying Leverage Points for Obesity,” “Fluoride Varnish for the Dental Care of our Underserved Patients: Why, When, and How,” “Migrant Health 101: An Introduction to Migrant Health,” and “The Importance of the Farmworker Advocacy and Civic Engagement: Turning Up the Volume on the Farmworker Voice.”

Friday’s lunch plenary included an update from Lieutenant Israel Garcia of the Bureau of Primary Health Care Office of National Assistance and Special Populations, on the current priorities of the Bureau for Community and Migrant Health Centers. Israel’s presentation was followed by the Keynote Address by Jose Galvez, an independent documentarian photographer and speaker. Mr. Galvez gave an inspirational speech coordinated with a presentation of his photos which documented his rise from the child of a farmworker family to being part of the team of the first Chicano photographers to win the Pulitzer Prize. (See Photo #5).

An additional round of four-hour Intensive Trainings were offered on Friday afternoon. The intensive trainings offered included “Making the Most of Health Insurance Coverage,” “Immigration Reform on Hold: What Do We Need to Know? How do Clinics Best Respond?” and “Connecting the Dots: My Work and the Program Requirements.”

Saturday’s breakfast featured a National Policy and Program Update from Joseph Gallegos, Senior Vice President of the National Association of Community Health Centers. The updated focused on the political environment for health centers, the health center funding cliff, and “Salud es la Solución” which includes an effort to involve farmworkers in NACHC’s “Access is the Answer” campaign.

Saturday morning included two rounds of educational sessions. The first included “Update on HIV/STD-related Research and Prevention Strategies for Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Workers,” “Theater in the Fields: How to Use Theater and the Arts to Enhance Farmworker Outreach,” “Taking Family Therapy into the Field: Providing Mental Health Services for Migrant Farmworkers,” and “Effective Collaboration to Increase Access to Care for Underserved Populations.” The final group of sessions included “Safety and Injury Characteristics of Youth Farmworkers in North Carolina,” “Inter-professional Service Learning to Increase Students’ Understanding of Migrant Latino Health,” “A Community-Based Advocacy Approach to Understanding the Affordable Care Act,” and “A Partnership between Health Centers and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start: Improving Primary and Oral Health Services for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Children and Families.”

The closing lunch program featured Jose Villa, CEO of the East Coast Migrant Head Start Project (ECMHSP). Mr. Villa shared his life story as a child farmworker and advocate for farmworker youth education, highlighted the work of Migrant Head Start and the opportunities for collaboration with migrant health, and shared a short film by ECMHSP: “And God Made a Farmworker.”

Finally of note, there were two additional meetings which took place alongside the conference. The National Advisory Council on Migrant Health met October 22-23 in the same hotel as the conference. Pennsylvania farmworkers provided testimony to the Council on the afternoon of October 22. The voucher program meeting was led by the National Center for Farmworker Health on the morning of October 23.

Steve Shore Award:

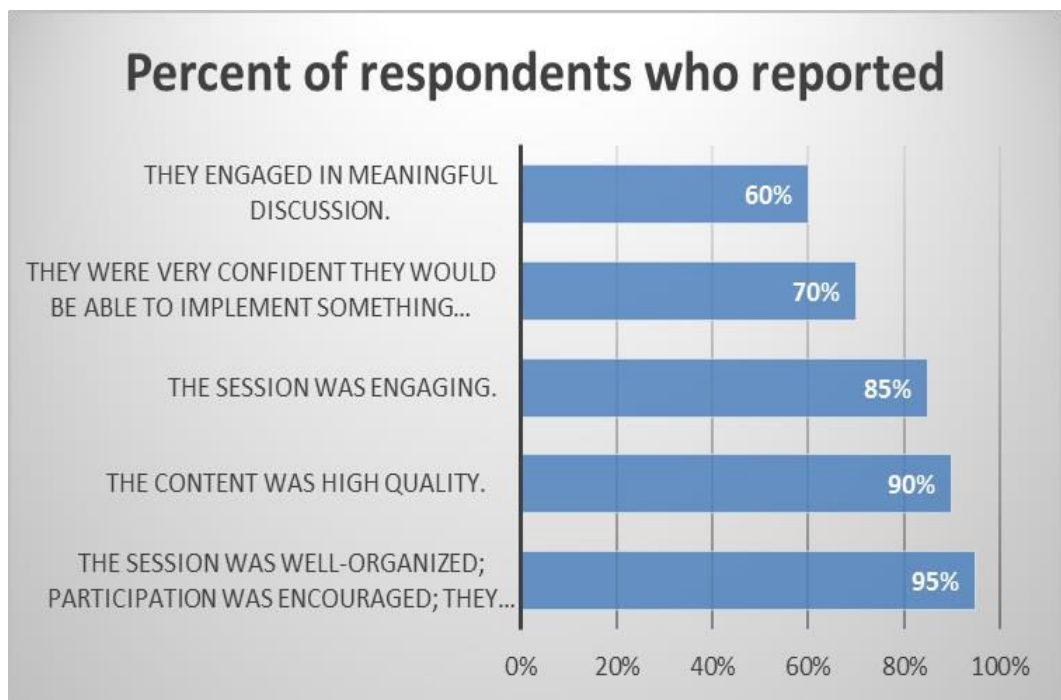
Mary Englerth of Keystone Health was the recipient of the Steve Shore Award. As a nun and as a Physician Assistant, Mary Englerth worked with the poorest of the poor in Peru and Guatemala. Upon returning to her home state of Pennsylvania in the 1980’s, she discovered many of the same abject conditions and vulnerabilities experienced by the local migrant and seasonal farmworkers. Keystone began as a Migrant Health Center in 1986 in Franklin County, Pennsylvania. Since those simple beginnings, Mary has partnered in every corner of the state where there are farmworkers employed in agriculture. Keystone Health is now in 29 counties in Pennsylvania and one county in Maryland. Mary has also been instrumental in growing a new crop of migrant health leaders through her efforts over the years to convince medical and dental and nursing schools, and Nurse Practitioner and Physician Assistant programs, to send their students, and their teachers, into the camps and clinics where farmworkers are seen and treated. Mary has also sought out other academic institutions to recruit students as volunteers, including recruiting Latino LPN and CIN students at a local community college about being part-time, paid outreach workers a few nights a week during the season.

Tracking to Success:

In order to ensure that the forum provided participants with valuable knowledge and skills that they could utilize in their everyday work environment, Tracking to Success evaluation forms were distributed and collected onsite for the Intensive Trainings, and electronic evaluations were distributed post conference to determine the effectiveness of all Concurrent Educational Sessions and plenary presentations. The overall feedback provided by participants on specific sessions was positive.

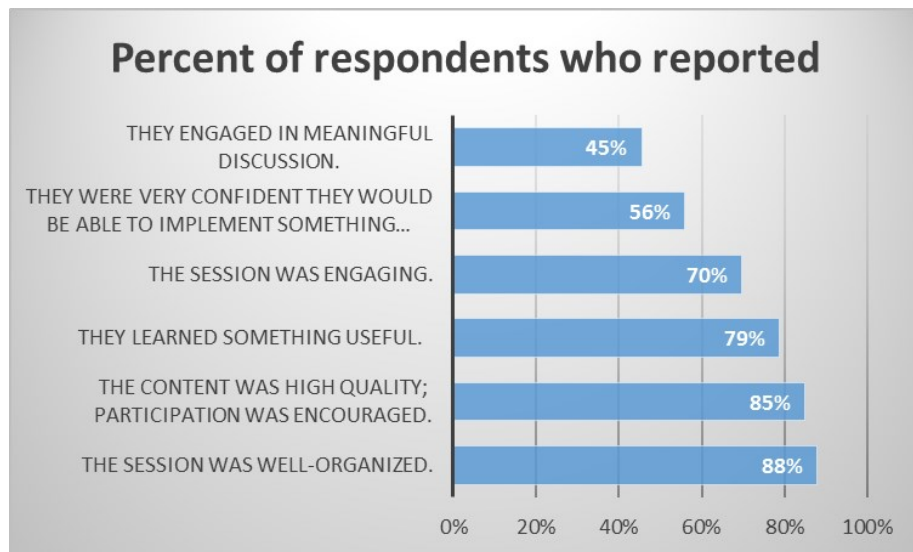
Concurrent Intensive Trainings:

Chart 4: Implementing Patient Centered Medical Homes for Mobile Populations



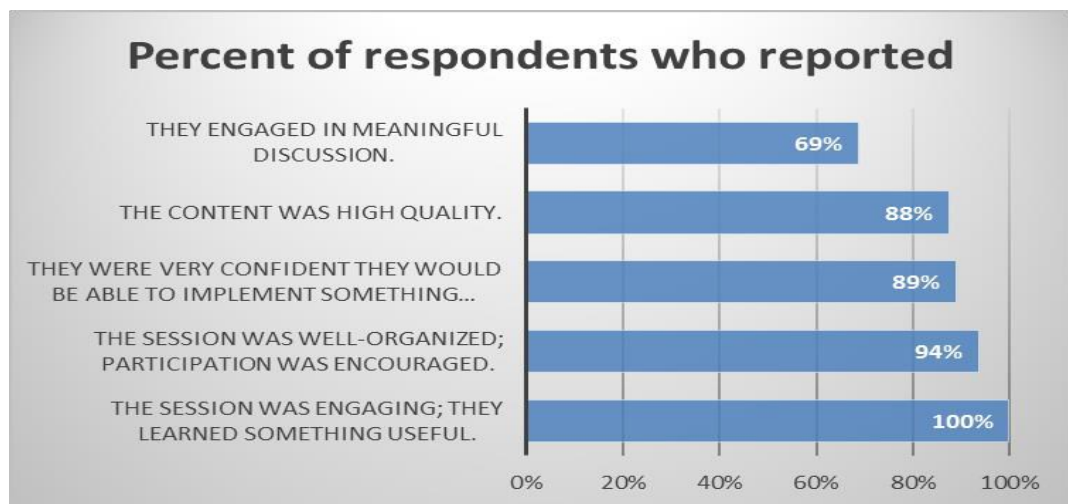
In this 3-hour intensive training, the Migrant Clinicians Network presented the general framework for Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) with particular attention to the challenges the mobile population faces. Blue Ridge Community Health Services provided an on-the-ground experience with how PCMH overlaps with their farmworker outreach program. 95% of 32 respondents thought the session was well-organized, participation was encouraged, and that they learned something useful. 90% thought the content was high-quality. 85% thought the session was engaging. 70% were very confident they would be able to implement something learned. 60% engaged in meaningful discussion.

Chart 5: H-2A Agricultural Workers, the Affordable Care Act, and Best Practices for Enrollment



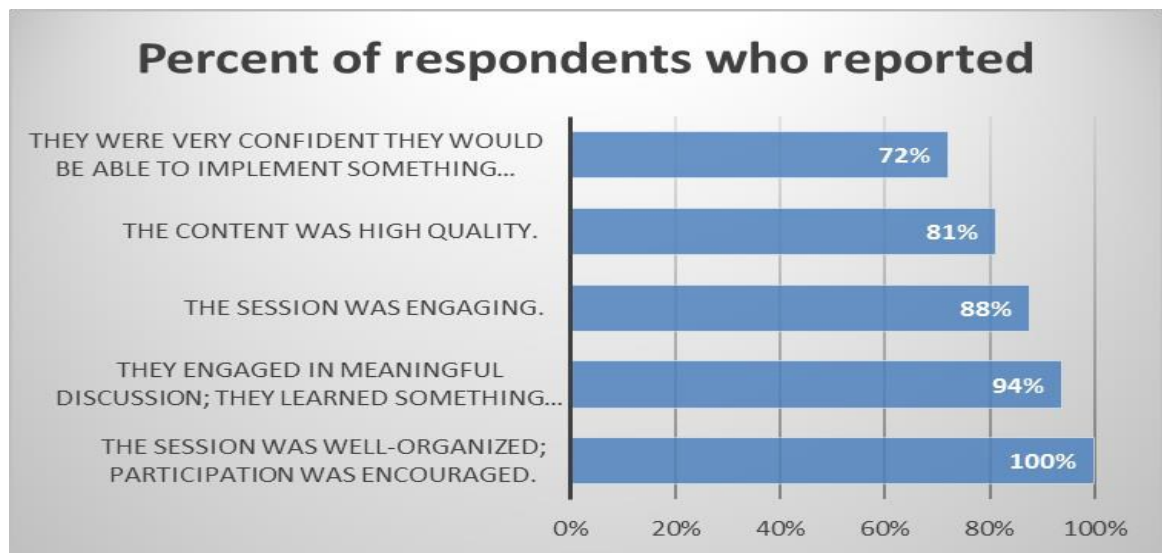
In this 3-hour intensive training, Farmworker Justice and the Outreach Director of Greene County Health Care reported on challenges and best practices related to enrollment of H2A workers in insurance coverage under the Affordable Care Act. 88% of 34 respondents thought the session was well-organized. 85% thought the content was high quality and that participation was encouraged. 79% reported learning something useful. 70% thought the session was engaging. 56% were confident they would be able to implement something learned. 45% reported engaging in meaningful discussion.

Chart 6: The Nuts and Bolts of Health Center Management: Skills for New Managers



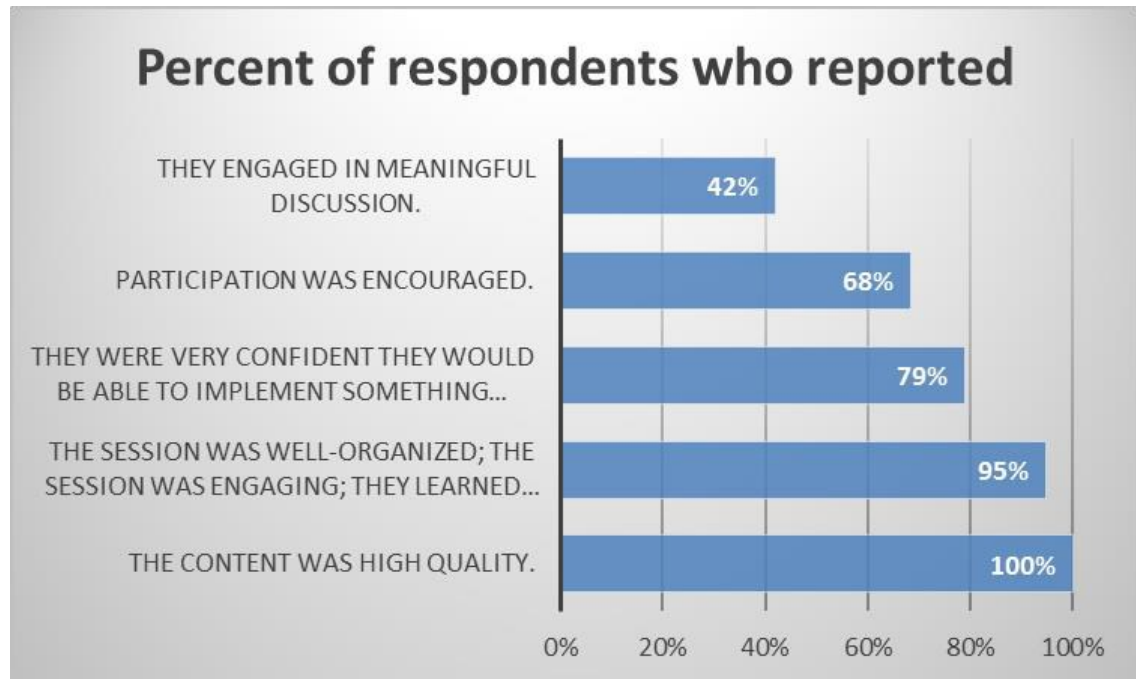
In this 3-hour intensive training, the National Center for Farmworker Health presented an overview of their training program for new managers. Interaction with the participants allowed them to effectively learn an overview of the basic, yet necessary management skills needed to lead an effective team. 100% of 18 respondents thought the speaker was engaging and that they learned something useful. 94% thought the session was well-organized and that participation was encouraged. 89% were confident that they would be able to implement something learned. 88% thought the content was high quality. 69% said they engaged in meaningful group discussions or activities.

Chart 7: Making the Most of Health Insurance Coverage: How Outreach and Enrollment Workers Can Support Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Workers in Fully Utilizing Their Coverage



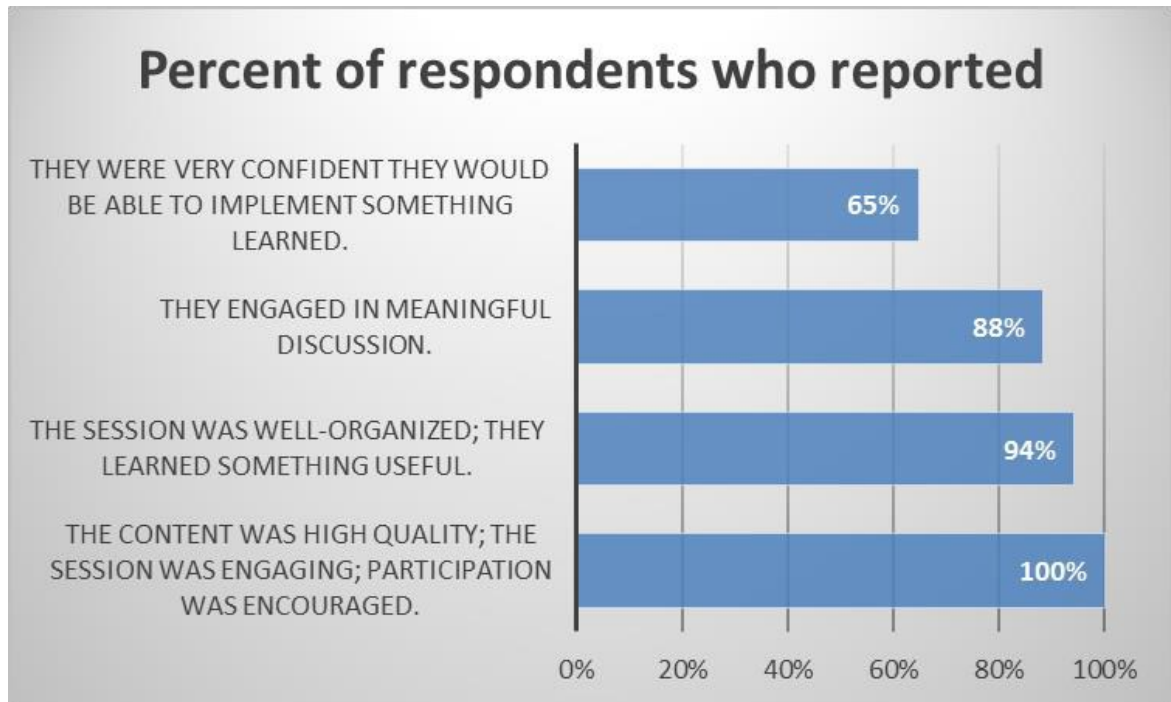
This 4-hour intensive training was provided by Health Outreach Partners and guided participants in group discussions and small-group activities to help outreach workers improve their skills for increasing health insurance literacy and ensuring patient activation among agricultural workers and their families. 100% of 18 respondents reported that the session was well-organized and that participation was encouraged. 94% reported that they engaged in meaningful discussion and that they learned something useful. 88% reported that the session was engaging. 81% reported that the content was high quality. 72% were very confident they would be able to implement something learned at their own organization.

Chart 8: Immigration Reform On Hold: What Do We Need To Know? How Do Clinics Best Respond?



This 4-hour intensive training examined the current status of immigration reform and reviewed current immigration policy regarding legalization, immigration enforcement, and the prospects for changes for better or worse moving into the future. Participants explored possible reactions at the state level including enforcement, and how migrant health centers and migrant health center staff can respond to this uncertain environment in order to overcome barriers and effectively provide services to immigrants and their families. 100% of 28 respondents reported that the content was high quality. Additionally, 95% reported that the session was well-organized and engaging; and that they learned something useful. 79% reported feeling “very confident” that they would be able to take at least one concept from the presented material and implement something meaningful at their own organization. 68% reported that participation was encouraged. 42% reported engaging in meaningful discussion.

Chart 9: Connecting the Dots: My Work and the Program Requirements



This 4-hour intensive training presented the 19 program requirements and enabled participants to connect the dots with their everyday responsibilities. 100% of 18 respondents reported that the content was high quality; the session was engaging; and that participation was encouraged. 94% reported that the session was well-organized and that they learned something useful. 88% reported engaging in meaningful discussion, and 65% reported that they were very confident they would be able to implement something learned.

Overall Conference TTS:

Participants were asked to respond with two key concepts they will most likely remember from the conference. The top four responses included: Affordable Care Act; H2A workers enrolling in the ACA; Immigration Reform and rights and limitation of healthcare access; and Migrant Health 101 and Migrant Requirements.

“Immigration Reform On Hold: What Do We Need to Know? How Do Clinics Best Respond?”; “H-2A Agricultural Workers, the Affordable Care Act, and Best Practices for Enrollment”; “Migrant Health 101: An Introduction to Migrant Health”; “Connecting the Dots: My Work and the Program Requirements”; and “The Nuts and Bolts of Health Center Management: Skills for New Managers” were the sessions ranked as most engaging in the overall conference evaluation. From this feedback, it was determined that the *Programmatic/Administrative Track* was most valued by participants. Amongst these five sessions, 100% of sessions were scored as Effective or higher across the following categories: engaging speaker and useful information shared that can be applied to my work. 80% of sessions were scored as Effective or higher across the following categories: well-organized presentation, quality presentation content, and facilitation of meaningful discussions. 93% of participants reported feeling “very confident” or “somewhat confident” that they would be able to implement something learned from the conference. (See Chart 10).

Chart 10: How Confident are you that you will be able to implement something learned from any of the Concurrent Educational Sessions?



In The Future:

Although the feedback received from conference participants and presenters was overwhelmingly positive, we take all recommendations very seriously and will strive to implement the necessary changes to strengthen future forums. Given the feedback from the 2014 East Coast Migrant Stream Forum, some of the recommendations that the North Carolina Community Health Center Association can feasibly take into consideration for East Coast 2015 include: shortening four-hour sessions to three-hour sessions, or breaking up longer sessions more; encouraging presenters to increase the amount of time for discussion at the end of presentations to facilitate group sharing of ideas and practices; incorporating a wider range of session options with a greater variety of topics; incorporate a greater number of social events and/or opportunities to network; and provide a list of conference participants. (Please note that the list of conference participants was emailed to participants after the conference). Additionally, future suggested topics include: cutting edge technology; clinical topics, such as mental health, integration of HIV/ HEP C and STI screening, agricultural respiratory disease, and hypertension; more on legal issues of farmworkers (including immigration reform and advocacy, and rights and limitations related to health access for undocumented farmworkers); management skills (including grant writing and how to work with foundations); student roles in improving farmworker health; new information about the marketplace; community health center and migrant health center collaboration with ACOs and hospitals; health education techniques; and cultural competency. With the continual support of funders and innovative thinking to address farmworker health, the East Coast Migrant Stream Forum will continue to provide an avenue by which outreach workers, farmworker educators, and migrant/seasonal farmworker advocates can meet and learn from experts in the field and peer-to-peer interactions. Each year the forum provides an incredible opportunity for migrant health education and networking with fellow migrant health professionals. The logistics and location of the 28th East Coast Migrant Steam Forum are still in progress. Conference stipends will be available for outreach workers, students, and lay health workers to give as many people as possible the opportunity to attend the 28th East Coast Migrant Steam Forum Conference. Information on the 2015 forum will be available at www.ncchca.org under "Calendar."



PHOTOS



Participants at the Welcome Reception

Steve Shore Community Catalyst Award – presented to Mary Englerth of Keystone Health by Rosa Navarro, Director of Training & Technical Assistance, NCHCA.



Sister Cecilia B. Abhold Award – presented to the North Carolina Community Health Center Association (Ben Money, CEO; Rosa Navarro, Director of Training & Technical Assistance; and Allison Lipscomb, Community Development & Special Populations Coordinator) by Oscar Gomez, CEO, Health Outreach Partners.



Participant sharing symbols drawn by her table which represent the role and power of outreach during plenary activity led by Health Outreach Partners.



Keynote Plenary
Speaker – Jose
Galvez.