

# Promising Practices for Building Interagency Collaborations to Increase Access to Care for Agricultural Workers

## *Quick Reference Guide*

This quick reference guide is designed to help health center staff build effective interagency collaborations to better reach and serve Migratory and Seasonal Agricultural Workers (MSAWs). These collaborations enable health centers to provide MSAWs with the care they need and address their health-related needs by sharing vital resources, coordinating services, and ultimately improving health outcomes in their communities.

This resource compiles promising practices from the National Center for Farmworker Health's training and technical assistance (T/TA) activities. You can use these practices and their implementation tips as a roadmap to build effective interagency collaborations in your health center.



## **Start with Existing Connections**

### *Begin with Who You Know and Trust*

#### Implementation Tips

- **Identify current partners:** Reach out to those who have supported your mission and goals and assess how those partnerships can be expanded or strengthened.
- **Leverage staff insights:** Tap into the knowledge of frontline staff and outreach teams who have built strong relationships in the community. Their perspective can help identify stakeholders aligned with your goals.
- **Map existing relationships:** For each connection, identify key contacts and assess the nature and strength of the relationship. Note past successes or areas of mutual benefit. Keep those already involved in existing partnerships informed and look for opportunities to build upon them.
- **Explore mutually beneficial opportunities:** Leverage shared missions and prior collaborations. Brainstorm specific, actionable ways to strengthen or expand the partnership. Consider cross-referrals, joint outreach events, shared resources, or co-applying for grants.

# Include Key Stakeholders

## *Involve the Right People*

### Implementation Tips

- **Identify potential new partners:** Look beyond existing collaborations to find additional individuals or groups in the community who can strengthen your efforts.
- **Engage community-aligned individuals and organizations:** Include those who represent, serve, or are integral to the MSAW community. Some examples include teachers, faith leaders, employers, and health agencies, among others.
- **Elevate community voices:** Ensure MSAWs and trusted local leaders have meaningful opportunities to share their perspectives and contribute to the decision-making. These individuals can be vital partners for identifying community needs and gaining support.

# Define Shared Goals & Coordinate Activities

## *Ensure Activities Reflect Community Needs*

### Implementation Tips

- **Bring all collaborating partners together:** Work together to define your collective goals, identify measurable outcomes, and determine how your organizations will collaborate. Clarify whether the collaboration will be one-on-one or part of a larger interagency initiative.
- **Identify collaborative activities:** Determine specific joint actions that reflect shared goals to address community needs. Some examples include conducting a joint community needs assessment, organizing a health fair, and/or offering health screenings to members of the community.
- **Assign roles and responsibilities:** Ensure smooth collaboration by assigning tasks based on each partner's unique strengths, expertise, and available resources.
- **Formalize commitments:** Utilize written agreements such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) or contracts to clearly outline roles, responsibilities, shared goals, and expected outcomes. Include details about shared staffing, funding, and other resource commitments.
- **Establish a shared communication channel:** Create a centralized way for partners to communicate regularly and efficiently. Some possibilities include a shared email group, online platform, or a recurring meeting schedule to maintain alignment and momentum.



# Monitor Progress & Adapt Together

## *Choose Simple Ways to Track Progress Together*

### Implementation Tips

- **Schedule regular check-ins:** Maintaining constant communication will help you stay aligned and adapt proactively to address challenges, celebrate milestones, and make timely adjustments to activities or goals based on new information or changing circumstances.
- **Demonstrate collective impact:** Develop shared metrics and evaluation processes to measure success.
- **Pivot as needed:** Plan for potential changes in staffing, resources, or organizational priorities to ensure flexibility and adaptability. Incorporate warm handoffs into transition planning to support the continuity and growth of these valuable relationships.

# Sustain Collaboration Over Time

## *Keep it Going*

### Implementation Tips

- **Institutionalize collaboration:** Embed partnerships into your organization's strategic goals, staff roles, and regular workflows to ensure long-term commitment. Integrate collaboration into policies, onboarding processes, and planning cycles to make it an integral part of your organizational culture.
- **Practice open communication:** Share leadership responsibilities and decision-making to promote a sense of shared ownership. Create an environment that encourages open and honest dialogue about success and challenges.
- **Stay focused on community needs:** Continuously bring insights from the field into partnership planning. Share what you see and hear in the community to shape planning and help improve partnerships.
- **Invest in relationships:** Prioritize trust-building and long-term solutions over short-term fixes. Celebrate collective wins and continuously nurture strong, respectful partnerships.

**Start using these promising practices today to build strong and effective interagency collaborations to help your health center better serve MSAWs in your community!**

Additional training and technical assistance on this topic are available upon request by contacting [training@ncfh.org](mailto:training@ncfh.org).



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