Evaluation of a Learning Collaborative to Implement Postgraduate Nurse Practitioner Residency Programs in Health Centers

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NTTAP — National Health Center Training & Technical Assistance Partners — Clinical Workforce Development — A PROJECT OF Community Health Center, Inc. and the weitzman institute

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Abstract Summary

Since 2016, **Community Health Center, Inc.'s (CHCI's) National Training and Technical Assistance Partners (NTTAP) on Clinical Workforce Development**, funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), has offered a learning collaborative to move participating health centers from planning to implementation of Postgraduate Nurse Practitioner (NP) and NP/Physician Associate (PA) Residency or Fellowship Programs. This learning collaborative provides health center teams with a roadmap and coaching on how to implement the formal training program, including program drivers, program structure, recruiting, evaluation, and program accreditation. This poster will explore the need for Postgraduate NP and NP/PA Training Programs, the elements of the learning collaborative, and the findings from Qualtrics survey on launching a Postgraduate NP and NP/PA Training Program in a health center.
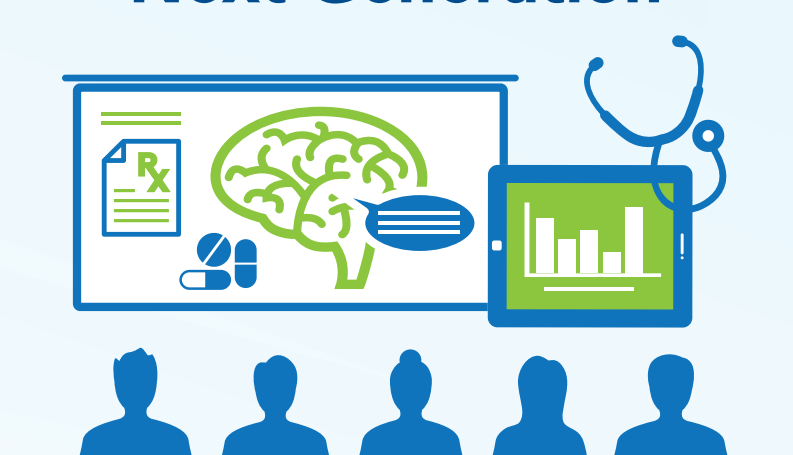
Learning Objectives

1. Understand the method of coaching health centers through planning to implementation of a Postgraduate NP and NP/PA Residency or Fellowship Program.

2. Gain insights into the facilitators and barriers to launching a Postgraduate NP and NP/PA Residency or Fellowship Program in a health center.

3. Learn how the NTTAP at CHCI can support your health center.

Needs Assessment

Implementing Postgraduate Nurse Practitioner (NP) and NP/Physician Associate (PA) Residency and Fellowship Programs in United States' health centers provides an opportunity to train new NPs and PAs to a high performance model of care. Nationally, across all physician specialties in the U.S., there is a projected shortage of 81,180 full-time equivalent physicians. Conversely, these workforce projections also estimate an excess of NPs and PAs[1]. This could mitigate the projected physician shortage in primary care, but only if these advanced practice providers are fully prepared for practice in the complex setting of primary care.

Training the Next Generation

Health centers must develop pathways to educate trainees across all disciplines who provide care for the medically underserved. Rather than filling a job vacancy, "growing your own" presents the opportunity to increase competence and confidence of pre-licensure and postgraduate health professionals. There is also a demonstrated sustained impact of Postgraduate NP Residency Programs on alumni practice and careers. A recent study of CHCI alumni demonstrated that 57% of participating alumni (n=65) are still practicing as primary care providers in health centers[2].

Methods

Method of Coaching Health Centers Through Planning to Implementation of a Postgraduate NP and NP/PA Training Program

- Learning Collaborative Structure:
  — Monthly learning session for 6-months
  — Bi-weekly coaching calls with experts in the field
  — Course syllabus
  — Online learning network
  — Ongoing support post-learning collaborative

Postgraduate NP Residency Learning Collaborative—Learning Session Overview	
Learning Session 1	• Program Drivers • Developing a Mission/Vision Statement for the Program • Resource Assessment • Support from Leadership/Board of Directors: How to Present the Case for a Postgraduate Residency Program
Learning Session 2	• Program Structure • Key Program Staff and Responsibilities • Value of Academic Clinical Partnerships
Learning Session 3	• Preceptors, Mentors, and Faculty: Roles and Responsibilities • Marketing and Recruitment • Contracts/Agreements
Learning Session 4	• Applications, Interviews, and Selecting Candidates • Finances, Sustainability, and Return on Investment • Contracts/Agreements • Program Policies and Procedures • Curriculum Development Overview, Didactics, and Postgraduate Residency Simulation Training
Learning Session 5	• Evaluation of the Postgraduate Residency Program and Resident Learner • Orientation • Graduation • Introduction to Accreditation by the Consortium
Learning Session 6	• Health Center Team Showcases

### Objectives of the Postgraduate NP and NP/PA Training Programs Learning Collaborative

- **Prepare for program accreditation**.
- **Evaluate** postgraduate resident learner outcomes and the impact of the postgraduate residency program.
- **Develop the structure and curriculum** for a postgraduate residency program.
- **Identify the operational and administrative activities** that support a postgraduate residency program.
- **Identify the clinical and financial resources** required to support a postgraduate residency program.
- **Build the case for starting a postgraduate residency program** in their organizations.

Research Study Methods

- This mixed methods study was approved by the CHCI's Institutional Review Board (IRB ID: 1219).
- The study consisted of a survey administered to health centers (n=78 health centers) who participated in the Postgraduate NP and NP/PA Training Programs Learning Collaborative from 2016 to 2023.
- Survey respondents were invited to participate in an interview to further detail their experience in launching a Postgraduate NP and NP/PA Residency or Fellowship Program after the learning collaborative.
- Survey questions included health center and participant characteristics (e.g. organization location, survey respondent name and title, learning collaborative cohort), and the status of their Postgraduate NP and NP/PA Residency or Fellowship Program, including:
  — Launched, active program
  — Launched, inactive program
  — In the process of launching
  — No, have not launched
  — Unsure
- To analyze the survey data, the researchers used the Friedman Test in SPSS to rank the barriers and facilitators. The results had good statistical significance.

Principal Observations/Findings

- Since 2016:

78 Participating Health Centers

47.44% response rate (37)
- 18 assessed facilitators
- 18 assessed barriers
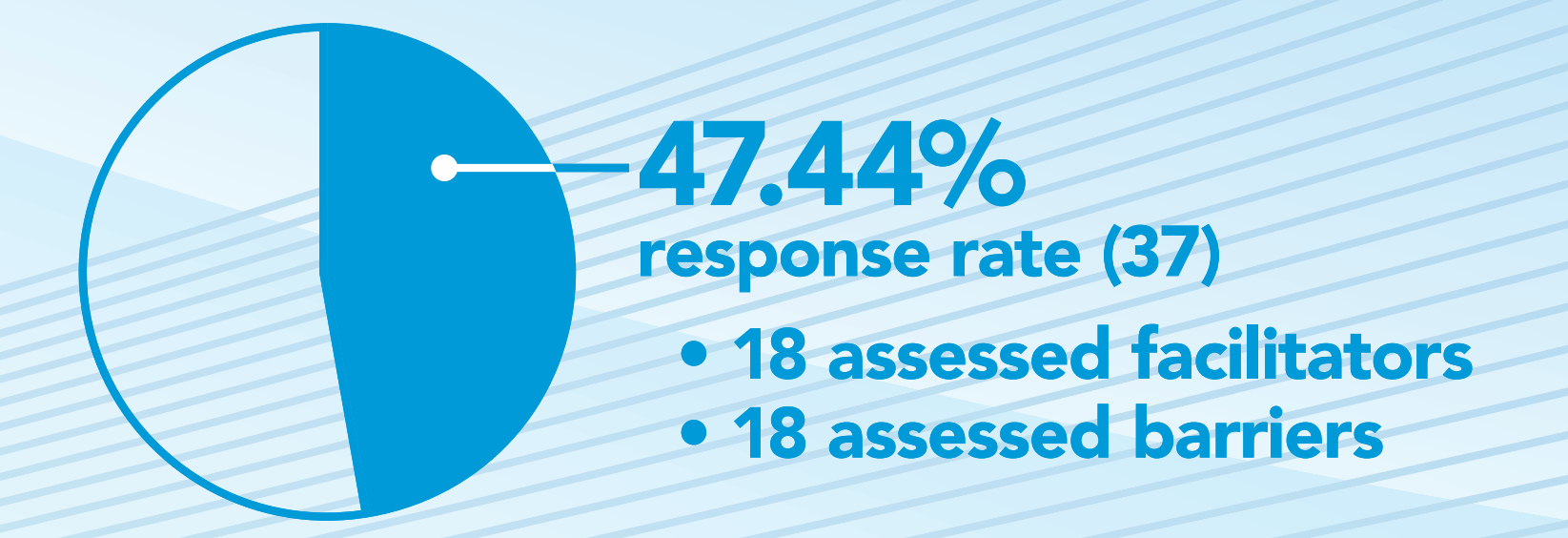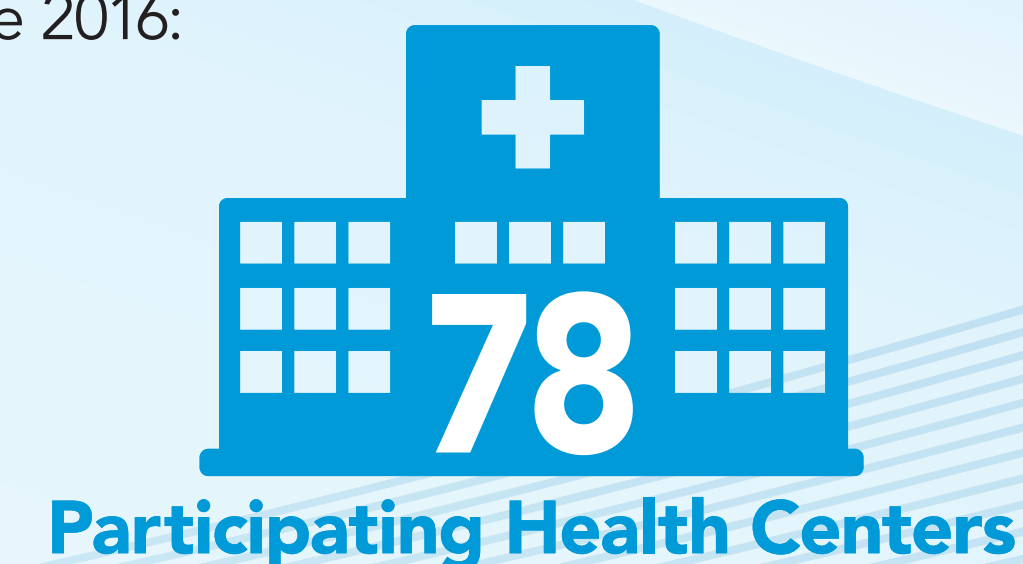
- **Barriers for implementation** as identified by health centers (n=18), include:
  — **Lack of financial resources**
  — **Competing priorities**
  — **Limited dedicated time for planning and implementation**

- **Facilitators for implementation** as identified by health centers (n=18), include:
  — **Leadership Support**
  — **Clinical Support (e.g. preceptors, mentors)**
  — **Dedicated time for planning and implementation**

- **Through interviews (n=15), we learned**:
  1. Those who have an **active program** echoed the sentiments of the survey responses that **without leadership support, they could not have launched their program**. They did face financial barriers and lacked clinical support, but because of the strong leadership support at their health center, they were able to overcome those barriers and launch the program.
  2. Those that **did launch a program** expressed that they **did face financial barriers, but were able to secure grant funding**.
  3. Those with a program expressed a **facilitator to launching** the program was **mission-driven workforce pathway planning**.
  4. Those **without a launched program**, echoed the sentiments of the survey responses that **barriers of finances, time, and clinical support for preceptors and mentors prevented their organization from launching** a Postgraduate NP and NP/PA Training Program. They also expressed barriers of limited clinical space.
  5. For those that **did not launch—expressed learning collaborative set them up for success, but unfortunately did not have the resources** to support a launch.

Impact

- The learning collaborative hosted by CHCI's NTTAP on Clinical Workforce Development has supported dozens of health centers to launch their Postgraduate NP and NP/PA Training Program. From the health centers that completed the study, the researchers learned that **as a result of the learning collaborative, 215 residents or fellows, have graduated from a Postgraduate NP and NP/PA Training Program created due to the foundational knowledge provided in the learning collaborative opportunity. Of those 215 graduates, 86 have stayed on to be employees at the health center.**

- To our knowledge, this is the first study to explore the facilitators and inhibitors of launching a program in a community health center. The findings of this research study is to support health centers and look-alikes in their journey to launching a Postgraduate NP and NP/PA Training Program and to fully understand what the facilitators and barriers are for implementing a program. The findings of this research study may also inform HRSA on policies, programs, and funding.

Citations

1. Retrieved from https://tinyurl.com/BHW-PhysicianProjections
2. Hart AM, Seagriff N, Flinter M. "Sustained Impact of a Postgraduate Residency Training Program on Nurse Practitioners' Careers." *Journal of Primary Care & Community Health.* 2022;13. doi:10.1177/21501319221136938

For More Information

Questions? Please contact our team at **nca@chc1.com**!

Interested in joining the learning collaborative?
Reach out to **Meaghan Angers**, NTTAP Program Manager, at **angersm@mwhs1.com**

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