Introduction to Migrant Health

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Farmworker Demographics

2.5 million (approx. 4 million including families)$^{2,3}$

- Male: 72%
- Female: 28%

41% are 20-34 yrs old


* Note: Kandel uses a combination of NAWS and others data.
Farmworker Demographics

71% foreign born

- Mexico (95%)
- Central America (3%)

70% Spanish dominant language

Estimated 4% of farmworkers speak an indigenous language as their primary language.

- hispanic (78%)
- white (13%)
- other (5%)
- african american (4%)

Foreign born workers, on average, have an 8th grade education.

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Farmworker Demographics

Average total individual income is $15,000 - $17,499

25% of all farmworkers have a family income below the federal poverty level

64% do not have health insurance

39% had no healthcare visit in last 2 years
Types of Farmworker Housing
Issues Associated with Farmworker Housing

- Instability (especially for migrant workers)
- Affordability
- Overcrowding
- Lack of privacy
- Inadequate facilities (including showers, toilets, laundry, kitchen)
Farmworker Health Overview

• Agriculture is one of the most hazardous occupations in the United States\(^1\)

• In 2013, 487 farmworkers died of work-related injuries\(^2\)

• About 20% of farmworkers and their families went to a C/MHC in 2013 \(^3\)

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1. CDC, NIOSH, Workplace and Safety Health Topics: Agricultural Safety, [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/aginjury/](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/aginjury/)
Work-Related Health Risks

- Heat stress
- Equipment & automobile accidents
- Lacerations from sharp equipment and hand tools
- Falls from ladders
- Eye injuries
- Musculoskeletal injuries
- Insect/rodent/snake bites

Each crop has its own risk profile
Work-Related Health Risks

Pesticide exposure in
the fields and at home
Illnesses Related to Unsanitary Conditions and Substandard Housing

- Gastro-intestinal diseases
- Intestinal parasites
- Urinary tract infections
- Conjunctivitis
- Lead poisoning

Photos by Farmworker Justice
Chronic Conditions

- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Cancer
- HIV/AIDS
- Tuberculosis
- Obesity
- Asthma

Photo by Farmworker Justice
Mental Health

• Anxiety
• Stress
• Depression
• Substance abuse
• Domestic violence

Contributing factors:
• Separation from families
• Isolation
• Discrimination
• Fear due to immigration status

According to 2009-2010 NAWS data, 10% of farmworkers surveyed had depressive symptoms
Barriers to Care and Healthy Lifestyles

- **Cultural issues** such as language, literacy, medical knowledge, health care practices and beliefs, and dietary practices
- **Social support** absent because of social exclusion or isolation
- **Food insecurity** and/or lack of access to healthy foods
Barriers to Care and Healthy Lifestyles

- **Poverty**, with unreliable transportation, lack of insurance, inability to buy services and supplies, and substandard housing
- **Limited job security** increases the possibility that workers will remain in a dangerous or questionable job to remain employed
  - Unavailability of sick leave
  - Fear of employer retaliation
Barriers to Care and Healthy Lifestyles

- **Constant mobility** causing discontinuity of care
- **Immigration status** of patient and/or family members
- **Racism** that motivates policies or actions that frighten members of particular racial/ethnic groups.
- **Confusion about US health systems**
Challenges for Migrant Health Centers – Delivery of Services

• Establishing a Patient-Centered Medical Home for farmworkers

• Understanding and diagnosing conditions related to occupational and environmental health

• Health literacy

• Cultural competency

• Realistic appointment schedules and walk-in capacity

• Access to medicine and specialists

• Reimbursement for services

• Outreach to farmworker communities
Challenges for Migrant Health Centers – Meeting the Program Requirements

• Sliding fee discount schedule

• Recruiting farmworkers to serve on health center board to ensure patient majority board composition

• Accessible hours of operation and locations to meet the needs of farmworker communities

• Staffing – recruiting and maintaining staff, especially bilingual Spanish/English staff
The Farmworker Health Network (FHN)

- Farmworker Justice
  [www.farmworkerjustice.org](http://www.farmworkerjustice.org)

- Health Outreach Partners
  [www.outreach-partners.org](http://www.outreach-partners.org)

- Migrant Clinicians Network
  [www.migrantclinician.org](http://www.migrantclinician.org)

- MHP Salud
  [www.mhpsalud.org](http://www.mhpsalud.org)

- National Association of Community Health Centers
  [www.nachc.com](http://www.nachc.com)

- National Center for Farmworker Health
  [www.ncfh.org](http://www.ncfh.org)
For more information...

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