

Kansas Health Care Workforce Partnership Planning Symposium**Summary**

The Kansas Health Care Workforce Partnership held a planning symposium at Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure Conference Center west of Salina Kansas April 18 and 19, 2011. Sixty-one people from throughout the state registered to attend this two-day event where participants first learned how each of the primary health care professionals in Kansas is developed.

Speakers included the program chair or dean from the University of Kansas Medical Center, the Wichita State University Physician Assistant Program and the Fort Hays State University Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner Program. Dental workforce information was presented by a representative of Kansas Department of Health and Environment's Bureau of Oral Health.

Representatives came from economic development, workforce, hospitals, foundations, safety net clinics, educational institutions, advocacy groups and primary health care providers. Being a working seminar, participants were offered frequent opportunities to network and ask questions leading to the discussions which followed. Participants were divided into seven small groups to brainstorm ideas to enhance education and training, recruitment and retention of primary health care professionals for underserved areas in Kansas. There were more than 250 suggestions presented by the small groups for the entire assembly to consider. The overarching focus centered on planning activities that would lead to a 10 to 25 percent increase in the primary health care workforce in Kansas by 2022.

After all of the ideas were presented to the entire body, discussion and additional networking opportunities were provided to help flesh out any additional questions. The small groups reconvened to reach a consensus on four of the best planning ideas, which, if implemented, would increase the primary health care workforce. As each small group presented their four ideas, it was clear there was similarity between them. The large group was then able to easily reach a consensus on the four ideas that they wanted to investigate further.

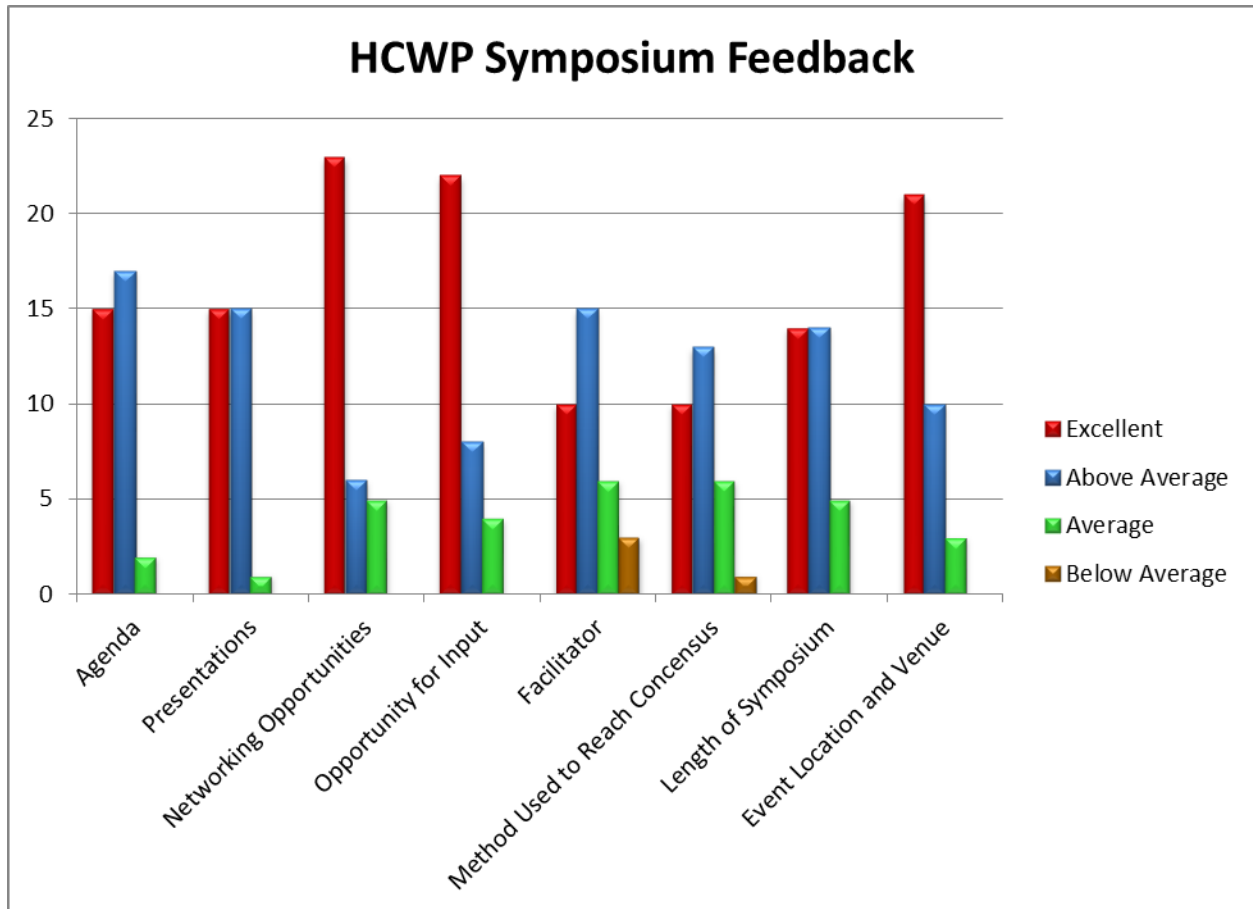
The four consensus ideas were:

1. Develop a multi-stakeholder collaborative creating an online health care workforce clearinghouse through the Kansas Department of Commerce. The website should have information and activities relevant to members including job postings, grant/funding opportunities and best practices. It should utilize social networking. Focus would be on securing data, identifying trends, creating a list serve and convening an annual workshop/conference with breakouts and training sessions from various stakeholders.
2. Increase distributed educational opportunities in Kansas (inter-professional focus; EX: Salina satellite). Consider sharing educational resources for physicians, physician assistants and ARNPs.

3. Develop means to improve a community’s capability to recruit and retain primary care health professionals.
4. Create funding pool to offer stipend to ARNPs willing to do primary care, attend school full-time, practice in high-need areas and serve as a preceptor. This should also be available to physician assistants with the same caveats.

The clearinghouse was the top vote getter by a large margin in two rounds of blind voting.

Following the symposium, a satisfaction survey was sent to each of the participants. Sixty-two percent of the participants completed the survey. Survey results revealed a very positive response to the symposium.



Participant comments received could be summed up by the following note: “I felt like we had accomplished something when we left. That hasn’t always happened at other symposiums. Good job!”

The next step for the Health Care Workforce Partnership Committee is to research the four ideas and develop a practical, sustainable action plan.