

Meeting summary for NCAFCC Region 3 Meeting (01/15/2025)

Quick recap

The meeting involved discussions on research projects, updates from the association, and strategic plans for 2025. The team also discussed various topics including Medicaid expansion, patient transitions, and potential partnerships for offering regional vaccination days. Lastly, the team shared updates on their clinics, including plans for a new building for Mustard Seed and the impact of life-threatening illnesses on patient populations.

Next steps

- All clinics to consider participating in Dr. Katie Woolseyfer and Kelsey Langraff's research study on healthcare professionals' stereotypes about people experiencing homelessness.
- Allison to send out the handout from Appalachian State University after the meeting.
- All clinics to save the date for the next annual conference on April 28-29, 2026.
- All clinics to pay their membership dues by January 31st, 2025.
- All clinics to invite their representatives to visit their clinic in the first quarter of 2025.
- All clinics to notify Allison if they see a significant increase in uninsured patients.
- Lacie to send out a brief questionnaire survey on Thursday regarding life-threatening illnesses in patient populations.
- All clinics to complete the brief questionnaire survey by January 31st, 2025.
- Clinics encountering patients needing immigration-related immunizations to send the immunization form to April and the team.

- NCAFCC staff to explore potential funding options for regional vaccination days.
- Cindy to check with the North Carolina Immunization Program about the availability of resources for the 317 vaccine program.
- Kim and Chris to have a separate conversation about Cone Health, Epic usage and costs.
- Chris to continue pursuing the potential new building for Mustard Seed Clinic and keep the team updated on progress.

Summary

Improving Patient Care for Stigmatized Groups

In the meeting, Allison welcomed everyone and introduced the guests, Dr. Katie Woolseyfer and Kelsey Langraff, from Appalachian State University. Dr. Woolseyfer and Kelsey shared their research on stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination in healthcare contexts, and their efforts to improve patient care for stigmatized groups. They expressed their need for assistance from the attendees over the next few months.

Measuring Healthcare Professionals' Stereotypes

Katie discussed her research project with Kelsey, which aims to measure the stereotypes that healthcare professionals hold about people experiencing homelessness. The project involves administering a 5-10 minute survey to healthcare professionals, which will be anonymous and not linked to any specific clinic or individual. The survey will be sent out via email and a follow-up reminder will be sent. The project is currently in the IRB approval stage and aims to collect data between January and March. Kelsey will analyze the data and present the findings in May. Trent suggested the possibility of a virtual engagement with clinic staff, which Katie agreed to. Elizabeth asked about the differentiation between paid staff and volunteers, to which Katie responded that as long as they provide patient care, it doesn't matter if they are volunteers or paid staff. Allison offered to send out the handout with the survey link and to make connections with clinics interested in an onsite visit.

Annual Conference and Membership Updates

In the meeting, Bridget opened with a devotion emphasizing the importance of communication in leadership. Allison then provided updates from the association side. She announced that the next annual conference will be held in the spring of 2026, with tentative dates set for April 28th and 29th. The location is yet to be determined. She also reminded everyone that membership dues for 2025 are due by January 31st and encouraged checking spam folders for the invoice. Lastly, she mentioned that the annual Ncafcc survey will be released towards the end of the month. Cindy added that due to changes in the annual survey, they will not be asking for the 4th quarter Medicaid expansion survey. She also reminded everyone to send in their agreement for roadmap participation.

Roadmap, Immigration Toolkit, and Survey

Cindy Jones discussed the importance of submitting information to the roadmap by March 31st and offered assistance with any queries. Elizabeth asked about the roadmap process, to which Cindy clarified the steps. Allison then shared updates from the Association, including the availability of an immigration toolkit for all members. She also mentioned that the toolkit would be updated as more information about immigration changes becomes available. Cindy announced that Lacie Brotherton would be assisting with the annual survey process. Lastly, April reminded the team about the need to invite their representatives to their clinics in the coming quarter.

Federal Funding Concerns and Survey

April expressed concerns about the potential loss of federal funding to FQHC's for serving the uninsured and anticipated an increase in the number of uninsured due to possible changes in work requirements. She encouraged the team to report any unusual increases in uninsured patients and to keep her updated on any changes. Lacie announced a brief survey to be sent out to the group, aiming to understand the impact of life-threatening illnesses on patient populations. Bridget was invited to share her observations about changes in patient demographics, specifically related to immigration.

Immunization Costs and Financial Assistance

The team discussed a recent trend of patients seeking financial assistance for immunizations required for the immigration process. They noted that these immunizations were not typically covered by their clinics and that the total cost could be around \$600. The team also discussed the possibility of offering regional vaccination days with potential funding, and the idea of reaching out to the North Carolina immunization program for assistance. The team agreed to further discuss the issue at the staff level and explore potential partnerships.

Medicaid Expansion and Strategic Plans

The meeting focused on discussing various topics including Medicaid expansion, patient transitions, and strategic plans for 2025. Bridget shared a positive experience with Medicaid expansion in Yadkinville, where patients were able to transition smoothly to nearby providers. Kim from Rockingham County reported a similar experience, with patients finding care within 3-4 weeks. The team also discussed challenges with Cone Health's requirements for qualifying for a nationwide patient information sharing program, particularly the need for HIPAA compliance. Chris from Mustard Seed mentioned their partnership with Cone Health and their use of Epic. Kim expressed concerns about qualifying as a HIPAA compliant entity, and Cindy suggested using a HIPAA business agreement if one exists. The team also discussed the possibility of using a medical director's Medicaid qualifications as a solution.

New Building for Mustard Seed Clinic

Chris shared his plans to obtain a new building for Mustard Seed, as they have outgrown their current clinic. The proposed building, which is being offered by another nonprofit, needs repairs and updates. Chris is excited about the potential move, which would allow them to expand their services and accommodate more patients. The new location is in a different neighborhood but still in the same city council district and has similar demographics. Chris plans to start a campaign to raise funds for the repairs and updates. The team expressed their support and anticipation for the project's progress.