2025 AzPHA Annual Conference: Modernizing Public Health Practice: Building an Innovative and Inclusive Infrastructure for the Public Health of the Future

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AzPHA Annual Conference | April 3, 2025 | Breakout session summaries

Breakout #1 10:30 a.m. - 11:20 p.m.

Public Health Workforce | Public Health Inclusion and Belonging and Employee-Driven Approach

Learning Objectives: Examples on fostering a workplace environment that celebrates diversity and ensures all employees feel valued, respected, and included. Create channels for employees to provide feedback about their experiences regarding workplace challenges and frustrations, and act on that feedback.

Session Summary: In this session, we will explore the importance of inclusion and belonging within the public health workforce and highlight the significance of an employee-driven approach in fostering a sense of belonging within your organization. We will define and discuss the concepts of inclusion and belonging, emphasizing their relevance in public health. Key points will include the importance of inclusion in the public health workforce and strategies for implementation. These strategies include establishing an employee recognition committee, conducting surveys, and creating workgroups to gather feedback and address challenges and frustrations. During the session, we will share valuable insights and successes from our county regarding the establishment of an employee recognition committee, as well as our participation in a pilot program launched by the Mayo Clinic called Listen-Sort-Empower, which other agencies around the state are also participating. This evidence-based program is designed to promote professional fulfillment and team engagement. It focuses on creating workgroups where employees can share and discuss the daily challenges and frustrations they encounter while collaboratively implementing tailored solutions. This employee-driven approach empowers frontline staff, enhances their sense of control over their work environment, reduces burnout, strengthens trust and respect in leader-staff relationships, and improves overall practice efficiency and workplace morale.Other organizations will be able to learn from our experiences and adopt effective practices to achieve similar successes in their workplaces. The session will encourage interactive participation, allowing attendees to discuss how they can implement these strategies or develop new ones that align with their organization and identify potential challenges.

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Fostering inclusion and belonging is not just a moral imperative but also essential for the effectiveness and resilience of the public health workforce

Data infrastructure and informatics | Identifying and explaining suicide, homicide, and overdose hot spots in Arizona, plus an Arizona Violent Death Reporting System dashboard presentation

Learning Objectives: Attendees will be able to…
- recall Arizona hot spots with respect to suicide, homicide, and overdose events
- explain what factors help explain these hot spots
- use a public-facing data dashboard to analyze violent death data in Arizona

Session Summary: In this session, we will present results from a research project involving suicide, homicide, and fatal unintentional overdose events in Arizona, as well as demonstrate how to use a public-facing data dashboard displaying violent death data in Arizona. The purpose of the research project is to identify and explain clusters, or "hot spots", of suicide, homicide, and fatal unintentional overdose events in Arizona. Data was collected from the Arizona Violent Death Reporting System (AZ-VDRS) and the Arizona State Unintentional Drug Overdose System (AZ-SUDORS) for the years 2020 through 2023. To statistically identify hot spots, crude mortality rates by Census tract were calculated and submitted to rate smoothing and local indicators of spatial autocorrelation (LISA) analysis, revealing locations where clusters of Census tracts showed elevated rates of suicide, homicide, and/or overdose. To better understand why some regions were at elevated risk, several socio-economic variables at the tract level were also collected and submitted to regression analysis, revealing the unique factors involved in the different manners of death. These results can inform attendees about what regions in Arizona are especially at risk of suicide, homicide, and/or fatal unintentional overdose, as well as help explain why they are at elevated risk. This data can help focus prevention efforts on areas most in need of support. Relatedly, a public-facing data dashboard will also be demonstrated. This interactive dashboard created by staff at ASU's Center for Violence Prevention and Community Safety displays AZ-VDRS data and allows users to customize searches and understand how suicides and

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homicides compare across demographics, time, and geography. Users can also download customized spreadsheets from the dashboard for personal analyses.

Using AI to enhance public health practice | Leveraging AI to Standardize Housing Interventions: Advancing Public Health Infrastructure in Arizona's Continuum of Care Programs

Learning Objectives: Participants will learn how ChatGPT Enterprise can automate document analysis and synthesize stakeholder feedback to create standardized SOPs. Participants will gain insights into the integration of AI tools to improve housing service delivery and align with statewide public health priorities.

Session Summary: Arizona has experienced a dramatic rise in homelessness since 2020 and currently lacks shared, standardized procedures to respond to increased inflows into homelessness. In response, Arizona State University, in collaboration with the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) and Arizona's Continuum of Care (CoC) programs, is spearheading an innovative and timely project to create Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for six key housing interventions: Prevention, Outreach, Shelter, Recovery Housing, Rapid Rehousing, and Permanent Supportive Housing. This effort draws on existing CoC best practices and the practice wisdom of over 100 service providers and administrators, leveraging ChatGPT Enterprise to enhance data analysis and stakeholder collaboration.

Through automating the parsing of publicly available agency documents, such as policy manuals and procedural guidelines, and integrating stakeholder input, this project ensures consistency and scalability across housing interventions. AI enables the synthesis of complex datasets, identifies trends, and streamlines the development of SOP drafts, saving time while improving accuracy. These SOPs will promote the Arizona Health Improvement Plan (AHIP) public health priorities of health equity, social determinants of health, mental well-being, and rural and urban underserved health by enhancing consistency in service delivery, inter-agency coordination, data-driven decision making, and use of inclusive and culturally appropriate housing services across the state. The target audience includes housing providers, state agencies, people with lived experience, and researchers invested in improving housing services and public

health outcomes. Stakeholders contribute through workshops and document sharing, while AI organizes their input into actionable outputs. Metrics for success include timely SOP completion, stakeholder satisfaction, and alignment with statewide public health priorities.

Data infrastructure and informatics | Enhancing Depression Care for Pregnant and Postpartum Women Through Data Visualization: Insights from the Arizona EQUIDEM Pilot Project

Learning Objectives: 1. Evaluate the impact of data visualization tools, including a Daily Huddle Report and Monthly Performance Scorecard, on improving depression screening, referral, and follow-up rates for pregnant and postpartum women in a safety-net healthcare setting.

2. Identify key barriers to depression care for pregnant and postpartum women, such as transportation challenges, stigma, referral delays, and competing clinical priorities, and explore how data-driven decision support can help address these disparities.

3. Examine the role of large language models (LLMs) in supporting SQL query design and data visualization development, and discuss their potential applications in optimizing clinical workflows and behavioral health service delivery.

Session Summary: Background: Timely and effective depression care for pregnant and postpartum women (PPW) is critical, yet significant disparities in screening, referral, and follow-up persist in clinical settings. The Arizona EQUIDEM (Equity in Depression Care for Mothers) pilot project was developed to enhance depression care performance monitoring and decision-making using data visualization tools. Aligning with US Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommendations, the project aimed to support universal depression screening while addressing disparities in follow-up care.

Objective: This study evaluated the feasibility and effectiveness of two novel data visualization tools—a Daily Huddle Report and a Monthly Performance Scorecard—designed to enhance clinical decision-making and improve depression screening,

referral, and follow-up rates at a large safety-net women's health clinic.

Methods: Using a Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) framework, Arizona State University and Valleywise Health partnered to design SQL queries for Epic Clarity data extraction, validate outputs with a large language model (LLM), and develop user-centered dashboard visualizations using synthetic patient data (n=125,000). A focus group with clinic staff (n=1) provided insights into usability, workflow integration, and barriers to depression care.

Conclusions & Future Directions:
The EQUIDEM pilot successfully demonstrated the feasibility of data-driven decision support for improving depression care in a safety-net setting. While delays in data-sharing agreements prevented full-scale implementation, findings suggest that data visualization tools can enhance clinical workflows, reduce disparities, and improve patient outcomes. Future steps include deploying these tools with real patient data, expanding visualization capacity for additional behavioral health conditions, and refining integration strategies using provider feedback.

Breakout #2 11:30 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.

Data infrastructure and informatics | Integrating Data to Action: Enhancing Overdose Surveillance and Response on Pima County

Learning Objectives: Identify sources of information to be able to inform decision making and action related to efforts to address substance misuse and other fatalities.

Describe how heat mapping trends are used to isolate the occurrences of fatal and non-fatal overdoses, providing targeted insights for intervention.

Session Summary: This workshop will explore how diverse data sources—including pharmacy data, law enforcement reports, emergency medical services (EMS) data, Office of the Medical Examiner, hospital discharge data, and syndromic surveillance—are integrated to strengthen overdose prevention efforts in Pima County. Participants will gain insight into how the Office of Injury and Violence Prevention is spearheading

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impactful work products such as fatality reviews, including Overdose Fatality Reviews (OFR), Suicide Mortality Review (SMR), and proposed expansions in mortality analysis. The session will also highlight the role of internships in advancing public health surveillance, with projects focusing on occupational death status, vital records gap analysis, and hospital discharge co-morbidities. Additionally, attendees will learn how heat mapping trends are used to isolate occurrences of fatal and non-fatal overdoses, providing targeted insights for intervention. The presentation will conclude with a discussion on ongoing surveillance efforts, real-time alerting systems, and the importance of cross-sector collaboration in addressing substance use and overdose prevention.

Using AI to enhance public health practice | Merging Minds and Machines (M & M's) | Re-envisioning Public Health Innovation

Learning Objectives: 1. Introduce user-friendly AI tools, including ChatGPT, to enhance decision-making, resource allocation, and intervention strategies, with a focus on practical applications for addressing complex public health challenges.

2. Build participants' confidence in applying innovative, transdisciplinary approaches to complex problem-solving by providing real-world examples and interactive exercises that demonstrate effective collaboration across sectors.

Session Summary: Morbidity and mortality (M & M's) remain cornerstone metrics for assessing public health challenges and outcomes. Addressing these complex issues requires transdisciplinary approaches that unite expertise across diverse sectors, including public health, technology, medicine, engineering, and community stakeholders. By blending human ingenuity with cutting-edge technologies, we can forge new pathways for transformative public health innovation.

This session offers a dynamic space to re-envision how we tackle today's most pressing public health challenges while preparing for the complexities of tomorrow. Through a transdisciplinary lens, participants will explore the synergy of human expertise ("minds") and advanced technologies ("machines"), such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and predictive analytics.

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Attendees will engage with a real-world public health scenario to discover how AI-powered tools and cross-sector collaboration can enhance decision-making, optimize resource allocation, and improve intervention outcomes. The session will also highlight strategies for integrating AI into public health practice in ways that are ethical, equitable, and grounded in community-centered solutions.

By the end of this interactive workshop, participants will gain actionable insights into how transdisciplinary strategies and the fusion of AI and human expertise can drive meaningful public health innovation. Join us to explore how the collaboration of minds and machines can inspire groundbreaking solutions for the most complex challenges of our time.

Public Health workforce | Bridging the Gap: Cultivating Public Health Leaders Through Workforce Innovation and Experiential Learning

Learning Objectives: Identify and Describe: Attendees will be able to identify key workforce development tools, such as change models, KPIs, and strategic roadmaps, and describe how these tools can enhance recruitment, retention, and professional growth in public health organizations.

Apply and Implement: Attendees will be able to apply at least two actionable strategies for fostering meaningful experiential learning opportunities and creating an inclusive workforce.

Session Summary: In 2023, Maricopa County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) took a significant step in advancing workforce development by formalizing the Applied Practical Experience (APEX) team within the Office of Organizational Excellence. This dedicated team—comprising a supervisor, fellowship coordinator, internship coordinator, and a coordinator for dietetic interns—aims to bridge the gap between academic preparation and real-world public health practice.

MCDPH's APEX team leverages tools like change models, KPIs, and strategic roadmaps to ensure alignment with broader organizational and county-level visions and missions. By integrating these frameworks, the team not only fosters professional growth but also supports departmental goals of recruitment and retention.

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Key interventions highlight innovative approaches to accommodating and training young professionals with limited prior public health experience. Through tailored orientations, professional development workshops, and hands-on learning opportunities, the APEX team empowers experiential learners to contribute effectively while cultivating their skills.

This session will provide insights into how fostering meaningful experiences and addressing workforce gaps can enhance recruitment, retention, and wellbeing in public health. The APEX team will share some of the key lessons learned and emphasize the importance of flexibility, mentorship, and fostering a sense of inclusion and belonging within the workforce.

Attendees will leave with actionable strategies to build resilient, multi-generational teams that align with organizational values and prepare the next generation of public health leaders.

Data infrastructure and informatics | The 2024 State Health Assessment

Learning Objectives: FYR 1-Promote and inform community members on the State Health Assessment, which provides a comprehensive snapshot of health and wellness in Arizona. 2-Promote and inform community members on how the SHA can be a starting point for quality improvement of community efforts as it is for the Ariona Health Improvement Plan.

Session Summary: The 2024 State Health Assessment (SHA) provides a comprehensive snapshot of our community's health that identifies critical health issues, reflects our collective progress, and lays the groundwork for future improvements to the well-being of all Arizonans. This important document provides an in-depth look at the state of health in Arizona, combining data-driven insights with community feedback to ensure that our public health efforts align with the diverse needs of our residents.

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Using AI to enhance public health practice | Leveraging AI for Smarter Public Health Decision-Making: Balancing Innovation with Cultural Responsiveness

Learning Objectives: 1.　　　Explore how AI-driven analytics and predictive modeling can improve public health decision-making while addressing social determinants of health.

2.　　　Understand the role of AI in optimizing organizational performance through automation, resource allocation, and enhanced communication strategies.

3.　　　Identify strategies to ensure AI applications in public health remain culturally responsive, ethical, and community-centered.

Session Summary: Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming public health by optimizing decision-making, enhancing communication, and improving organizational performance. However, the challenge remains: How can AI be implemented in a way that prioritizes equity, community trust, and cultural responsiveness?

This session will explore real-world applications of AI in public health practice, demonstrating how machine learning, natural language processing, and predictive analytics can streamline operations, enhance disease surveillance, and guide resource distribution. We will discuss AI's role in automating data analysis for public health programs, improving response times for outbreaks, and generating novel insights for policymakers.

A key focus of this discussion will be ensuring AI-driven solutions are inclusive and equitable. Attendees will learn about strategies to mitigate bias in AI models, ensure community engagement in AI-driven decision-making, and balance automation with human oversight. By examining successful case studies where AI has enhanced public health outreach, behavioral health interventions, and health communication strategies, participants will gain practical insights into leveraging AI without compromising ethical and cultural considerations.

Finally, the session will address the barriers to AI adoption in public health, including data privacy concerns, trust in AI-generated recommendations, and challenges in

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workforce training. By the end of the session, participants will leave with actionable strategies to implement AI responsibly in their organizations, ensuring that public health innovation is both effective and equitable.

Public Health workforce | Fostering Connection and Quality: Improving Behavioral Health Care Through Collaboration

Learning Objectives: Participants will identify the effects of professional isolation. Participants will identify three evidence based approaches to combating professional isolation.

Session Summary: Professional isolation is a growing challenge that impacts provider performance, patient outcomes, and overall care quality.
This session will explore how a targeted collaboration strategy can address isolation among behavioral health providers, foster collaboration and enhance delivery of care.

Participants will learn to identify the effects of professional isolation on both provider performance and client care, recognizing how isolation can hinder communication, teamwork, morale, and even ethical decision-making.

I will emphasize three evidence-based approaches to combat professional isolation that were adapted into the development of The Alliance ACO's Alliance Office Hours.
1.   Interdisciplinary Treatment Team Meetings: Regular team meetings create opportunities for providers to collaborate, share insights, and jointly address complex cases.
These meetings not only improve communication and coordination but also strengthen the sense of connection among team members, reducing silos and promoting a unified approach to care.
2.   Quality Improvement Initiatives: Engaging providers in shared quality improvement goals, such as enhancing behavioral health HEDIS measures, fosters a sense of collective purpose.
By involving teams in data-driven projects to improve patient outcomes, organizations can cultivate collaboration while addressing key performance metrics.

3.   Workforce Well-Being Programs: Provider well-being is essential for sustainable, high-quality care. Programs that promote mental health resources, stress management, and work-life balance reduce burnout and create a supportive culture.

This session will highlight the Alliance ACO's innovative Office Hours initiative; a weekly, voluntary Zoom drop-in session for behavioral health providers, creating a consistent platform for communication, collaboration, and shared learning resulting in opportunities for HEDIS measure improvement.

Data infrastructure and informatics | Substance Use Data to Action: Development of the City of Pheonix Opioid Overdose Alert System Methodology and Program Framework

Learning Objectives: 1. Understand how data can inform the development of statistical methodologies to accurately detect opioid overdose spikes
2. Enumerate how to select and test overdose spike detection methods to ensure efficacy and utility
3. Outline how spike data can be used in real-time as part of a larger public health and safety response to the opioid overdose crisis in Arizona

Session Summary: The City of Phoenix has the highest opioid overdose rate of all municipalities in Arizona, with over 4,000 suspected overdoses occurring annually. Overdose spike detection systems provide one avenue to put data into action towards ending the opioid overdose crisis. To develop this system, an in-depth examination of best practices in the literature and among peer municipalities was conducted, but no gold standard was found. The City's Office of Public Health, in partnership with Arizona State University's Substance use and Addiction Translational Research Network, utilized data on suspected opioid overdoses from 2022 onward to examine statistical methodologies most appropriate for spike detection in Phoenix. Three possible methods came to the fore based upon standard deviation, average threshold, and daily increase. These were ultimately combined to create a multilayered alert system that allows for different response strategies based on the alert level. The alert system was made live as a pilot to allow for testing the efficacy and utility of the spike detection methodology

compared to daily suspected overdose data and cluster events over time prior to official launch. The outcomes of this preliminary testing will be discussed, along with the necessary adjustments to the system, in the hope that others will find it useful in developing their own systems. Likewise, we hope that sharing these methods may also be useful for detection of other emergent public health events. Finally, we share the proposed response protocol to be activated when a spike in opioid overdoses is detected among all participating City and community entities.

Public Health workforce | Tribal Healthcare Workforce Development: A Collborative Approach

Learning Objectives: 1. Participants will able to describe two best practices for preparing Tribal youth for careers in public health, such as culturally relevant educational pathways.

2. Participants will be able to describe at least two methods for recognizing and celebrating the contributions of high-performing public health workers serving Tribal communities.

Session Summary: Tribal youth face unique challenges when pursuing careers in public health, including balancing family responsibilities, limited access to educational resources, and the immediate need to work to support their families. Despite these barriers, effective strategies can help prepare them for success. One approach is to highlight and connect them with successful Tribal youth who have navigated educational pathways, serving as role models. Another is to embed support programs within communities, providing resources, knowledge, and skills that align with their cultural values. Culturally relevant educational pathways foster growth by helping youth recognize their strengths, build meaningful relationships, and stay connected to traditions while exploring career options. Programs like Native SCOPE, Gila River Summer Scrubs, San Carlos Summer Scrubs, and the Diné College Indigenous Student Enhancement Program have introduced Tribal youth to healthcare and public health careers. Mentorship and community involvement enhance career readiness by reinforcing public health roles and creating a strong support system. Recognizing and celebrating public health workers in Tribal communities is essential because they tackle

complex health challenges that impact their people. Their work is deeply connected to the well-being of their communities, making it difficult to separate professional responsibilities from personal commitment. Acknowledging their contributions can be done in meaningful ways, such as highlighting research and publications authored by Tribal members, valuing hands-on efforts that bring tangible change, and supporting innovative thinkers who take risks to create new solutions. Many Tribal communities hold valuable, often unspoken, histories of past public health efforts within families and clans. By recognizing public health workers today, we ensure that their contributions are seen, retained, appreciated, and built upon for the health of future generations.

Breakout #4 2:35 p.m. - 3:25 p.m.

Using AI to enhance public health practice | The AI Co-Worker You Never Knew You Needed

Learning Objectives: 1.Understand the Basics of Generative AI in Public Health: Participants will gain foundational knowledge about ChatGPT and other generative AI tools, including ethical considerations for their use in professional public health settings.

2.Apply Generative AI Tools to Public Health Scenarios: Participants will practice using ChatGPT to address realistic programmatic and administrative case studies, exploring practical applications and best practices for enhancing productivity and decision-making in public health roles.

Session Summary: Have you ever wanted to clone yourself to get more done? A version of you that never sleeps, always has new ideas, and is ready to tackle even your most tedious tasks? ChatGPT can be your new AI-powered productivity partner! Join Maricopa County's Carmen Batista and Nina Lindsey as they demonstrate how this technology can seamlessly integrate into public health programmatic, grants, or leadership workflows.

Start with a whirlwind introduction to the fundamentals of generative AI. Participants will explore how ChatGPT can streamline essential public health tasks such as drafting/reviewing grant proposals, preparing agendas, and enhancing

communications—all without requiring advanced technical skills. By addressing common administrative and programmatic challenges, attendees will learn about some of ChatGPT's core features: natural language processing, content generation, information synthesis, problem-solving, and creative support.

Recognizing that innovation comes with responsibility, we will examine cautions for use of AI in Public Health settings. Ethical considerations like maintaining cultural responsiveness, safeguarding data privacy, and mitigating bias will be explored. The session will reinforce the critical importance of transparency and critical thinking as we move into an era where partners and community are already relying on AI powered content.

To bridge theory and practice, participants are invited to a "chat-along" activity, applying generative AI to a public health case study. This activity offers a structured, hands-on opportunity to experiment with ChatGPT and assess its practical use in solving complex public health challenges. Attendees will also receive a curated list of ChatGPT prompts that have been field-tested in public health settings and tailored for programmatic and administrative work. Session summary crafted with assistance from ChatGPT 4.0 and reviewed and approved by Nina Lindsey and Carmen Batista.

Data infrastructure and informatics | Data as a Driver of Action: Leveraging Wastewater Monitoring for H5 Detection and Response
Learning Objectives: Explain the roles of wastewater testing in monitoring public health during emergencies.
Evaluate the effectiveness of a data-driven approach in responding to public health emergencies.
Identify key stakeholders involved in wastewater surveillance and how their collaboration contributes to effective public health responses.

Session Summary: Wastewater surveillance has emerged as a new public health tool, unlocking possibilities for early disease detection by identifying the presence of infectious pathogen particles in untreated wastewater. As a part of state-wide

surveillance, the Arizona Department of Health Services(ADHS) conducts wastewater monitoring within Arizona for multiple pathogen targets, including the H5 subtype associated with the novel Avian influenza A. Exposure to animals infected with H5N1 significantly increases the risk of human infections and represents a major public health concern. In Arizona, the first major outbreak of H5N1 was reported in Pinal county by a commercial poultry farm on November 11th. The first detections of H5 in wastewater samples occurred shortly after; one detection in Coconino county in Flagstaff(11/14/2024), followed by two detections in Maricopa county in Tempe(11/19/2024) and Phoenix(11/24/2024). Subsequent detections quickly followed. ADHS, county, and laboratory partners collaborated closely with wastewater utilities to identify potential sources of H5 contributing to the sewer system. Specifically, the Translational Genomics Research Institute was able to perform cytochrome oxidase testing on the positive H5 wastewater samples to confirm the presence or absence of chicken/wild bird and cow DNA. DNA from wild bird/chickens was identified in selected wastewater samples. With the insights from this testing and consistent positive wastewater detections, Coconino and Maricopa counties issued a press release to inform the general public and enhance community awareness about H5 detections in wastewater. The integration of wastewater testing, combined with the strong collaboration between state, county, city, and utility partners, underscored the effectiveness of a coordinated, data-driven approach in responding to public health emergencies, such as H5.

Public Health workforce | Building a Sustainable Mental Healthcare Workforce in Arizona: Provider Perspectives and Solutions

Learning Objectives: Describe key factors contributing to Arizona's mental healthcare provider shortage.

Identify at least three actionable strategies that can improve recruitment, retention, and professional development in Arizona's mental healthcare workforce.

Differentiate the workforce barriers faced by providers in rural versus metropolitan areas of Arizona.

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Session Summary: With Arizona facing a severe shortage of mental healthcare providers in the coming decade, infrastructure that can provide a sustainable workforce is needed to address this challenge. While several studies have used data-driven and informatics-based approaches to investigate the barriers involved in accessing mental healthcare services, less attention has been given to understanding the provider shortage from the perspective of those within the field. This study uses thematic analysis to explore the factors driving this shortage through the perspectives of mental healthcare professionals in Arizona. This study uses primary data obtained from in-depth interviews with 15 different Arizona-based providers across 10 different mental healthcare professions, representing a range of roles and leadership levels within the field.

Through a systematic coding process, we identified recurring themes related to workforce recruitment and retention, workplace culture, professional development gaps, and the impact of cultural competency on mental healthcare services. Participants highlighted several challenges they have faced that impact workforce and system capacity, such as high turnover rates, limited mentorship opportunities, and disparities in training that impact provider efficacy and job satisfaction. Findings from this analysis illustrate how Arizona mental health professionals face significant barriers to job satisfaction, career growth, and burnout, exacerbated by funding limitations and resource constraints.

This session will examine these findings and discuss actionable recommendations for improving workforce development in Arizona's mental healthcare system, shaped directly by the firsthand experiences of providers actively delivering care across the state. This session will also explore challenges providers face in rural and metropolitan regions of Arizona, highlighting strategies to reduce regional disparities.

Public Health workforce | Building the Future: Strengthening the Public Health Workforce by Reimaging Graduate Education
Learning Objectives: 1) Understand the importance of reimagining graduate education to support public health workforce development

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2) Discuss strategies to equip students with the skills to address global and local challenges through a community-centered approach.

Session Summary: The rapid growth in public health curricular programs has the potential to help diversify the public health workforce, establish pathways for training, and ultimately rebuild the state and local public health workforce that is currently inadequate to meet basic public health needs. However, addressing these workforce challenges requires more than just expanding educational opportunities. Attracting students to public sector roles demands meaningful educational experiences, strong community-engaged partnerships, and transferable skills that inspire and prepare them for impactful careers. There is a significant gap in social science training when it comes to preparing students for community engaged partnerships and addressing critical public health issues such as climate change, pandemics, structural violence, and health disparities. Too often, students are expected to develop these approaches on the job, which can lead to harm and limit the effectiveness of their work.

This session will bring together leading academic and public sector experts for a discussion on innovative strategies and actionable solutions for building an adaptable public health workforce focusing on: 1) Strengthening Alliances: Ethical frameworks that prioritize long-term trust-building, equitable power dynamics, and community-led research agendas; 2) Developing Convergence Research Methods: Ability to work with community partners to establish and assess priorities for research including participatory action research and institutional analysis; and 3) Reimagining Graduate Education: Providing advanced training in epistemic humility, trauma-informed knowledge co-creation and co-production, transdisciplinarity, and team science.

Closing Panel 3:40 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

> **Commented [1]:** Is there a need to list this if there aren't any summaries that follow?