



health justice plan 2016

CLINICIANS are called to care for people of all walks of life; in fact, it is their ethical duty. Many migrant clinicians choose their line of work out of a sense of moral responsibility to a population that is often overlooked. We at Migrant Clinicians Network, in representing these clinicians, are tasked to speak up for the health and well-being of mobile underserved populations, who are often voiceless and marginalized -- but whose health matters. We understand that it is a moral imperative to speak out in the face of injustice; it is our ethical duty to serve the underserved.

THE MOBILE POOR, who are moving in search of work and a better life, need a voice. When federal policy is being considered, when a pattern of disease of unknown origin appears in underserved populations, when important programs are being undercut, MCN serves to help the mobile poor ensure that their health needs are heard. To this end, MCN is committed to effectively advancing health justice for the mobile poor.

OUR ADVOCACY and education priority is for all people to have high quality, affordable health care and a safe and healthy workplace. We endeavor to assure the human rights of people as they move, whether moving across borders or within borders. Advancement in these areas address the social determinants of health and improve health outcomes for the mobile poor of this country and around the world.

WE RECOGNIZE there are many advocacy efforts aimed at achieving the very goals to which we at MCN are committed. Each year, MCN's top advocacy priorities ensure that we dedicate our time and resources to the most urgent, effective, and/or impactful advocacy works. The following outlines MCN's advocacy priorities for 2016.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND IMMIGRATION



Worldwide Refugee Health Access

More people have been forced to leave their homes than ever before. Migrant Clinicians Network recognizes that as migration increases worldwide, more health services need to be aimed at a population fleeing danger, on the move, and in a new land, both in the US and around the world. In 2016, MCN will work for the health justice of refugees around the world.



Border Surge Detainee Rights

Children should not be incarcerated for their immigration status. MCN will continue to advocate for the hundreds of women and children who have experienced mental distress and other health issues while being held in family detention facilities.



Border Health Access

MCN will continue to track the health needs of mothers with children and unaccompanied minors who crossed the US-Mexico border in 2014 during the “border surge” as well as the thousands who have continued to arrive since then, by advocating for their rights both at the border and at their final destination in the US. Across the US, clinicians need to understand that these recent migrants require special attention to the pre-, peri- and post-migration trauma they may have endured.



Climate Change & Environmental Degradation

The effects of climate change hurt underserved populations the hardest. Extreme weather events, hotter days, and other changing conditions constitute a public health crisis, resulting in a myriad of issues for low-income migrant workers including increased heat stroke for outdoor workers, lack of access to potable water, shifts in availability of work, and changes in ranges of infectious diseases. Climate change also increases worldwide displacement, and will be a growing challenge for migration services in the coming years.

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE



Ag Worker Access 2020

In conjunction with the National Center for Farmworker Health and the National Association of Community Health Centers, MCN will continue to advocate for health centers to identify migratory and seasonal agricultural worker patients within their patient population and also in the communities that they serve. Identifying this population will allow health centers to more appropriately care for migratory agricultural workers and their families. The Ag Worker Access 2020's goal is to increase access to quality care for agricultural workers in health centers over the next five years, and serve at least two million by 2020.



Women's Health

Migrant women face significant challenges in accessing health care related to the specific needs of women, like reproductive health, pregnancy and childbirth, sexual and intimate partner violence, and cancers that disproportionately affect women, including cervical and breast cancer. MCN looks forward to continuing work in promoting access to reproductive health care, including through our second annual Women's Leadership Conference in Austin, Texas.



Global Plans

In an age of ongoing global infectious disease outbreaks, MCN will continue to support action to increase health access to adequate treatment for marginalized populations within our borders and worldwide.



Medicaid Expansion

Nineteen states have yet to choose to expand Medicaid coverage, shutting out millions of people from accessing health care. MCN will advocate for expansion and demonstrate the benefits of expansion for underserved populations.

WORKER HEALTH & SAFETY



WPS Implementation & Enforcement

In 2015, the Environmental Protection Agency released its revised and strengthened Worker Protection Standard to protect pesticide applicators, farmworkers, and their families from pesticide exposure. Now, we shift our focus toward the critical implementation and enforcement of these new rules through partnerships with the EPA and other organizations focused on health justice and agricultural worker rights.



Chronic Kidney Disease of Nontraditional Causes

MCN recognizes that CKDnT is potentially an emerging issue. The disease has reached epidemic proportions, concentrated among young men from Mexico and Central America, who make up a sizable portion of the US migrant worker population. MCN will continue to assess its prevalence in the US and look at disease progression and treatment availability among migrant and other underserved populations.



Pesticide Exposure

Agricultural workers and their families experience the most exposure to pesticides out of any population group. MCN is committed to sustainable improvements in health and environmental justice for farmworkers communities in order to reduce the risk of pesticide exposure. MCN will continue to advocate for bilingual labels, protection from pesticide drift, and diagnostic tools for clinicians.



Food System Policy

MCN will advocate for agricultural workers' rights to a safe and healthy workplace through food system policy and by supporting innovations to improve agricultural worker health and wellbeing.