

California Health Improvement Project (CHIP) Physician Assistants Putting Prevention into Practice

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Problem Statement and Underlying Causes

PROBLEM: As Physician Assistants (PAs) strive to deliver high quality patient-centered care, there is an increasing emphasis on comparative effectiveness research (CER) and patient-centered outcomes research (PCOR). However, there is lack of infrastructure for the dissemination and practice based implementation of information gained from patient CER and PCOR for PAs and for other clinical disciplines.

CAUSES:

- Many primary care providers are unfamiliar with the resources to stay updated on the current recommendations for preventive services and how to order tests with proper coding to maximize coverage
- Knowledge of the recommendations is essential for offering appropriate preventive services and helping patients make informed decisions
- Patients rely on information they receive via friends, family and media unless specific and accurate information is provided to them through their healthcare provider

Ill-defined screening and counseling



Patient-centered, evidence-based preventive screening and counseling

Project Description

This Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)-funded project is three pronged and includes (1) web-based training sessions hosted by LA Net to train key PAs throughout the state; (2) community-based educational sessions throughout the state led by trained PAs who become the community resource for preventive screening and counseling (3) development and launch of a web-based Performance Improvement Continuing Medical Education module for prevention available on the American Academy of Physician Assistant's Learning Central website for use by PAs nationwide.

Goal and Objectives

Goal: 50% of PAs practicing in primary care offices in CA will demonstrate a clear understanding of recommended preventive services as defined by post-testing after training by the end of 2015.

Output-oriented Objective:

1. Engage 15 primary care physician assistants in an educational discussion sessions regarding USPSTF A & B recommendations for non-pregnant adults using 26 bi-monthly interactive video sessions by June, 2014 in order for them to become a resource in their community.
2. Develop and execute 3 community-based educational sessions throughout the state by January, 2015.
3. Develop and launch a web-based Performance Improvement CME module for prevention available on the Physician Assistant Lead Learning Management System for PAs nationwide by July, 2015.

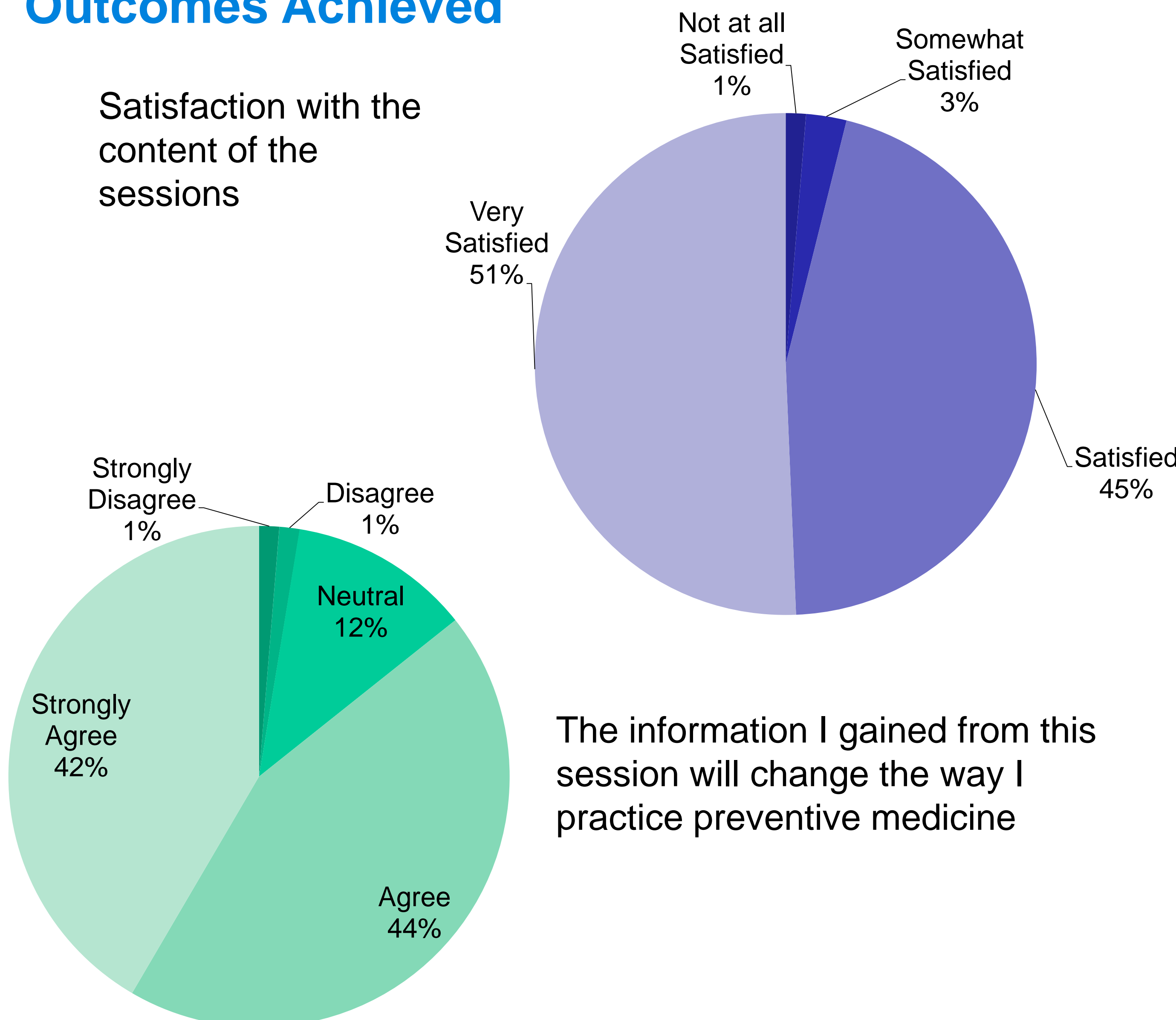
Outcome-oriented Objective: PAs in primary care develop a clear understanding of the current essential benefits for preventive services as defined by PPACA for non-pregnant adults, and understand resources to access as updates are made.

Outputs & Outcomes

Outputs Achieved



Outcomes Achieved



We have completed phase 1 and we have been collecting data after each session to acquire cumulative data on the effectiveness of the learning sessions. Outcomes expressed are for the 16 on-line interactive sessions completed.

Lessons Learned

Much of the success is owed to the great engagement and teamwork from a national membership organization and a community-based practice-based research network

PAs are engaged and interested in learning more about preventive services and are willing and interested in taking on a clinical leadership role

It is important to keep up with and incorporate the trends and changes in the profession. PA national certification now includes Performance Improvement CME and we are adjusting our curriculum to include appropriate activities.

We would have led the sessions better initially had we used specific techniques to engage members. This eventually was done, but only in the later half of the sessions.

About My Organization

The American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) is the national professional society representing more than 84,000 certified PAs. With 56 Chapters, and 25 specialty organizations, AAPA has a huge reach to PAs across the nation. AAPA has a long tradition of educating its members. As part the current operating plan, AAPA is actively engaged in implementing innovative strategies for educating and supporting PAs in practice based quality improvement; and is actively working to implement a learning management system (LMS).

LA Net is a community-based organization incubating in Community Partners focused on health disparities reduction in Southern California. Established in 2002 with funding from the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). L.A. Net provides support to CHCs, NPOs and private primary care practices serving low income communities.

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