

A Discussion of the Current Definition of Migrant Used in Migrant/Community Health Centers

On many occasions, MCN staff has heard from colleagues in the area of migrant health that the official legislated definition of a Migrant or Seasonal Farmworker used in HRSA funded health centers is not representative of the population now being served in many M/CHCs. In order to have a clearer understanding of the opinions held by our colleagues, MCN initiated a 3 week-long survey to gather information **from individuals providing direct health services** about the possible strengths or weaknesses of the definition of *migrant* currently in use.

This was an internet based survey, notification of which went out to staff at 136 Migrant Health Centers and other sites serving migrants. MCN received 101 responses to this survey, 76% of those responding work in Migrant and/or Community Health Centers.

When asked how many patients seen in clinic meet the HRSA definition of “migrant” 20.8% of respondents said that “Most” or “Many” of their patients fall into this category. Another 22.8% said that most of their patients fit the definition. Thirty two percent said that “Some” meet the criteria, and another 22.8% said that “Few” patients met the HRSA definition of “migrant”.

Respondents were then presented with the following statement: “In many communities, there are individuals who are *mobile* but do not meet the criteria for *migratory agricultural worker* as defined by HRSA. Such *mobile* individuals can include (but are not limited to): day laborers who are intermittently unemployed and move to find work; day workers who are employed but mobile due to homelessness; and unemployed and mobile, such as elderly or disabled individuals who move to live with various family members.” When asked how many of their patients fit into this definition of mobile, 14.9% said “Most” or “Many”, 30.7% said “Some” and 49% said “Few”.

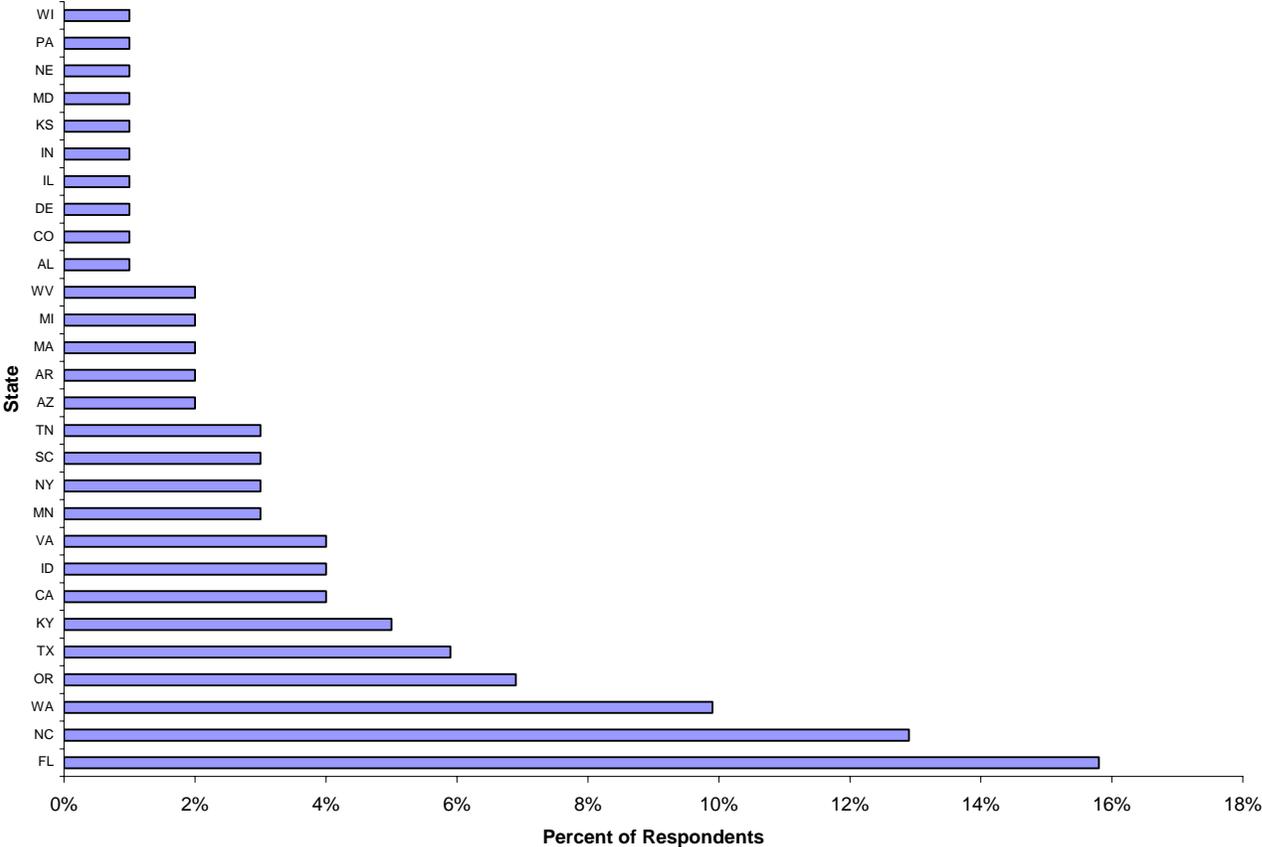
Of those who do see mobile patients that do not fit the HRSA definition, the following highlights the type of work being done in order of reported frequency: Construction or Landscaping, Service industry (hotels, restaurants, sanitation, child care), Canning and processing produce, Meat processing (poultry, beef, pork), Factory work, Unemployed, Dairy, Cotton Gin labor, Horse racing/track workers, Forest Service, Smoke Jumper, Ski Area, River Guide, Transport/Driving, Domestic labor, Roofing, Waitress, Day labor, Pick brush, Crab workers, and the Fern industry.

Of those who responded, 32.7% said that HRSA’s definition does not limit their ability to provide services. Thirty three percent said it “somewhat” limits their ability to provide services, and 10.9% said their services are limited “a lot”. Twenty two percent were unsure.

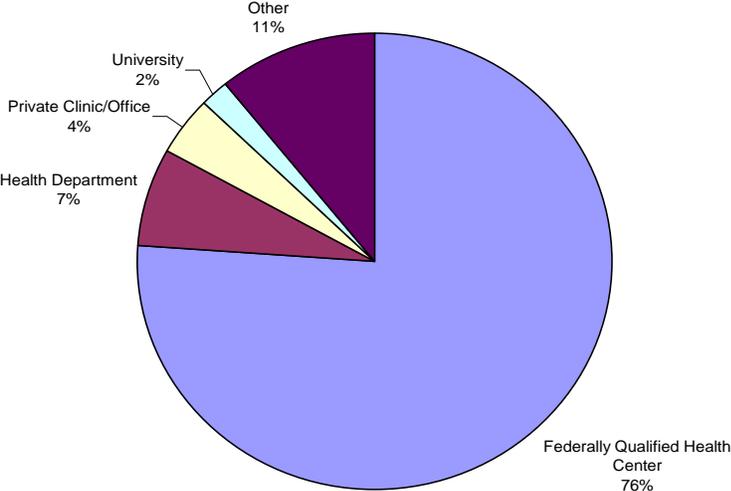
Respondents gave the following answers when asked if HRSA was to expand the definition of migrant, how would an expanded definition increase their ability to provide services (respondents could pick more than one): increase funding opportunities (57.4%); increase identification and reporting of migrants seen (55.4%); increase ability to cover the costs of health care services (49.5%); increase number of migrants seen at clinic (44.6%); it would not increase our ability to provide services (8.9%).

Survey Results

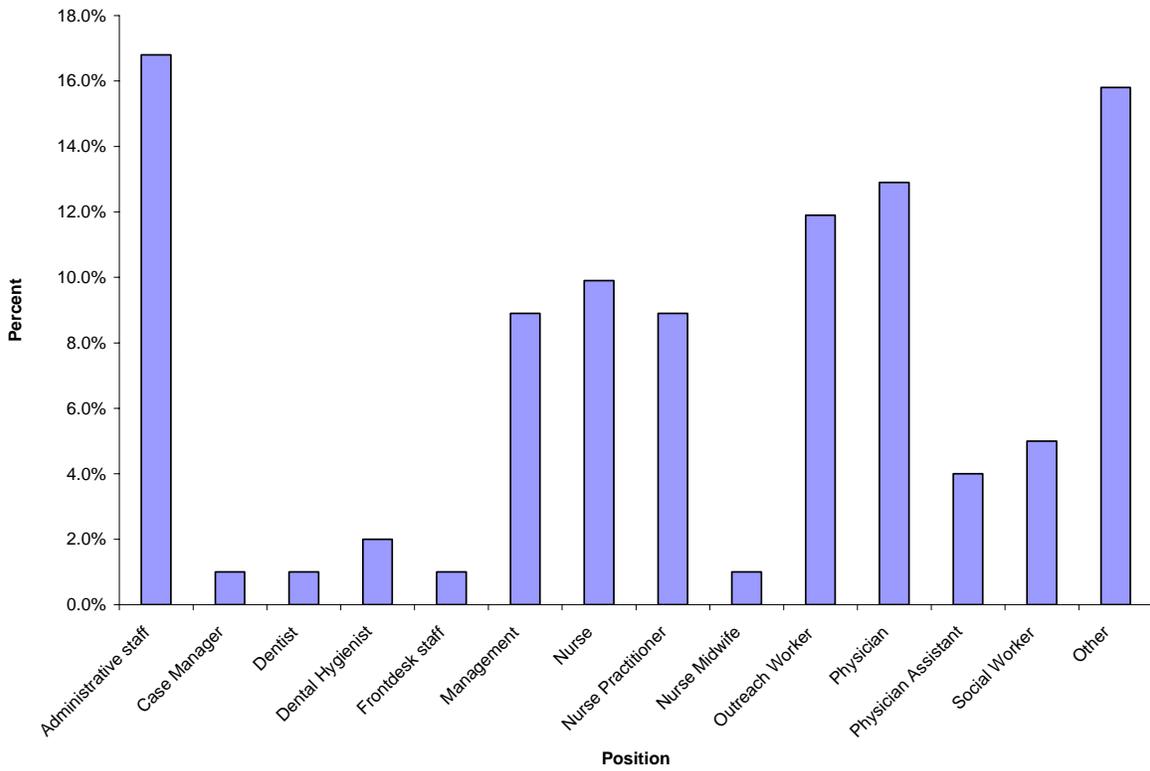
1. In what state do you work?



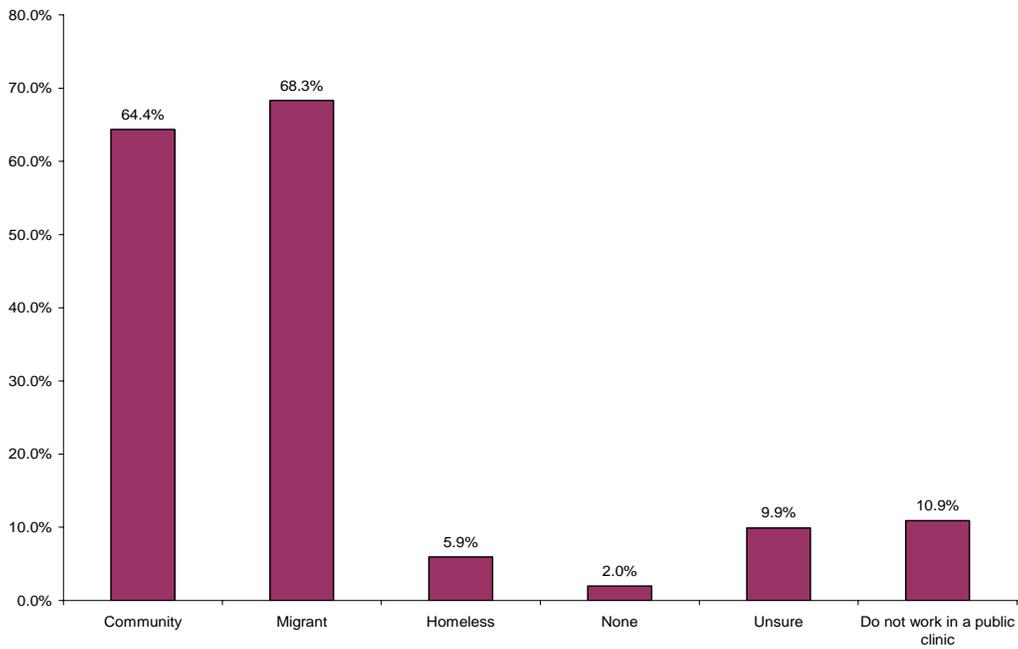
2. In what type of setting do you work?



3. What is your position at work?

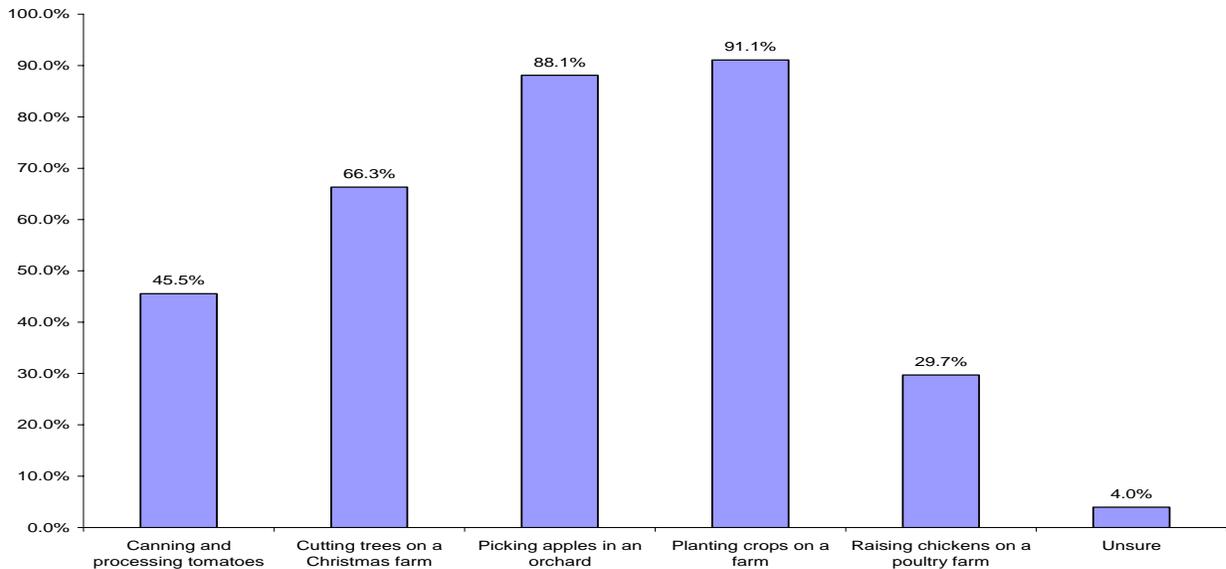


4. If you work in a public clinic, to the best of your knowledge, which types of federal funding does your clinic receive? (Respondents could pick more than one)

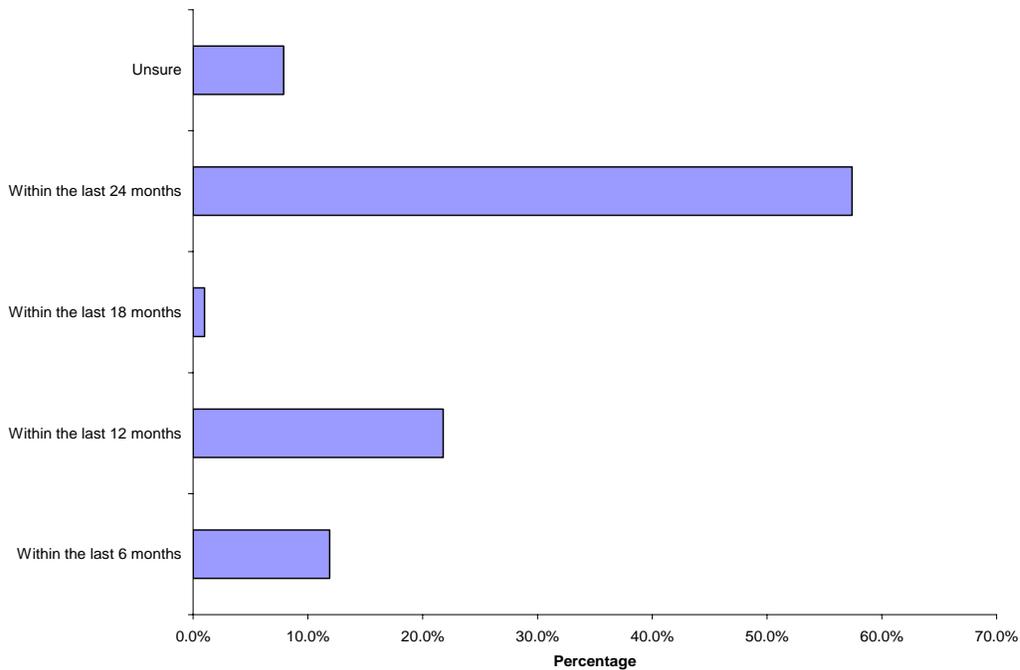


The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) uses the definition of *migratory agricultural worker* that comes from the Public Health Services Act (section 330 g). The next two questions are intended to survey current knowledge about the official HRSA definition of migrant.

5. To the best of your knowledge, which type of workers listed below, would be covered by that definition? (Respondents could pick more than one)



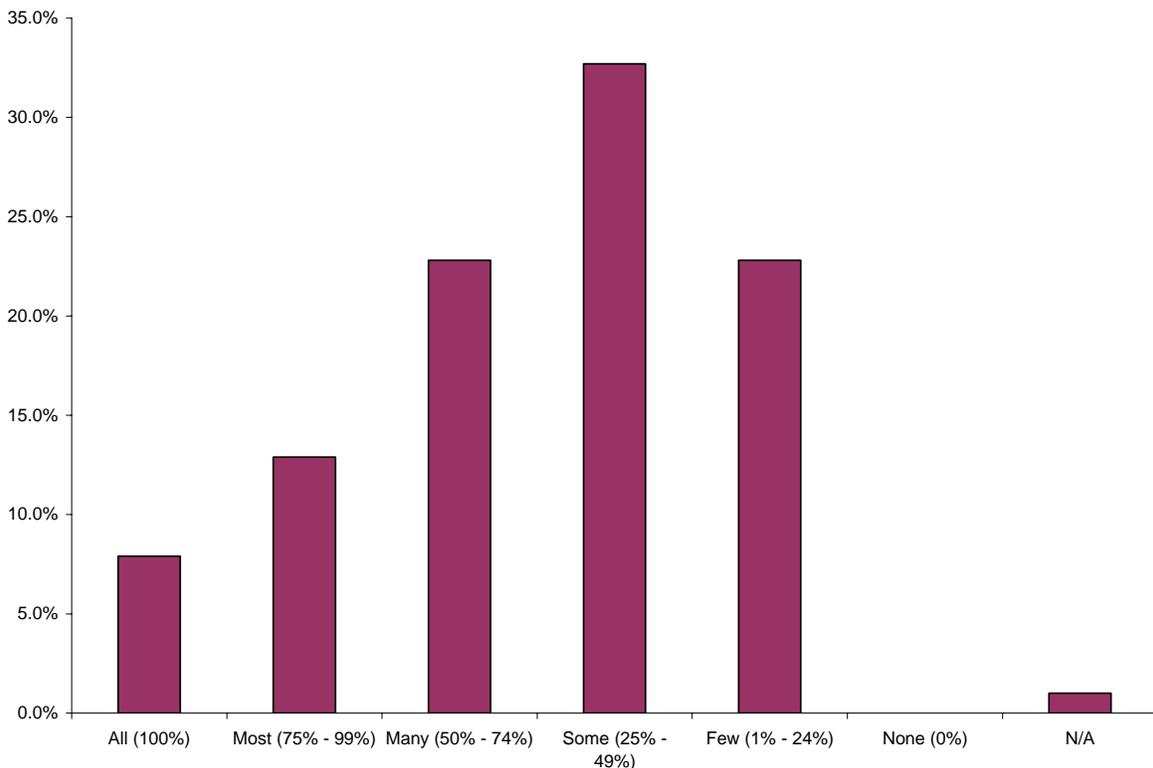
6. To the best of your knowledge, how recently does someone have to have done the applicable type of work to be covered by the definition?



The Public Health Services Act stipulates that:

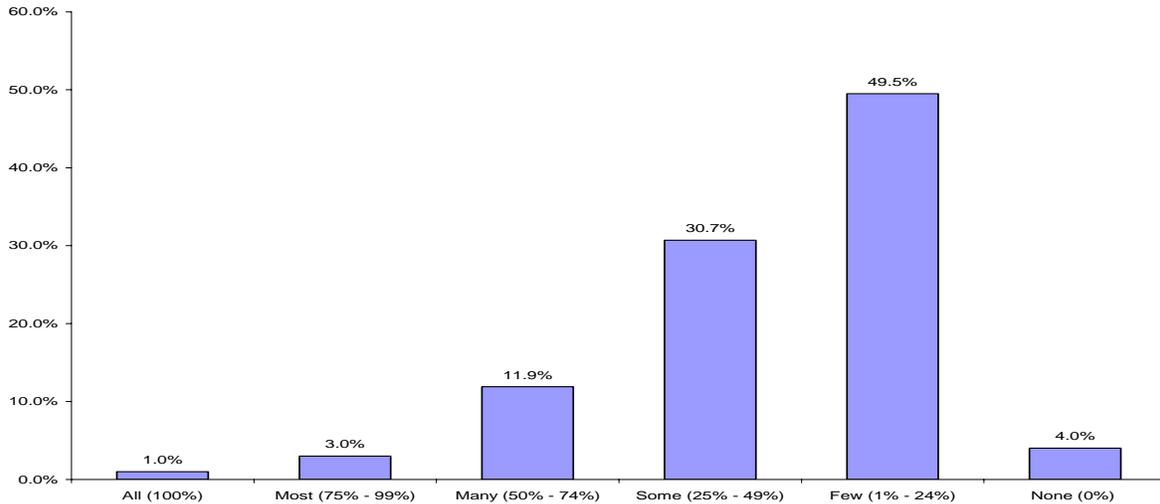
- **The term *migratory agricultural worker* means an individual whose principal employment is in agriculture, who has been so employed within the last 24 months, and who establishes for the purposes of such employment a temporary abode.**
- **The term *agriculture* means farming in all its branches, including:**
 - **cultivation and tillage of the soil**
 - **the production, cultivation, growing and harvesting of any commodity grown on, in, or as an adjunct to or part of a commodity grown in or on, the land; and**
 - **any practice (including preparation and processing for market and delivery to storage or to market or to carriers for transportation to market) performed by a farmer or on a farm incident to or in conjunction with an activity described in clause (ii).**

7. Approximately how many patients seen in your clinic meet the above criteria?

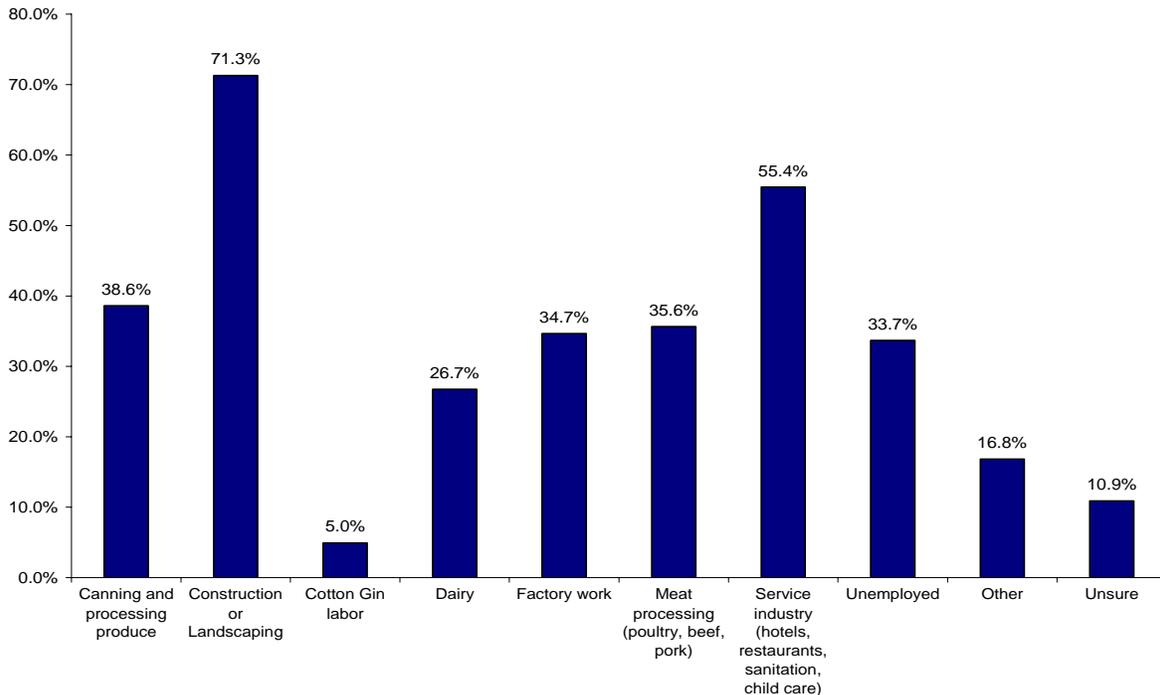


In many communities, there are individuals who are *mobile* but do not meet the criteria for *migratory agricultural worker* as defined by HRSA. Such *mobile* individuals can include (but are not limited to): day laborers who are intermittently unemployed and move to find work; day workers who are employed but mobile due to homelessness; and unemployed and mobile, such as elderly or disabled individuals who move to live with various family members.

8. Based on the above description approximately how many of the patients seen in your clinic are mobile but do not fall under the HRSA definition of migrant agricultural worker?

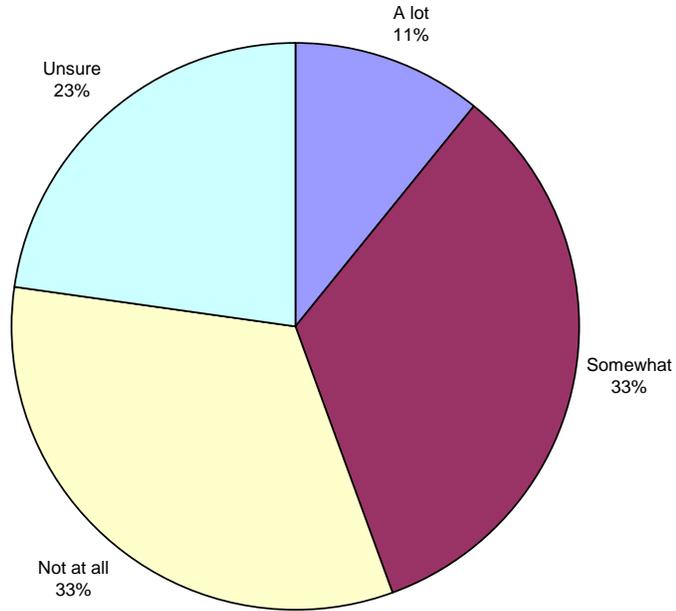


9. If there are mobile patients seen at your clinic, what types of work are they doing? (Respondents could check more than one)

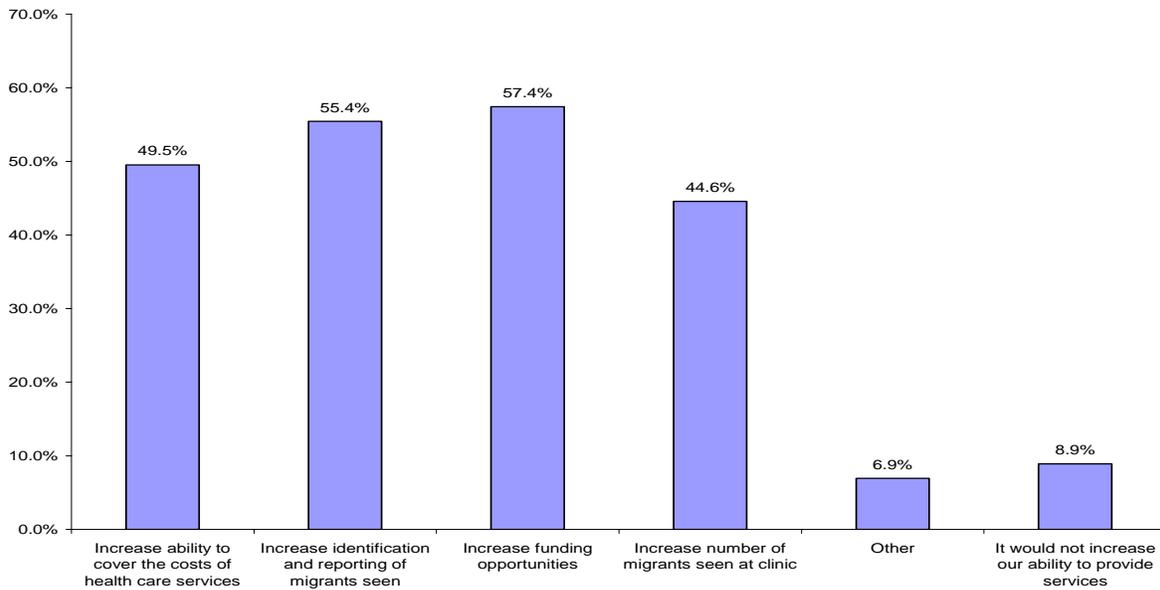


“Other” Responses Included: Horse racing/track workers (6 responses), Forest Service, Smoke Jumper, Ski Area, River Guide, Transport/Driving, Domestic labor, Roofing, Waitress, Day labor, Pick brush, Crab workers, Fern industry

10. Does the HRSA definition of migratory agricultural worker (as defined previously) limit your clinic's ability to provide adequate services in your community?



11. If HRSA was to expand the definition of migrant, how would an expanded definition increase your ability to provide services (Respondents could pick more than one)?



12. If HRSA was to expand the definition of migrant, which occupation(s) would you want to include? (Respondents could pick more than one)

