

# Documenting the Work and Health Experiences of Low-Wage Workers in Community Health Centers in South Los Angeles



## HOST ORGANIZATION:



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## OHIP INTERNS:

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# Background



Low-wage workers at increased risk for workplace injury/illness



Community health centers could serve important role in providing care, referrals, support.

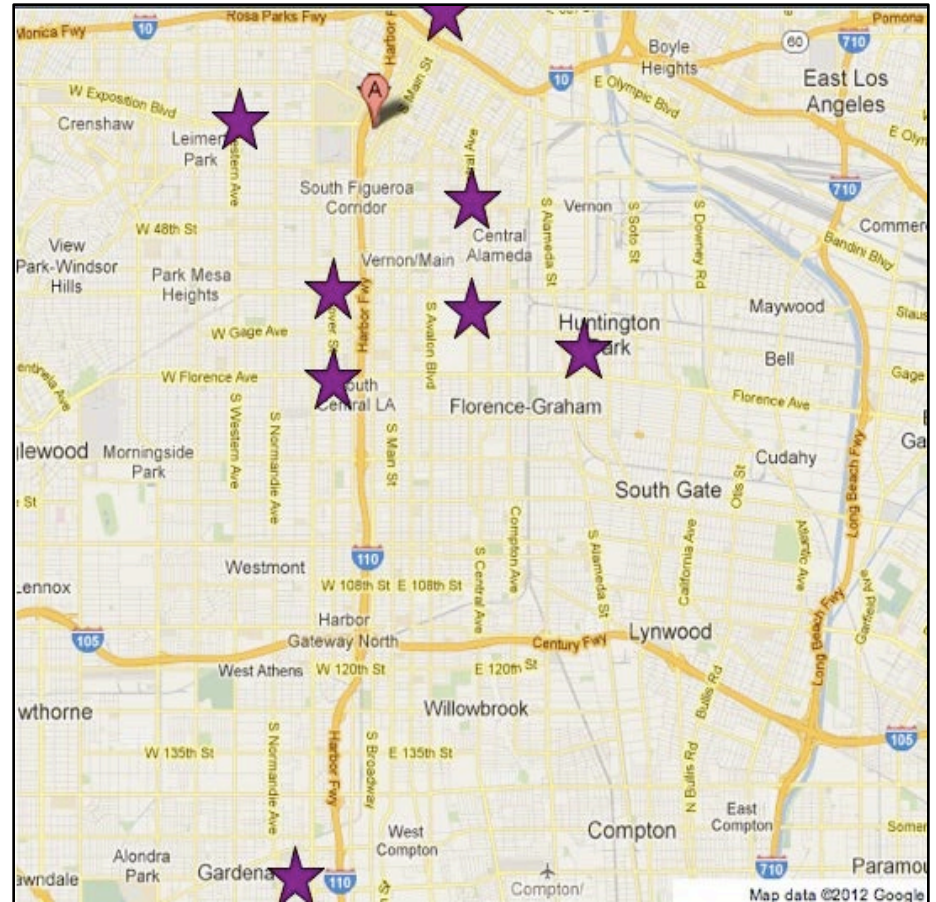


Community health centers lack capacity to adequately address OSH concerns of patients.

# The Coalition- SCCHC



EISNER PEDIATRIC & FAMILY MEDICAL CENTER



# Objectives



Document the work and health experiences of low-wage workers in South LA.

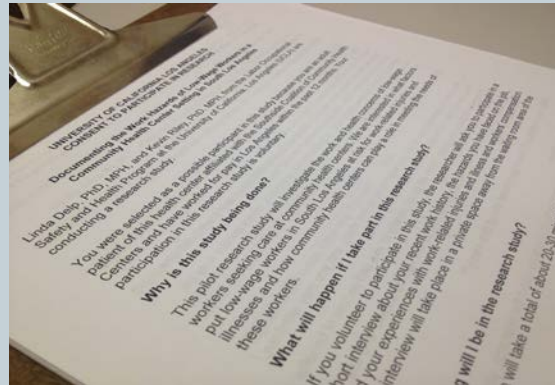
Develop recommendations for CHC's.

Create education materials on specific work-related health and safety topics.

# Methods



-Interviews  
with clinic  
patients



-Interviews  
with  
promotoras



-Identify best  
practices



# Accomplishments



10 clinic  
interview sites

124 patient  
interviews

12 promotora  
interviews

1 promotora  
focus group

Presentation to  
SCCHC Board of  
Directors



# Patient Demographics



<b>Gender</b>	48% → Male 52% → Female
<b>Language</b>	36% → English 64% → Spanish
<b>Ethnicity</b>	77% → Latino 18% → African American 5% → White/Other
<b>Nativity/Legal Status</b>	30% → U.S. Born Citizen 35% → Foreign born authorized 35% → Foreign born unauthorized

- **Union → 8.8%**

# Patient Occupations





# Patient Interview Results:



<b>Identified dangers at work</b> (Chemicals, Fumes, Dust, Noises, Stressors)	<b>83%</b>
<b>Sick/Injured on the job</b>	<b>49 %</b>
<b>Given info about health &amp; safety hazards in workplace and how to protect themselves</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>Have heard or know about Cal/OSHA</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Have heard or know about Workers Comp.</b>	<b>38%</b>

# Common Themes



- **Stress**
  - Production quotas
  - Long work hours
  - Financial worries
  - No job security
- **Underreporting of work injuries/illnesses**
  - Fear
  - Lack of knowledge on workers rights
  - Apathy from Employer
- **Education**
  - Worker rights

# Worker Testimonies



*“Information is very important in the area of work, how to put on a back brace, how to utilize worker’s compensation.”*

*-Housekeeper, South Central Family Center*

*“I went to school here, I finished high school. I learned that I have rights and I knew that I wasn’t being treated justly. But necessity makes you put up with it, even if you know its wrong. Jobs are not easy to come by.”*

*-Female patient, St. John’s Clinic-Compton*



# Challenges



- **Building trust with patients**
  - explain goals of study
  - ensure patient confidentiality
- **Poor Recognition of Work place Hazards**
  - assumption of high risk as workplace norm

# Successes



- **Achieved 124 patient interviews**
- **Raised Awareness through conversations**
- **Greater understanding of priorities and demands of CHC's**
- **Provided useful material to clinics and promotoras**
- **Greater understanding of occupational health and safety issues in South LA**

# Recommendations



- **Disseminate OSH materials to community-health fairs, clinic waiting rooms**
- **Educational workshops**
- **Provide additional OSH training for promotoras**
- **Build referral relationships between clinics, worker centers and other supporting agencies**



# Reflections



# Acknowledgements



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