

Advocacy for Sexual and Gender Minorities in Rural and Urban Communities – Going Beyond the White Coat to Promote LGBTQIA+ Wellness and Health

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Introduction

- The aim of this project was to add an advocacy component to the curriculum of the Sexual and Gender Minorities (SGM) Population Health Clerkship (PHC).
- The PHC is a two week course in the Fall semester in which second year medical and nursing students learn about social and health inequities of a specific population.
- The PHC runs during the last two weeks of October and has about 12 students.
- Additionally, the sites that students visited were expanded to encompass rural sites in the Western portion of the Commonwealth in addition to the urban areas of Boston and Worcester that have traditionally been part of the PHC to give the students a more geographically holistic view of problems faced by LGBTQIA+ patients.

Advocacy Curriculum

- Previously, the SGM PHC focused on introducing students to public health and community resources for LGBTQIA+ individuals.
- The goal of this curricular addition is to shape a class of future medical professionals who are able to promote change for their LGBTQIA+ patients within and outside of their communities by working with community organizations and gubernatorial agencies.
- Through meetings with community organizations, students will learn how to promote initiatives that aim to minimize disparities plaguing the LGBTQIA+ community both within and outside of medicine.
- Sessions added include:
 - Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth
 - The Department of Public Health, LGBT Health Sector
 - Sexual and Gender Minorities Health Equity Initiative, Harvard Medical School

Western Massachusetts Sites

- In past SGM PHC courses, the community organizations that students interacted with were concentrated in urban locations such as Worcester and Boston.
- In order to show students the unique plights of LGBTQIA+ folks in rural populations (as well as shared ones with their urban counterparts), multiple Western Massachusetts sites have been added to the SGM PHC.
- By physically travelling to these sites in the Western part of Commonwealth, students will learn how these communities have adapted to solve the needs of the LGBTQIA+ residents and ways in which social and health needs of this population still remain to be resolved.
- Sessions added include:
 - The Stonewall Center, Amherst
 - Cooley Dickinson Hospital, Northampton
 - Tapestry Health, Greenfield

Returning Community Sessions

- LGBT Elder Network
- Transgender Care with Dr. Stuart Chipkin
- AIDS Project Worcester
- SWAGLY
- Family Health Center, Worcester
- LGBT Asylum Task Force
- Planned Parenthood of Central Massachusetts
- Safe Homes
- Fenway Health

Acknowledgements

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 - PHC Faculty Supervisor
- Heather-Lyn Haley, PhD
 - PHC Coordinator
- A special thanks to the each of the communities and organizations involved in the PHC – their generosity and collaboration help create a generation of compassionate and empathetic medical professionals.

Table 1. Subject Overview of the Population Health Clerkship

Week	Topics Covered
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical Care for Transgender Patients Social Care for LGBTQIA+ Elders Advocacy for Sexual and Gender Minority Youth Care for Queer and Gender Expansive Asylum Seekers Reproductive Health for LGBTQIA+ Communities
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Advocacy for Sexual and Gender Minorities Tackling LGBTQIA+ Health in Rural Environments Substance Abuse in Queer and Gender Expansive Communities Creating Continuity of Care for LGTBQIA+ Folks

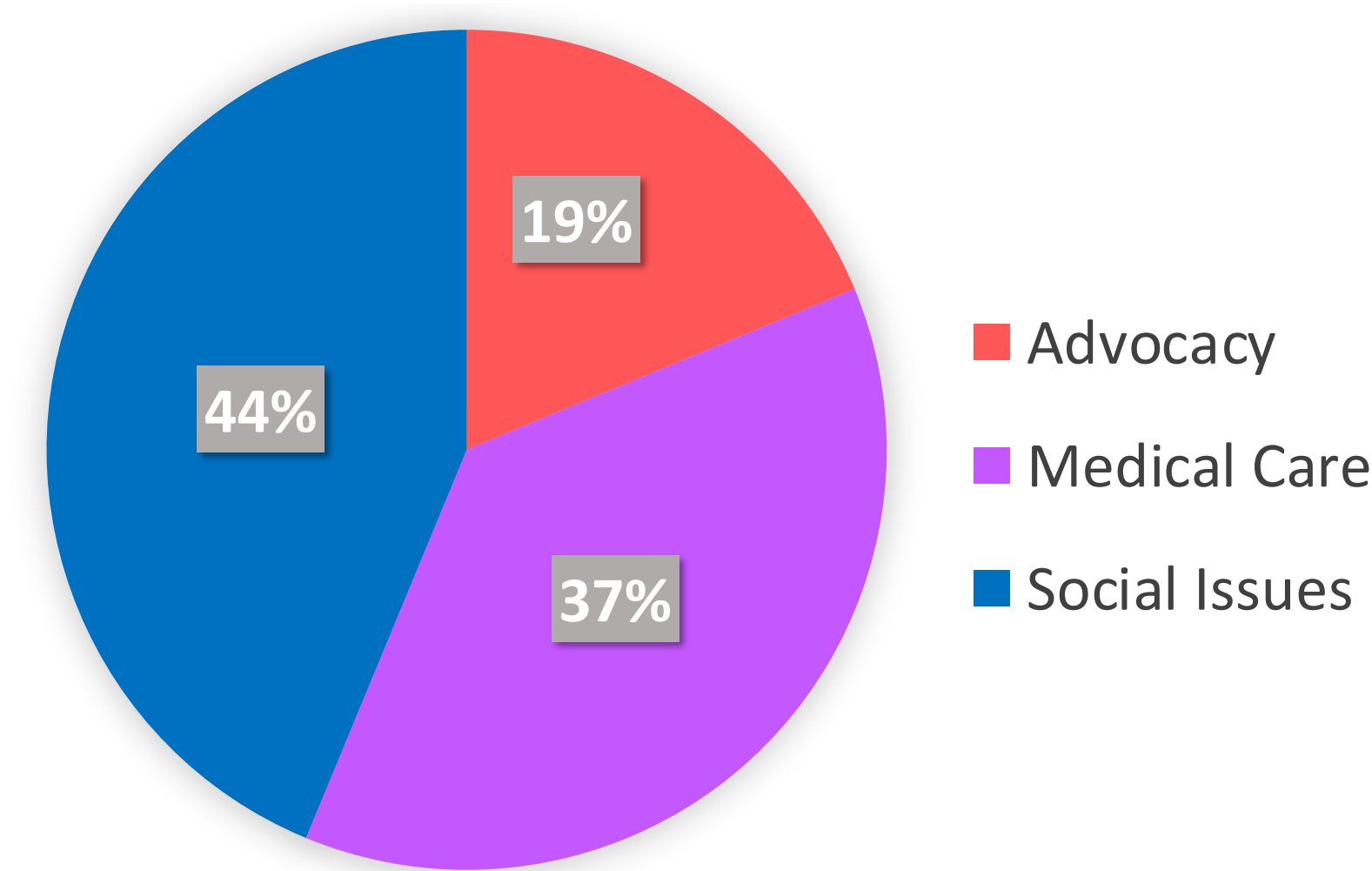


Figure 1. Breakdown of Site/Organization Type

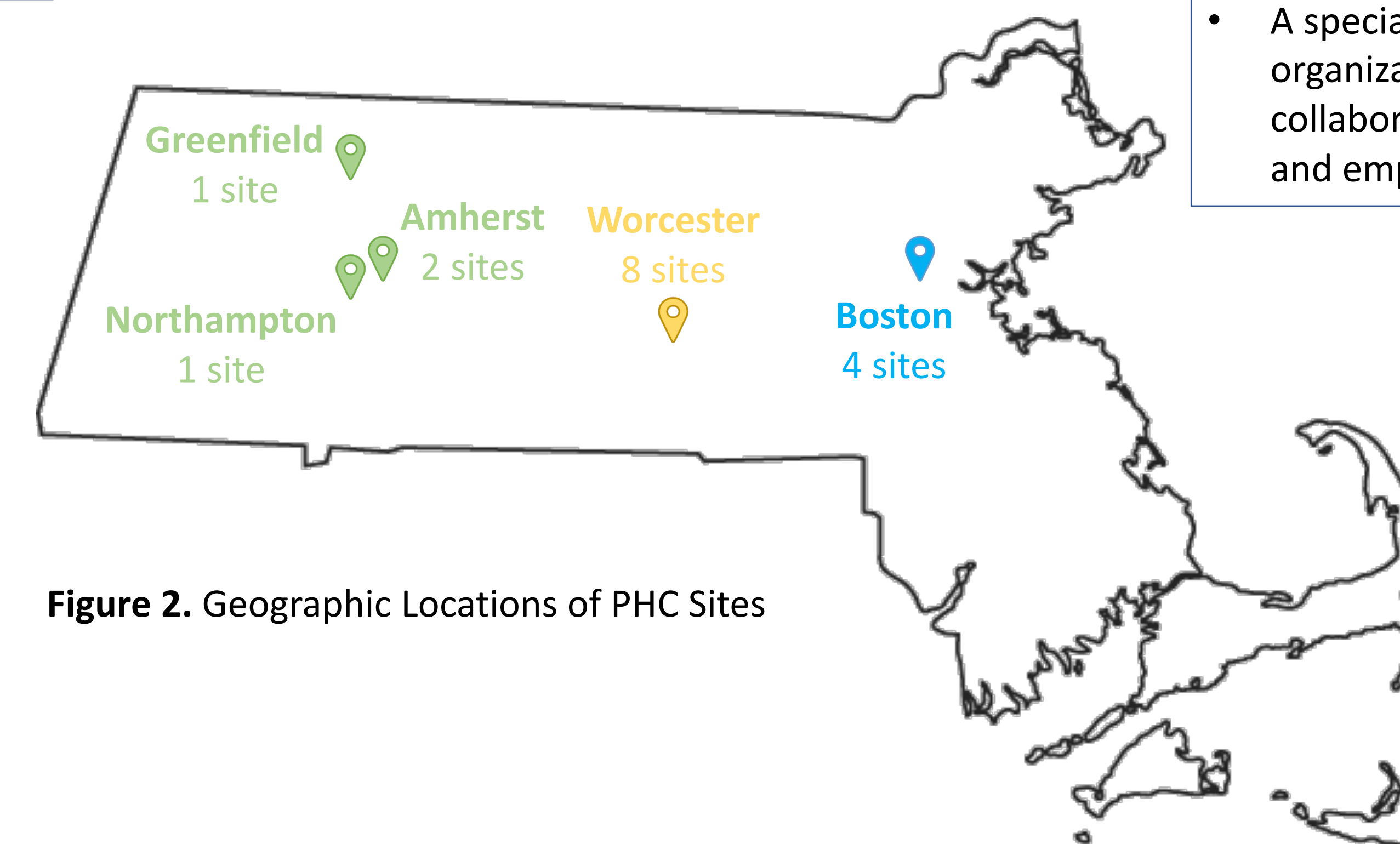


Figure 2. Geographic Locations of PHC Sites

