

# Documenting and Assessing Complex University/Industry Partnerships

The perspectives of industry partners.

# Centers of Excellence

In 2005, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities established centers of excellence in health care, manufacturing and engineering, and information security at four state universities and 18 community and technical colleges. These centers offer state-of-the-art programs, practical research and connections with K-12 schools and business and industry to help local economies thrive and position Minnesota for a strong future.

# HealthForce Minnesota

Transforming Education. Advancing Practice

HealthForce Minnesota will join together the expertise and resources of education, healthcare providers and community members to:

- Provide the Minnesota healthcare industry with a well-trained, flexible and diverse workforce;
- Create ongoing capacity to transform health science education and delivery; and
- Position Minnesota as a global leader in healthcare education, practice, research and innovation.

# Industry Perceptions of HealthForce Minnesota

# Survey Methodology

- Survey of 18 employers and industry representatives involved in [HealthForce](#).
- 18% of the organizations were not previously involved with any of the academic partners.
- Semi-structured telephone survey, fall 2007, with mix of closed and open-ended questions.
- Conducted by Wilder Research; slides prepared by Ellen Shelton.

# Expected Benefits of Participation

Percent who regard each of the following as “critical.”

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 78% | More employees available                               |
| 50% | Better qualified employees available                   |
| 39% | Opportunities to influence higher education curriculum |
| 22% | Upgrade skills of current workforce                    |

# How likely is it that these benefits will accrue?

Percent who regard each of the following as “very likely” or “somewhat likely:”

83%	More potential employees available
95%	Better qualified employees available
78%	Opportunities to influence higher education curriculum
94%	Upgrade skills of current workforce

# Types of involvement in HealthForce Activities

- 78% Center work groups/committee(s)  
» Average 14 hrs/mo
- 6% Helped with a booth/presentation  
or other outreach
- 28% Partner on a grant-funded project
- 17% Serve on other committees or  
initiatives

# Perceptions of the Quality of HealthForce Partnerships

Percent who “agree” or “strongly agree”

88% The new ideas and connections you make at meetings are worth the extra time the meetings take.

61% The benefits your organization gets out of its involvement with the Center are equitable considering what it puts into the Center.

# Perceptions of the Quality of HealthForce Partnerships *(continued)*

67% There are policies and standard practices in place in MnSCU that limit the Center's ability to innovate.

62% Resources are fairly shared among the Center's partners and activities.

# Perceptions of the Quality of HealthForce Partnerships *(continued)*

- 81% Information about the Center's activities is adequately shared with the business partners.
- 75% Information is collected to identify successful innovations and is reported back to participants elsewhere in the Center.

# Perceptions of the Quality of HealthForce Partnerships *(continued)*

46%      The partners all agree on a clear and consistent mission for the Center.

6%      The Center is well-known among programs and businesses that do not participate in it.

# Perceptions of the Quality of HealthForce Partnerships *(continued)*

- 45% You are well aware of what other participating organizations bring to and need from the Center.
- 83% The Center has facilitated new partnerships, programming, and service.

# Motivation to Continue Participation

“What one thing most makes you feel that it is worth your time and effort to participate in the Center?” *(open-ended question, coded themes)*

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 22% | Networking; the people I meet                                |
| 17% | Improvements to the workforce                                |
| 6%  | Involvement with or influence on the higher education system |
| 22% | Opportunities or potential offered by the Center             |
| 6%  | Improving awareness of or publicity for the industry         |
| 17% | Innovation; it is generating new ideas                       |

# Perceptions of Progress

“In general, do you feel that **HealthForce Minnesota** has made adequate progress up to this point?”

67%      Yes

28%      No

6%      Don't know

## Examples given to illustrate progress during open-ended questions

- 33% Building relationships with industry
- 0% Marketing or visibility for the industry and/or the Center
- 33% Mention of organizational steps (leadership, hiring, structure)
- 33% Mention of specific projects or programs the Center has done

# Lessons Learned

In discussions during the program evaluation site visits, academic and industry partners both provided a number of lessons learned about what makes the partnerships work well.

- **Communication** particularly in initial face-to-face meetings to enable the development of solid relationships.
- **The right mix of partners that** contribute something that is of value to the other partners
- **A clear mission that is agreed by all** with aligned goals and activities
- **Spreading the involvement** both upward to policy-making and resource-controlling levels of participating organizations *and* outward to operational levels.

Source: Wilder Research, Centers of Excellence Program Evaluation, 2008

**Respondents who agree or strongly agree with the following statements about the Centers of Excellence.**

	HealthForce (n = 12-18)		All Centers of Excellence (n=47-66)	
The new ideas and connections you make at the meetings are worth the extra time the meetings take.	15	88%	53	83%
Information about the Center's activities is adequately shared with the business partners.	13	81%	45	71%
Information is collected to identify successful innovations and is reported back to participants elsewhere in the Center.	12	75%	39	70%
The benefits your organization gets out of its involvement with the Center are equitable considering what its puts into the Center.	11	61%	34	68%
Resources are fairly shared among the Center's partners and activities.	8	62%	29	62%
There are policies and standard practices in place that limit the Center's ability to innovate.	8	67%	20	40%

Source: Wilder Research, Centers of Excellence Program Evaluation, 2008