LEND is an interdisciplinary leadership training program providing graduate-level training in maternal and child health education in neurodevelopmental and related disabilities.

There are significant disparities in child health status and outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Future clinicians and future leaders in systems and policymaking require the knowledge, skills and training to eliminate these disparities.

LEND addresses the urgent need to increase the number & diversity of leaders and professionals to address this need.

**Objectives**

This evaluation examines (i) trainee completion of the WIHD LEND program, (ii) the percentage of program graduates who later have leadership positions in the field, (iii) the percentage of program graduates working in the MCH field; (iv) the percentage of candidates from diverse backgrounds.

Data will be used to demonstrate program effectiveness to enhance program curriculum and trainee recruitment and seek support from policy makers for continuation of funds.

**Methods**

- This was a longitudinal quantitative study using the LEND/UCEDD long-term trainee survey.
- It included 796 LEND trainees who completed the WIHD-LEND training program since 1992.
- The rate of diversity increased over time from 20% to 33%.
- About 29% identified as having a disability or being a parent and/or family member of someone with a disability.

**Community Partners**

Focus group with former LEND trainees. Questions about experiences during and after LEND.

Common themes → Valuable experience; Multidisciplinary setting and experience of self advocates/family specialists; Suggestions for curriculum and greater opportunities for alumni conx

**Results**

- **Achievements** (N = 294)
  - Leadership (N = 86)
  - Interdisciplinary Collaborations (29%)
  - Program Dev. & Implementation (51%)
  - Clinical/Field Experience (16%)

- **Confidence in Leadership Positions (51%)**
  - Advocacy for Self and Others (30%)
  - None; Full Program Satisfaction (16%)

- **Advocacy, Support & Outreach (41%)**
  - Advocacy for Self and Others (30%)
  - Continue Interdisciplinary Collaborations (12.6%)

- **For more information regarding policy initiatives...**

**Discussion**

LEND has had a positive impact on trainees and promoted better health outcomes among MCH population.

Participants Highlighted:

“All these experiences have been the best professional satisfaction. The LEND Program made me grow as a health professional.”

“My training and education in neuro-developmental disabilities and leadership was instrumental in my choices and opportunities in my current career path.”

Limitations: Fewer responses over time; Further clarification of questions Survey does not consider all advocacy efforts, e.g. family/self-advocates.