

Digest 16 – March 2026

Theme: Navigating Professional Conferences

How Fellows Can Navigate Professional Conferences for Optimal Networking and Learning

Cohort Discussion:

Looking ahead to the 2026 NYSPHC Summit and the NYS Public Health Partnership Conference, a dialogue between mentors and mentees on navigating a professional conference can be beneficial to Fellows and help them plan how to fully engage in these opportunities. Planning ahead and reflecting on professional goals before attending a conference can help ensure that Fellows get the most out of the experience. In upcoming cohort discussions, mentors can share advice based on their own experience at professional conferences and provide insight into opportunities that may be beneficial to Fellows' professional growth.

Some strategies to discuss include:

- **Studying the Agenda:** Review sessions, speakers, and workshops in advance to create a personalized schedule.
- **Utilizing Technology:** Download the conference app to review maps, session details, and speaker information.
- **Pre-Event Networking:** Reach out to speakers or attendees through the conference app or on LinkedIn to arrange meetings or coffee chats.
- **Packing Efficiently:** Bring comfortable shoes, portable chargers, business cards, mobile phone, notebook, and snacks to ensure that personal needs are met.
- **Following Up:** Follow up after the event by organizing notes and key learnings and reaching out to new contacts.

In your next mentorship cohort meeting, spend time discussing the questions below:

- What are your top two or three goals for this conference (e.g., networking, learning, job searching)?
- Which sessions, speakers, or workshops best align with your current professional development goals?
- What is your "elevator pitch" for introducing yourself to new people?
- How do you plan to balance attending sessions, networking, and visiting exhibitor booths?

Some additional resource links to support your discussion are listed below:

- [Oregon State University: Maximizing Your Conference Experience](#)
- [2026 NYSPHC Annual Summit and NYS Public Health Partnership Conference website](#)