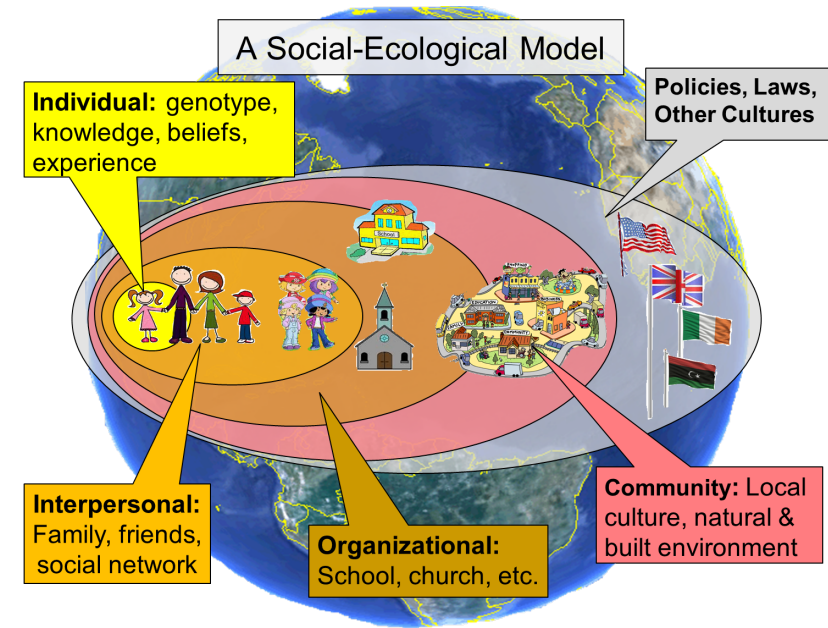


Community Health Workers: Key for improving health in Louisiana

Ashley Wennerstrom, PhD, MPH
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Persistent Health Inequities

- COVID-19
- Maternal mortality
- Diabetes
- Asthma
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Heart disease
- Cancer mortality (late stage detection)
- Lead exposure



Social Determinants of Health

Economic Stability	Neighborhood and Physical Environment	Education	Food	Community and Social Context	Health Care
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employment• Income• Expenses• Debt• Medical Bills• Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing• Transportation• Safety• Parks & playgrounds• Walkability• ZIP code & geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Literacy• Language• Early Childhood Education• Vocational Training• Higher Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hunger• Access to Healthy Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social integration• Social isolation• Support Systems• Community Engagement• Discrimination• Stress• Incarceration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health coverage• Provider availability• Linguistic and Cultural Competency• Quality of Care

What's your definition of a CHW?



CHW Definition

- American Public Health Association CHW section:
- “A Community Health Worker (CHW) is a frontline public health worker who is a **trusted member of and/or has an unusually close understanding of the community served**. This trusting relationship enables the CHW to serve as a liaison/link/intermediary between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and **cultural competence** of service delivery...

CHW Definition

CHWs also build individual and community capacity by increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency through a range of activities:

- Outreach
- Community education
- Informal counseling
- Social support
- Advocacy²

CHW Job Titles

CHW is an umbrella term!

- Community health representatives/liaisons/advisers
- *Promotores de salud*
- Outreach workers/specialists
- Community health navigators
- Community case managers
- Community organizers
- And many more!



Where do CHWs work?

- State & local health departments
 - New CDC 2109 grant
- Health clinics (e.g. FQHCs)
- Hospitals
- Community-based organizations
- Universities
- Schools & Community Centers

CHW Roles and Skills

CHW Core Consensus Project Roles³

1. Cultural mediation
2. Providing culturally appropriate health education
3. Care coordination, case management, and system navigation
4. Providing coaching and social support
5. Advocating for individual and community needs

CHW Roles, continued

6. Building individual and community capacity
7. Providing direct services
8. Implementing individual and community assessments
9. Conducting outreach
10. Participating in evaluation and research³

Evidence for CHWs

Improved Chronic Disease Management

- Improve outcomes for patients with chronic conditions
- Enhance disease prevention ^{4,5}
- Based on extensive evidence, Community Preventive Services Task Force⁶ recommends CHWs for:
 - CVD prevention
 - Diabetes management
 - Diabetes prevention



Reduced Hospitalizations

- Individualized Management for Patient-Centered Targets (IMPACT) Model⁷
 - 3 primary care settings
 - 2+ chronic diseases, high poverty zip code
 - RCT
 - Goal setting + CHW support
 - Reduced hospitalizations
 - Improved patient experience of care

ROI/Reduced Health Care Costs

- New Mexico Managed Care⁸
 - Lowered costs in ED, inpatient, and non-narcotics and narcotics prescriptions
- Arkansas Community Connector Program⁹
 - 23.8% average reduction in annual Medicaid spending per participant
- Denver Health Outreach program¹⁰
 - ROI of 1:2.28
- Boston Community Asthma Initiative¹¹
 - ROI of 1:1.37
- East Texas ED initiative¹²
 - ROI ranging from 1:3 to more than 1:15
- CMMI Health Care Innovation Awards, CHW were only intervention to significantly reduce costs: \$138 per beneficiary per quarter¹³

Louisiana CHW Workforce Coalition

- Initially created by LA Legislature in 2019
 - Provide recommendations on expanding CHW workforce
 - **Financing CHW positions through Medicaid**
 - Developing standards for CHW training
 - Many other issues
- [LA CHW Workforce Study Committee Report](#)

Proposed CHW Service Description

1. Health promotion and coaching for individuals
2. Care planning with a beneficiary's healthcare team as part of a team-based, person-centered approach
3. Health system navigation and resource coordination services



Eligible Population

One or more of the following:

- Diagnosis of one or more chronic health (including behavioral health) conditions;
- Documented or suspected unmet health-related social need; or
- Pregnancy.



Provider Qualifications

- Has completed state-recognized training curriculum approved by the Louisiana CHW Workforce Coalition
- Substitution of a training may be granted to an individual who has provided 3,000 hours of documented work experience as a CHW
- The supervising physician, NP, or PA must maintain documentation of CHW qualifications



Reimbursement

- Will be based on published salary information, including benefits, and administrative overhead (salary: \$42,000 from the Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- This is to ensure appropriate reimbursement so that CHWs are sustainable
- Individual and group services will be allowed



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