Effective Community Health Worker Programs: Critical Inputs for Supportive Systems

December 14, 2021

This project was completed with support from the Commonwealth Fund and the Community Health Acceleration Partnership (CHAP).
Today’s Speakers

**Senator Bob Casey**
(D-PA)
United States Senate

**Peggy O’Kane**
President
NCQA

**Martha Chavis**
CEO/President
Camden Area Health Education Center (AHEC)

**Cheryl Garfield**
Community Health Worker
Penn Center for Community Health Workers

**Brea Burke**
Community Health Worker
Ballad Health

**Chethan Bacchireddy, MD**
Chief Medical Officer
Virginia Medicaid
Remarks from Peggy O’Kane
Overview

Community health workers (CHWs) are essential members of the health workforce

- Evidence shows that CHWs can improve outcomes and reduce costs
- Federal, state & local interest in CHW services is growing
- Recent unprecedented investment in CHW workforce
What does it mean to be a community health worker?
Process Review & Project Update

Collect Input

Elicit Concepts and Themes

1. Project Team filters input based on standards criteria

2. Steering Committee reviews and comments

Draft White Paper

Considering for Potential Future Work

Summary of Input

- Listening Sessions
- Steering Committee
- Environmental Scan
Critical Inputs for Successful CHW Programs

Overview of Concepts

- Recruitment & Hiring of CHWs
- Training for CHWs
- Supervision for CHWs
- Support for CHWs
- CHW Scope of Work
- CHW Workforce Development
- Health/Social Care Team Integration
- Organizational Data Systems & Engagement
- Program Sustainability
Critical Inputs for Successful CHW Programs

Concepts & Themes

Recruitment & Hiring of CHWs
- CHW qualities and qualifications
- Recruitment process
- Hiring process

Training for CHWs
- Initial/pre-service training
- Continuous training process
- General training methods, content and evaluation

Supervision for CHWs
- Supervisor qualities and qualifications
- Supervisor role
- Structure and process of supervision
- Training, support and evaluation of supervisor
Critical Inputs for Successful CHW Programs

Concepts & Themes

Support for CHWs

- Job aids, resources and supplies
- Documentation tools
- Safety and emergency protocols and resources
- Peer support
- Community health worker well-being

CHW Scope of Work

- CHW role and responsibilities
- Flexible, person-centered work practices and manageable caseload

CHW Workforce Development

- Performance assessment
- Career ladder
- Pay and incentives, awards and recognition
Critical Inputs for Successful CHW Programs

Concepts & Themes

**Health/Social Care Team Integration**
- Define and recognize CHW role with team members
- Organizational commitment and process to link health and social care

**Organizational Data Systems & Engagement**
- Data systems for quality improvement
- Community health worker engagement engagement
- Community-centered care and engagement

**Program Sustainability**
- Program evaluation and improvement
- Financial sustainability
An intensive CHW support intervention (six-month engagement with per patient cost of $1700) achieved a $2.47 return on every dollar invested.

Principles for Building Standards

- Honor CHW self-determination & leadership
- Authentic CHW engagement
- Allow sufficient time
- Representation of diverse stakeholders
Summary

• CHW-led interventions can lead to *improved outcomes*

• There has been *growing interest* in employing CHWs and *unprecedented investment* in the CHW workforce

• Using a *participatory, consensus driven process* we identified critical inputs for successful CHW programs

• *Sustainable financing* is needed to ensure successful CHW programs

• Incorporate principles for building standards such as *honoring CHW self-determination* into future efforts