

Community Health Workers Equal:



SAVINGS

reduced medical costs

- = Reduce health care costs and emergency room use
- = Improve health and well being of population
- = Appropriate care at the appropriate time
 - = *In Buffalo County, Nebraska, Community Health Workers have demonstrated a 5:1 return on investment and cost savings of \$3.5 million for the hospital in two years.*



SYSTEM

improved health outcomes

- = Reduce burden on physicians
- = Integrate with health team and community referral system
- = Improve population health
 - = *In New Mexico, 1% of Medicaid participants were consuming 20% of state support. Community Health Workers reduced the use of resources, resulting in cost savings of over \$2 million.*



SUPPORT

improved access to care

- = Increase access to health and social service needs
- = Infuse social services and medical needs to provide holistic care
- = Improve the humanity in health care
 - = *In Arkansas, Community Health Workers helped the elderly population address housing, medical, and social needs to keep them in their own homes rather than assisted living or nursing homes, resulting in cost savings over \$2.6 million for tax payers from 2005-2008.*

Nebraska should adopt the following recommendations:

1. Nebraska needs to adopt the American Public Health Association's (APHA) definition of Community Health Workers as an umbrella job classification for the varied job descriptions already being used throughout the state of Nebraska (See I, II below).
2. Nebraska needs to adopt a certification training program for Community Health Workers, which includes standardized core competencies and a scope of practice based upon consistent themes found in national research (See III below).
3. Nebraska needs to adopt a standardized payer system which incorporates Community Health Workers into the Center for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS) and commercial payers. The Community Health Worker should be included as a part of the integrated health care team to help reduce the cost of health care and improve health outcomes.

I. APHA Community Health Worker Definition:

A Community Health Worker 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 Community Health Worker to serve as a liaison/link/intermediary between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and community capacity by increasing health knowledge and self-efficiency through a range of activities such as outreach, community education, informal counseling, social support, and advocacy.

II. Job Titles Under Community Health Worker Umbrella:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| = Adult Case Manager | = Health Communicator | = Outreach Advocate |
| = Case Coordinator | = Health Educator | = Outreach Case Manager |
| = Community Coordinator | = Health Insurance Counselor | = Outreach Worker |
| = Community Health Educator | = HIV Peer Advocate | = Parent Liaison |
| = Community Organizer | = HIV Prevention Coordinator | = Parent Aide |
| = Community Outreach Worker | = Home Care Worker | = Parole Advocate |
| = Community Social Worker | = Home Visitor | = Peer Advocate |
| = Family Advocate | = Home-Based Clinician | = Promotor(a) |
| = Family Education Coordinator | = Intake Specialist | = Promotora(a) de Salud |
| = Family Support Worker | = Maternal & Child Health Case Manager | = Street Outreach Worker |
| = Health Advisor | = Medical Representative | = Veterans Advocate |
| = Health Advocate | = Mental Health Worker | = Youth Development Specialist |
| = Health Assistant | = Nutrition Educator | = Youth Worker |

III. Core Competencies:

- = Communication skills
- = Interpersonal skills
- = Capacity building skills
- = Advocacy skills
- = Organizational skills
- = Case management
- = Knowledge of specific health issues
- = Documentation

Scope of Practice:

- = Bridge cultural mediation between communities and health and human care systems
- = Provide culturally appropriate health education
- = Provide informal counseling and social support
- = Advocate for individual and community needs
- = Ensure people obtain services they need
- = Build individual and community capacity
- = Provide basic screening services.
- = Member of the care delivery system
- = Navigator
- = Screening and health education provider
- = Outreach/Enrollment/ informing agent
- = Organizer

For more information, contact:

Denise Zwiener

308-865-2280

dzwiener@bcchp.org

P.O. Box 1466, Kearney, Nebraska 68848

Online resources available at www.bcchp.org/chw

Powered by

Buffalo County
COMMUNITY PARTNERS
BUILDING A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY