

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS TRAINING COURSE

Developing and building the skills of new and seasoned Community Health Workers and other front-line professionals committed to advancing community health.

WHAT, EXACTLY, IS A COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER? Community Health Worker (CHW) is an umbrella term. Their job titles are as diverse as the communities, sites and roles in which CHWs serve. CHWs focus on improving individual and community health and health access. They forge connections where people live, learn, work, worship and heal, from the inner city to rural communities. (c3project.org)

Just as CHW job titles vary, so do the roles, populations of focus and specific responsibilities. However, roles tend to fall within the following:

1. Cultural mediation among individuals, communities, and health and social service systems
2. Providing culturally appropriate health education and information
3. Care coordination, case management, and system navigation
4. Providing coaching and social support
5. Advocating for individuals and communities
6. Building individual and community capacity
7. Providing direct service and education
8. Implementing individual and community assessments
9. Conducting outreach and program enrollment
10. Participating in evaluation and research

One thing is well known—CHWs are a rapidly growing component of the healthcare workforce in this country. The U.S. Department of Labor anticipates an 18% increase in the CHW workforce between 2016–2026, which is much faster than the average for all occupations. (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics)

WHAT IS DRIVING THE GROWTH OF THE CHW ROLE?

- Growing recognition that social determinants impact the health and well-being of individuals and communities
- Importance of reaching underserved, marginalized and cultural segments of communities to improve health status and reduce risk
- Enrollment of targeted populations into healthcare or social services programs
- Improving engagement of attributed populations
- Increasing the diversity of the healthcare team to best serve patients' physical, emotional and social needs

WHY IS CHW TRAINING IMPORTANT?

The educational background of CHWs is varied, ranging from high school to college level graduates. The CHW is often hired for their “soft skills” of relationship-building, cultural competence, and connection or experience with the target population. The complex knowledge and skills of healthcare engagement and navigation are new to most, as is the dynamic of operating within a team-based environment.

Most professions, particularly in healthcare, require training in order to achieve and/or maintain certification or licensure. As an emerging workforce, in many areas of the country there are limited or no requirements for CHWs. To ensure CHWs are skilled and effective in their work, payers, health systems and community-based organizations are increasingly seeking and investing in training CHWs. This training meets the national standard for Department of Labor Registered CHW Apprenticeship.

CHWs AID PANDEMIC RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

CHWs can play an important role and impact the response to COVID-19 and future pandemics. CHWs are typically responsible for connecting clients to needed services and supports. In addition, CHWs help assuage fear, cope with isolation, combat misinformation and provide accurate information (i.e. vaccines), minimize risks, and serve as contact tracers. Now, more than ever, CHWs are a workforce worth investing in.

CHW PROFESSIONAL SKILLS TRAINING

This skills-based course includes four sections covering the following topics:

Course 1: Introduction to Community Health Work

- Role and evolution of CHWs
- Introduction to public health, healthcare and health policy
- Health equity

Course 2: Core Competencies for Providing Direct Services

- Practicing cultural humility
- Guiding principles
- Conducting initial client interviews and home visiting
- Coaching
- Care management and care coordination

Course 3: Enhancing Professional Skills

- Stress management and self-care
- Conflict resolution
- Professional skills

Course 4: Applying Core Competencies to Key Health Issues

- Introduction to chronic conditions management
- Promoting healthy eating and active living
- Exploring trauma and supporting survivor recovery
- Health outreach

HOW IS THE TRAINING DELIVERED?

There are two ways to access this training course—through a U.S. Department of Labor approved Registered Apprenticeship or as a stand-alone course. The “classroom” training has the same content in either approach.

CHW PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

The CHW Professional Skills Training course is delivered in 23 weekly classes of 90-minute sessions (34.5 hours) that are accessible to individuals through an online real-time interactive learning environment facilitated by ICCC faculty and guest experts. Textbooks, articles, videos and other resources are included within the curriculum and students will complete an additional 3-5 hours of homework each week. Optional onsite education and networking events are scheduled periodically in Des Moines, Iowa. These sessions may be accessed virtually.

CHW REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

The CHW Professional Skills can also be accessed as part of a U.S. Department of Labor-approved Registered Apprenticeship program. While the training curriculum is the same with either option, there are additional requirements of the organizations enrolling a CHW through the Registered Apprenticeship program.

Pricing

CHW Professional Skills Training _____ \$1,500
per person

CHW Professional Skills Training plus
Registered Apprenticeship Program _____ \$2,500
per person

Accreditation

Successful completion of the CHW Professional Skills Training earns a non-credit certificate from the Des Moines Area Community College and a competency certificate from the Iowa Chronic Care Consortium.

Successful completion of the Professional Skills Training and the CHW Registered Apprenticeship results in the above-referenced certificates plus a national credential as a Community Health Worker that is issued by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Training Enrollment Dates

ICCC will coordinate class enrollment in the spring and fall of each year. Please visit our website at <http://iowaccc.com/community-health-worker-professional-skills-training/>

SPONSORSHIP

CHW Professional Skills Training is provided by the Iowa Chronic Care Consortium (ICCC), a not for profit, population health consulting, training and planning organization. Our mission is to build capacity with other organizations to deliver effective, personalized health improvement and chronic care strategies that reduce the burden of chronic conditions.

INFORMATION

To learn more about CHW Professional Skills Training, CHW Registered Apprenticeship, pricing or schedule of trainings, visit us at <http://iowaccc.com/community-health-worker-professional-skills-training/> or contact Deb Kazmerzak at deb.kazmerzak@iowaccc.com or 515.554.3788

