

Community Health Workers

CHWs are trusted health professionals

Community health workers (CHWs) are knowledgeable, trusted health professionals that share life experiences, cultural backgrounds, and languages with the communities they serve. They serve as a bridge between communities, health care, and health and human services.

CHWs are also known as **Community Health Representatives** in American Indian communities and **Promotoras de Salud** in Latino communities.



CHWs are a health equity workforce

CHWs empower individuals and communities for better health through a range of activities such as:

- Navigating the health care system.
- Providing culturally appropriate care.
- Reducing language barriers.
- Educating about early detection, prevention, and management of chronic conditions.
- Connecting people to resources such as transportation, food, and employment services.
- Providing health coaching, informal counseling, social support, and advocacy.

CHWs impact health outcomes, cost, and quality

CHWs can:

- Improve health outcomes
- Improve access to care and resources for underserved communities
- Improve quality and cultural sensitivity of health services
- Reduce health disparities
- Reduce health care costs

Services from CHWs have led to:



15% increase in access to care for rural populations in the United States.



92% of patients successfully managed their blood pressure after one year.



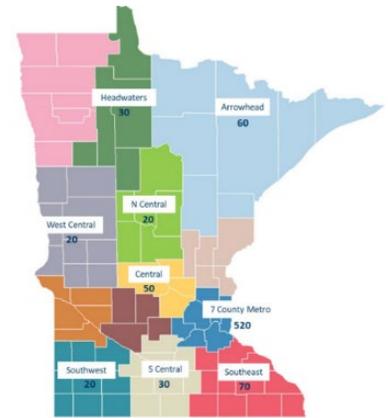
Lower rates of emergency care and hospitalizations.



\$2.47 back for every Medicaid dollar spent on CHW interventions.

CHWs work in many settings

- There are over **1300** CHW Certificate holders in Minnesota and **880** employed in rural and urban areas.
- CHW services are provided in **47 out of 87 counties** and over **11 settings** including community organizations, hospitals and clinics, public health agencies, and more.
- **CHWs work under many job titles** such as outreach worker, care guide, health care/patient navigator, peer educator, health educator, insurance navigator, and more.



CHWs are trained health professionals

Core training is offered through a 16 credit **CHW Certificate** at accredited post-secondary colleges and universities.

Courses can be taken in the classroom, online, or both. Cost per credit is determined by school.

- Minnesota West Community and Technical College, Worthington
- Normandale Community College, Bloomington
- Northwest Technical College, Bemidji
- Rochester Community and Technical College, Rochester
- St. Catherine University, St. Paul

Ongoing and on-the-job training is available from:

- [MDH Community Health Worker Training Courses \(health.state.mn.us/communities/commhealthworkers/courses.html\)](http://health.state.mn.us/communities/commhealthworkers/courses.html)
- [Apprenticeship – Minnesota Community Health Worker Alliance \(mnchwalliance.org/community-health-worker-training-program/apprenticeship/\)](http://mnchwalliance.org/community-health-worker-training-program/apprenticeship/)
- **Licensure and Certification:** No health care-related certification or licensure is required.

Billable services

CHW services are supported through grants, medical billing, and operational funding.

Medical billing and reimbursement are available through MN Medicaid and CMS Medicare for:

- Assessment and planning
- System navigation
- Facilitating access to resources
- Care coordination
- Health education
- Self-advocacy
- Social and emotional support
- Coaching or motivation to reach care plan goals

For more info on billing: [MN Department of Human Services Provider Manual \(https://tinyurl.com/4ub293x2\)](http://mn.gov/human-services-provider-manual/)

For more information

For more information or references, contact Community Health Worker Initiatives:

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www.health.state.mn.us/chw