

# Join the Coalition.

[www.FloridaCHW.org](http://www.FloridaCHW.org)

A number of agencies across Florida employ Community Health Workers (CHWs). Some examples include community health centers, research institutions, and community-based organizations, both rural and urban. But there has not been a focused statewide, multi-agency effort to promote the valuable work of CHWs. In 2011, the Florida Department of Health, conferring with the statewide cancer council C-CRAB (Cancer Control and Research Advisory Council) received a federal grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to develop and promote the work of CHWs in the state. This statewide group -- the Florida Community Health Worker Coalition -- includes five working groups devoted to Policy, Curriculum, Practice, Networking/Sustainability, and Research. The Florida CHW Coalition has convened two statewide summits, and is planning to develop regional meetings for educational and mentorship opportunities. We need your help, input, and participation! Joining the Coalition is easy and there is no charge.

Visit [www.FloridaCHW.org](http://www.FloridaCHW.org) today to contribute your skills and expertise to the effort!



## The Florida Community Health Worker Coalition

[www.FloridaCHW.org](http://www.FloridaCHW.org)



Bridging gaps and connecting communities for a healthier Florida.

# Community Health Workers

## Who are they?

A Community Health Worker (CHW) is a frontline 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. A CHW also builds individual and community capacity by increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency through a range of activities such as outreach, community education, social support and advocacy. Some activities performed by the CHW include providing information on available resources, providing social support, advocating for individuals and community health needs, and providing services such as first aid blood pressure and other kinds of screening. They may also collect data to help identify community health needs.

## How can they help?

Many CHW definitions, including the one approved for the 2010 Standard Occupational Code revisions<sup>1</sup>, are based on the seven roles of CHWs as identified in the 1998 National Community Health Advisor Study<sup>2</sup>.

These roles are:

- Bridging and providing cultural mediation between communities and health and social service systems
- Providing culturally appropriate health education and information
- Assuring people get health and social/economic services they need
- Providing informal counseling and social support
- Providing direct service, such as basic first aid and administering health screening tests
- Helping patients and community members navigate complex health and social service systems and understand and manage their conditions
- Conducting outreach to difficult-to-reach populations
- Coordinating care for people with specific diseases and conditions, such as diabetes, asthma, pregnancy, and HIV/AIDS
- Facilitating enrollment in health coverage programs
- Helping people address broader cultural, environmental, and lifestyle issues that impact their health

## What are the benefits?

- Improve health outcomes
- Address health and health care disparities
- Reduce health care costs by helping vulnerable and underserved populations access non-emergency services
- Navigate fragmented health and social services
- Help people make positive changes in their behaviors, and adhere to complicated treatment regimens<sup>4-9</sup>
- Reduce emergency department utilization<sup>10</sup> and hospitalizations

**27%** reduction in Medicaid expenses

Average savings of over **\$2,000** per patient per year

Return on investment of **\$2.28** per \$1.00 spent

Decreased per capita expenditures over **97%** in an asthma program<sup>11</sup>



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