Opportunities for State Public Health Agencies to Support and Integrate the CHW Workforce:

*Lessons from a multi-state learning community*

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Presenter disclosures

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(1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

No relationships to disclose
State Public Health and CHWs: Opportunity to improve community to clinical connections

- Downstream
  - Clinical and patient-focused healthcare services

- Improved Population Health

- Upstream
  - Public health and place-based services
General areas of state health agency support for CHW workforce development

Technical Assistance (TA) Plan

• State-specific TA

• Opportunities for cross-state learning

• Topic areas:
  • Certification
  • Strategic planning
  • Coalition building
  • Financing

Site visits

LC webinars

Individual calls

Resources
ASTHO CHW Learning Community States

2017 cohort (HRSA support)

2016 cohort (CDC support)
State-Identified TA Needs

1. CHW participation and broad coalition building
2. Standardized trainings and core competencies
3. CHW certification programs
4. Financing options
Challenges

• **Constantly shifting state landscape:**
  • Competing priorities
  • Staffing and leadership changes
  • Federal uncertainty
  • Varied provider models

• **Need for coordination and shared vision:**
  • Internal agency coordination
  • External partner coordination
  • High-level connections and support
  • CHW engagement
Coalition building - Who should be at the table?

- Direct CHW engagement
- High-level agency support
- State health agency managers
- Providers
- External (neutral) facilitation helpful
Strategies for internal and external coordination

**Internal:**
- Consistent language in requests for proposals; common CHW definition across divisions
- Unified communications strategy and resource dissemination
- Internal workgroups; internal staff lead

**External:**
- Build consensus around need for collaboration
- Ongoing stakeholder coalition meetings
- Force Field Analysis to review enabling and restraining forces
Strategies for securing high-level support

• Value Proposition:
  • Advantages for state population health AND workforce development goals
  • Outline costs, feasibility, and capacity for state health agency to convene internally/externally and advance a CHW agenda
  • Benefits to the agency
  • Benefits to providers

• Generate a specific “ask”:
  • E.g., State health official letter to providers/contractors re: CHW education and training
Strategies around defining certification

• Define objective first
• Air preconceptions around what certification looks like and fears of negative consequences (and take deliberate steps to avoid these)
• Protect the diverse and community-based nature of the workforce
• Ensure pathway to certification is available to existing workforce
• Flexibility around structure and oversight
• Direct CHW input
Progress

• Positioned state health agency as **central convener**

• Support for **state CHW association/outreach**

• **Value proposition** to engage state health agency leadership/divisions

• **Legislative language** around certification
Next Steps

• **Future state needs:**
  • Employer education and outreach
  • Training materials

• **Opportunities for ASTHO:**
  • Longer duration of TA
  • Increased communication and peer to peer learning between states
Thank you!

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CHW resources: www.astho.org/community-health-workers/

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