

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

## *Lessons from a multi-state learning community*

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Nov. 7, 2017



# Presenter disclosures

**Anna Bartels**

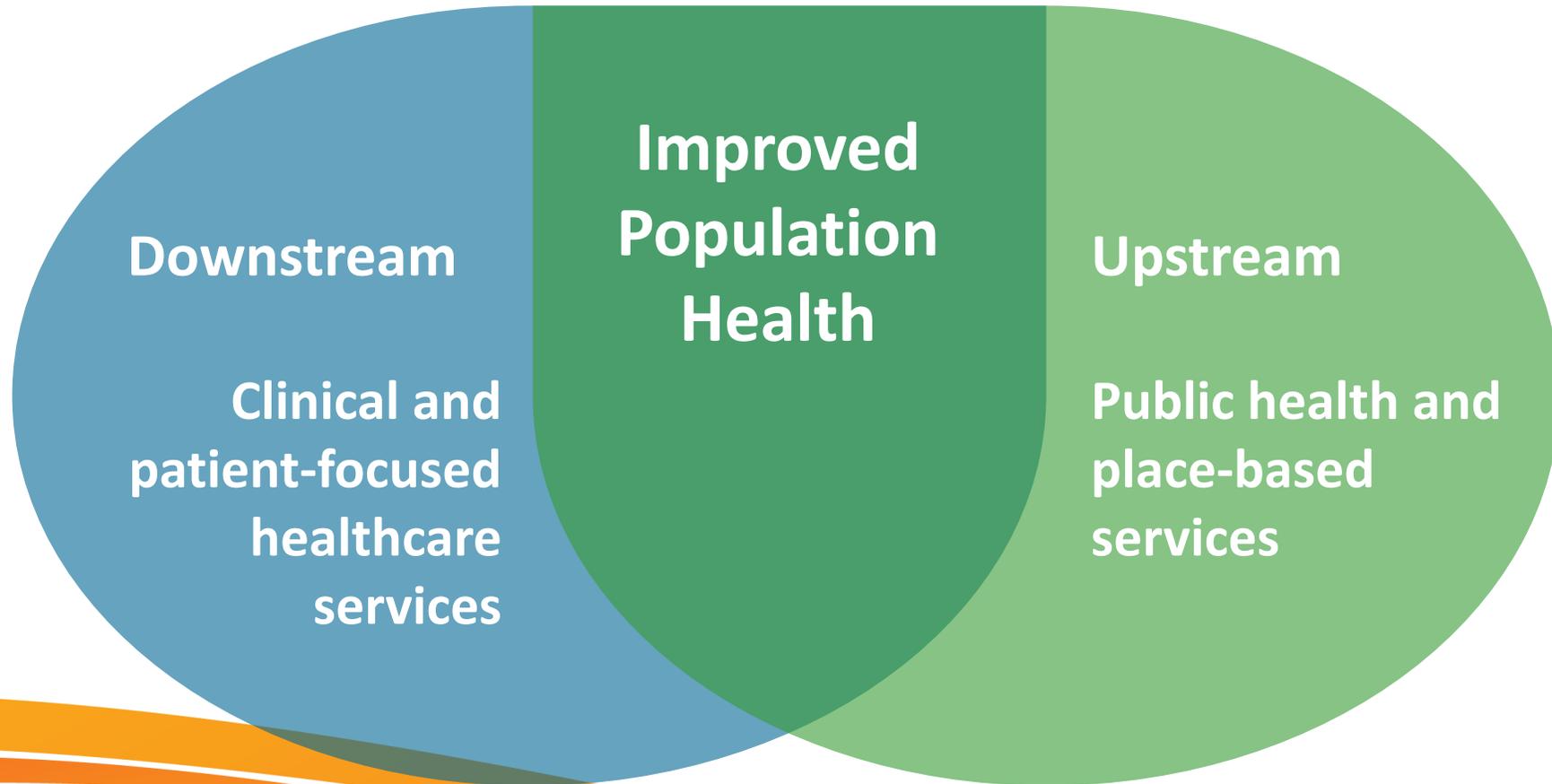
- (1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

No relationships to disclose



**astho**<sup>tm</sup> 75 *years*  
1942 - 2017

# State Public Health and CHWs: Opportunity to improve community to clinical connections



# General areas of state health agency support for CHW workforce development



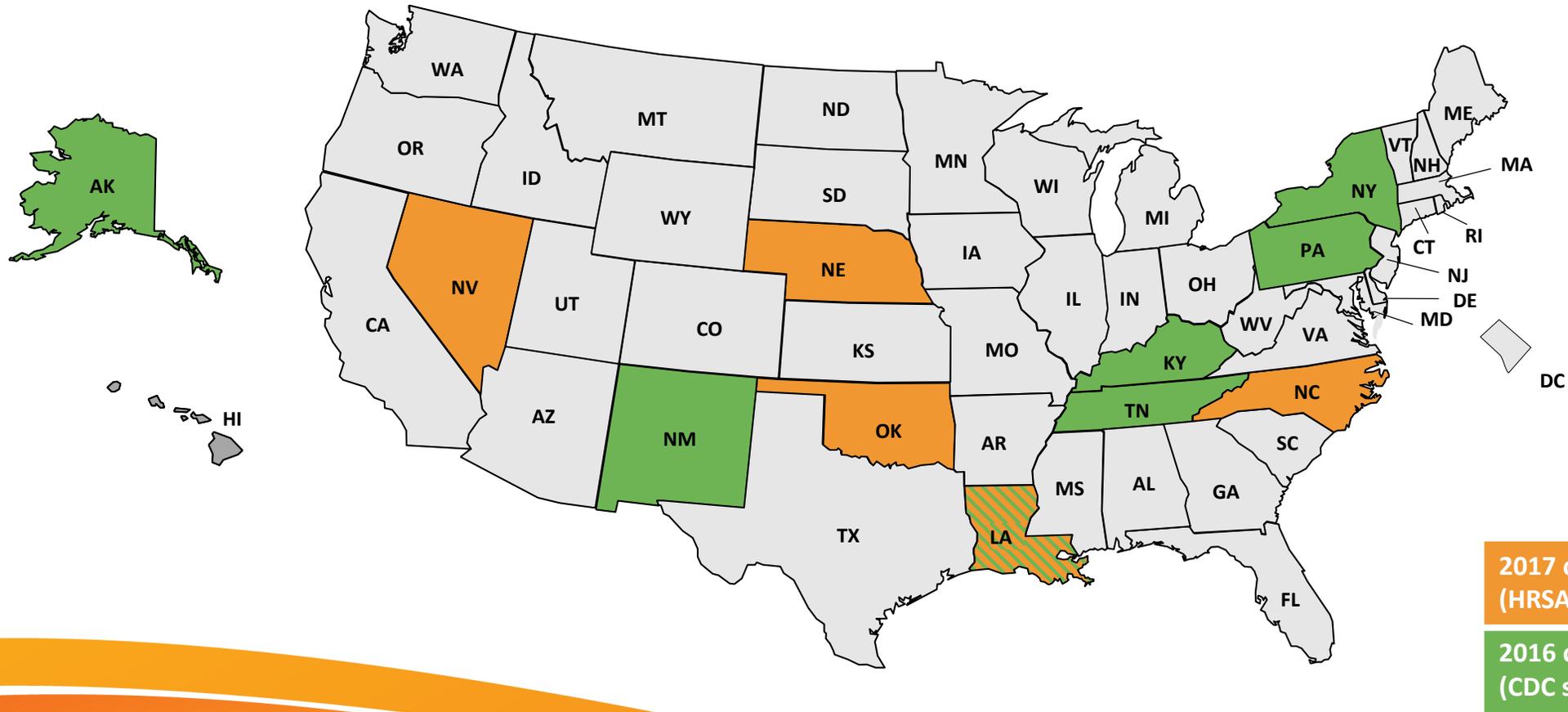
Geoffrey Wilkinson, "State Health Department Support for Community Health Worker Workforce Development and Engagement," available at <http://www.astho.org/Health-Systems-Transformation/Documents/State-Health-Department-Support-for-CHWs-Toolkit-Version/>

# Technical Assistance (TA) Plan

- State-specific TA
- Opportunities for cross-state learning
- Topic areas:
  - Certification
  - Strategic planning
  - Coalition building
  - Financing



# ASTHO CHW Learning Community States



# 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:**

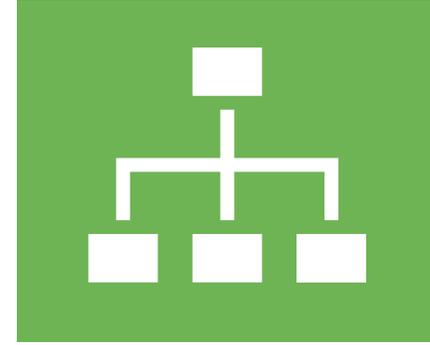
- Competing priorities
- Staffing and leadership changes
- Federal uncertainty
- Varied provider models

- **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

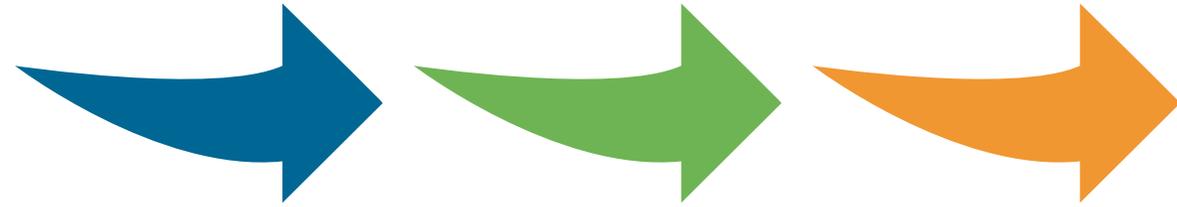
# Strategies around defining certification

- 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/](http://www.astho.org/community-health-workers/)

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