



ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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PROTECTING HEALTH, IMPROVING LIVES

# **Paving a Path to Advance the Community Health Worker Workforce in Illinois**

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# Learning Objectives

- Define the CHW role and what makes this workforce unique.
- Describe how the CHW profession can impact the Illinois health care delivery system.
- Identify the main goals and outcomes of the newly created Illinois CHW Advisory Board.

# Background-Policy Shifts

The ACA formally recognizes the role of CHWs in Sec.5313

ACA offers multiple opportunities to expand the ability of CHWs in a financially sustainable manner.

ACA aims to improve patient access to comprehensive, coordinated care and offers multiple opportunities to expand the ability of CHWs to contribute to care teams.

# Background-Policy Shifts

## Key provisions of the ACA:

- Medicaid Health Homes (Section 2703)
- Medicare's Hospital Readmission Reduction Program (Section 3025)
- Hospital Community Benefits (Section 9007)
- Innovation Model Awards offered by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) (Section 3021)

ACA provisions provide important opportunities for integration of CHWs into prevention and care. **However, these provisions of ACA are not self implementing.**

CHW advocates must take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the ACA to establish and expand the role of CHWs as an indispensable part of health and healthcare for all people. This evokes a call-to-action for policy development

# Business Case for CHWs

## CHWs contribute to overall health system savings through:

- (1) improved prevention and chronic disease management, reducing costly inpatient and urgent care costs.
- (2) cost-shifting, with increased utilization of lower cost services.
- (3) indirect savings associated with reallocation of expenditures within the health care system, e.g., by appropriate team allocations within the patient centered medical home.

### Savings and ROI:

\$2.28 to \$4.80 for every \$1.00 spent on CHWs.

At NY-Presbyterian Hospital, CHWs working to control asthma reduced hospitalizations and ER visits by 50%

# In addition, studies show.....

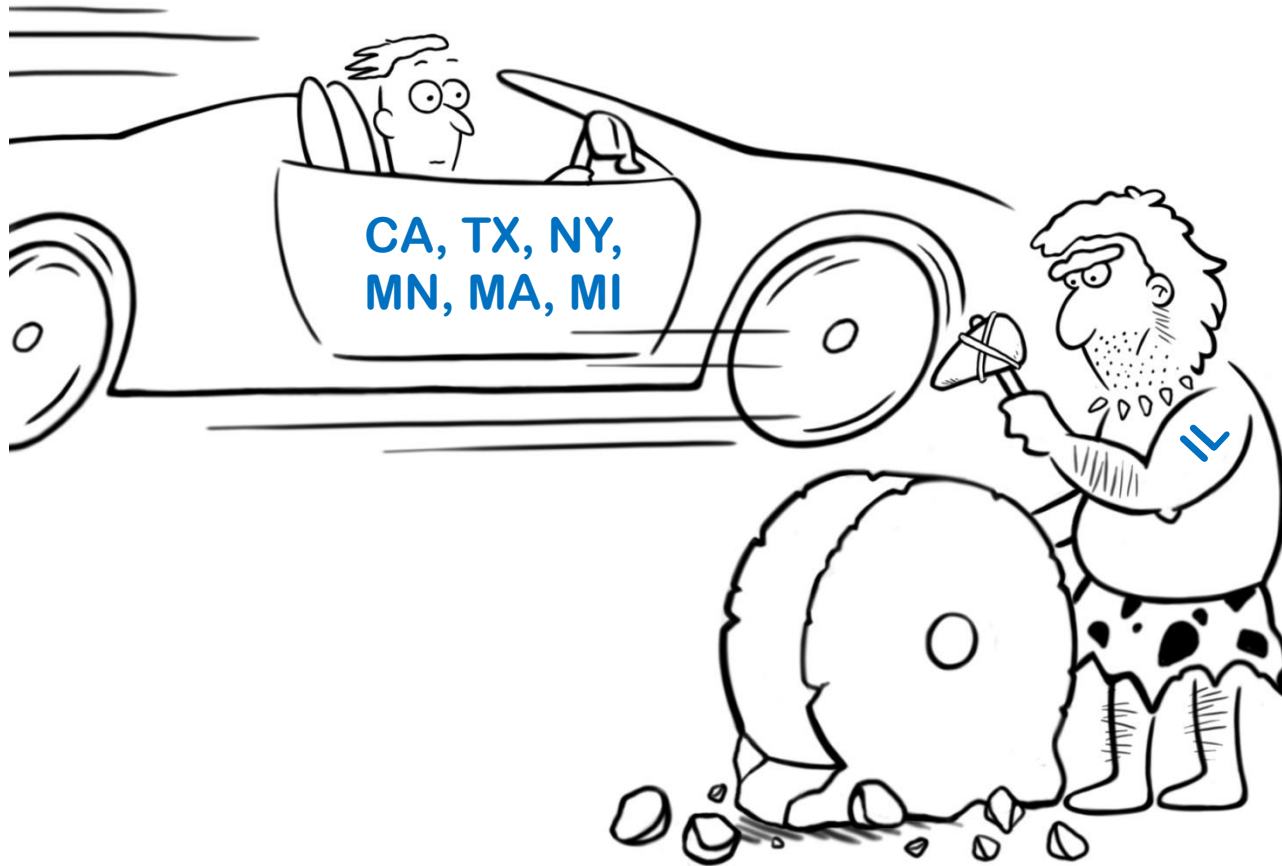
- CHWs improve health outcomes, particularly for low-income populations
- CHWs help patients and communities better understand their responsibilities and health care options.
- CHWs contribute to health equity by both working in the health care setting and addressing social determinants of health out in the community.

# Problem Description

- In spite of these well documented benefits, there is an inconsistent utilization of CHWs statewide. Here in Illinois, we lack state-wide policies or common standards:
  - No standard definition of CHWs
  - Limited funding/reimbursement mechanisms
  - Uncoordinated statewide curriculum/certification
  - Unidentified career pathways and career ladder opportunities

# State Policies on CHWs

“There’s no need to re-invent the wheel”





# Who are CHWs?



- community health advocate
- family support worker
- community health advisor
- parent aid
- promotor(a) de salud
- outreach educator
- community health representative
- outreach advocate
- patient navigator
- youth worker
- street outreach worker
- case worker
- community coordinator
- home visitor
- family health advocate

SOURCE: Lisa Renee Holderby-Fox, Executive Director, Massachusetts Association of Community Health Workers, c/o CMAHEC, Worcester, MA

# What do CHWs do?

- Many CHWs work in health care settings, while others work in community-based/social service settings that support health promotion in addition to disease management.



Source: <http://www.apha.org/membergroups/sections/aphasections/chw/>

# What do CHWs do?



SOURCE: Sergio Matos, Executive Director, Community Health Worker Network of New York City.

# APHA Definition

*“A Community Health Worker (CHW) is a frontline public 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, informal counseling, social support and advocacy.”*

# Health Care Team Member

In 2003 IOM recommended CHWs serve as members of health care teams

## **Responsibilities:**

- Coach individuals in managing their own health and assist them in navigating health/social services system.
- Build individual and community capacity by increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency
- Liaison between patients and providers
- Health educators, informal counselors providing social support
- Connect to broad array of community resources

# Illinois' Response

Law can and should be used as a tool to establish sustainable mechanisms for CHWs.

## **July 31, 2014 HB5412 was signed into law.**

- Establishes the Illinois CHW Advisory Board.
- 15 voting members
- 8 are CHWs from across the state
- 7 members are stakeholders representing healthcare and social services, health workforce policy development, employers of CHWs, and institutions of higher ed
- Ex-officio members represent various state agencies

# Board's Responsibilities

- Advise the Governor and the legislature on all matters that impact the effective work of CHWs
  - consider the core competencies, skills and areas of knowledge of a CHW essential to expanding health and wellness in diverse communities and reducing health disparities.
  - training and certification processes for CHWs
  - make recommendations for reimbursement options and pathways through which secure funding for CHWs may be obtained.

# Reimbursement/Funding

## Things to consider\*:

- Sustainable funding sources need to be expanded (i.e. Medicaid, private sector, health insurance plans, etc.)
- Analyze current funding mechanisms for effectiveness/expansion (pursue waiver or SPA for Medicaid)
- While establishing system for reimbursement, avoid creating barriers for “volunteer” employees
- Clarify/define which health professionals can serve as supervisors of CHWs for Medicaid reimbursement models

\*Mid-America Regional Public Health Leadership Institute, TA Project, December 2012



**The recommendations put forth by the Board will help Illinois build a strong supportive infrastructure for CHWs, addressing professional identity and developing workforce and financing mechanisms to strengthen the depth and breadth of their impact.**



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# THANK YOU

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