

Community Health Worker Training Program

ADVANCING THE COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER WORKFORCE IN
MINNESOTA

Community Health Worker Training Program grant overview

In September 2022, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) received a three-year grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration to strengthen and diversify the community health worker (CHW) workforce. The grant aims to increase access to care and prevention services, strengthen the public health workforce, and achieve health equity in underserved populations.

The Community Health Worker Training Program grant provides scholarships for students pursuing a CHW certificate at an accredited institution and stipends for CHWs participating in registered apprenticeship programs. The grant will increase training opportunities for new and existing CHWs and make training curriculum and materials available in multiple languages.

Who are community health workers?

Per the American Public Health Association, a 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.

Why community health workers?

- CHWs are effective in improving conditions to support health, reducing health disparities, and preventing chronic health conditions, injury, violence, and substance use disorders.
- CHWs increase access to preventive health care and social services, reduce avoidable health care expenses, help service providers provide quality and culturally appropriate care, and address the social conditions that impact health.
- A sustainable, diverse, evidence-based CHW workforce model will facilitate improved health outcomes and health equity for communities that experience disproportionately poorer health outcomes.

Community Health Worker Training Program initiatives

MDH partners with the Minnesota Community Health Worker Alliance, academic institutions, and employers to:

CHW Certificate program scholarships

- Recruit individuals from underserved communities to complete CHW Certificate program
- Provide scholarships to trainees to complete the CHW Certificate program and to address barriers (transportation, childcare, Wi-Fi, supplies) - up to \$3,750 for 90 students per year

Apprenticeships and field experiences

Increase employment opportunities and improve on-the-job training for CHWs through:

- Partnerships with organizations to develop employer paid registered apprenticeships
- Stipends to apprentices: \$7,500 for 35 apprentices per year
- Increase partnerships with organizations to host CHW field experiences or internships

Training and materials for CHWs

- Advance knowledge of new and existing CHWs through free trainings and a training directory
- Make CHW curriculum and materials available in multiple languages

How to get started

Certificate program and scholarships

1. Trainee applies to CHW Certificate program school of their choice. Visit the [Minnesota Community Health Worker Alliance Education webpage \(https://mnchwalliance.org/education/\)](https://mnchwalliance.org/education/) for more information.
2. Trainee completes scholarship application on Minnesota Community Health Worker Alliance website at <https://mnchwalliance.org/chw-certificate-scholarship/>.
3. Scholarship recipients participate in meetings and provide data as requested.

Apprenticeships

1. Employer registers for apprenticeship through Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI).
2. Apprentice applies for apprenticeship through employer.
3. Employer hires apprentice and provides training and data as requested by DLI and the Training Program.
4. Apprentice applies for stipend through Minnesota Community Health Worker Alliance, participates in meetings and provides data as requested for the CHWTP.

Contact us

MDH HRSA CHWTP Grant: Kristen Godfrey Walters | Kristen.Godfrey.Walters@state.mn.us

Minnesota Community Health Worker Alliance: Rachel Stoll | rachel@mnchwalliance.org