

Community Health Workers in Primary Care grant

A two-year grant for primary care clinics serving children and youth (birth through age 18) to hire Community Health Workers.

Grant amount: \$2,087,000. An additional \$6 million is intended to be appropriated during the next legislative session.

What are Community Health Workers?

Community Health Worker (CHW) is a term to describe a person working in a variety of settings who is a trusted member of or a close understanding of the community they are working with. The key part of their work is their connection to community and clients based on shared experiences and cultural background. CHWs use their role with clients to advocate on their behalf, connect them to culturally competent care, and build trust.

Other terms to describe Community Health Workers:

- Promotores(as): CHWs serving Hispanic or Latino communities
- Community health representatives (CHRs): CHWs who serve American Indian and Alaska Native communities

Why CHWs in primary care?

Advocacy for this project centered on addressing rising behavioral/mental health concerns in Washington, including long wait times for accessing services, difficulty navigating across services and settings, and the importance of providers who reflect the communities they serve.

CHWs will be located in primary care settings to provide guidance on processes, such as screening and referrals, support with understanding medical/mental health recommendations and diagnoses, and support in moving across different services and settings. This project includes CHWs who will focus on supporting young children from birth to age five and their caregivers, and an additional group of CHWs who will support school-age children and youth (5 through 18 years) with the caregivers.

Who does this impact?

Primary care clinics and staff

Clinics can apply for this grant, and those who are selected will be able to hire one to two CHWs to join their clinic team.

Community Health Workers

This project will increase the job opportunities for current CHWs and those who are interested in becoming CHWs.

Children, youth and families

The primary focus of this work is supporting children, youth and families in navigating our complex health system. CHWs will work closely with families who are receiving care at the selected clinics.

Child and youth advocates

This project is a demonstration grant, which means that we will use lessons learned to explore ways to build more CHW services throughout Washington

Timeline

- August 22: Application is available and posted online
- October 3: Application deadline (2 p.m. Pacific)
- October 29: “Apparent Successful Applicants” announced and notified via email and posted to our website
- TBD: Awards are disbursed
- November through December: HCA finalizes contracts, awardees begin recruiting
- January 2023: Estimated contract start date

Learn more

Questions and comments can be directed to CHWGrant@hca.wa.gov or 360-725-1244.