

Community Health Worker (CHW) Grant

Implementation Brief

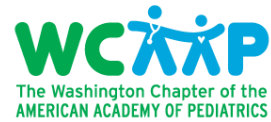
Community Health Worker Grant Implementation Brief

Acknowledgements

This implementation brief was developed in partnership by the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA), Department of Health (DOH), and Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (WCAAP).

HCA acknowledges the advocacy of the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Workgroup's Behavioral Health Integration into Primary Care Subgroup as well as the WCAAP's First Year Families steering committee. Additionally, HCA appreciates the financial support of Perigee Fund to ensure Community Health Workers were able to participate in the grant application process.

Many thanks to Washington Department of Health Community Health Training Program Team and the Community Health Worker Leadership Committee for your collaboration and contributions to this project.



Community Health Worker Grant

A Community health worker (CHW) is a frontline public health worker who is a trusted member of or has a unique understanding of the community served. This trusting relationship enables the worker to serve as a liaison between health and social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery.

In March 2022, [ESSB 5693, Sec. 211 \(103\)](#) and funds from the 2022 supplemental operating budget were appropriated to Health Care Authority and Department of Health initiating the community health worker grant and CHW Pediatric Curriculum development.

Grant Overview

HCA will administer a two-year grant between January 2023 – January 2025 for primary care clinics serving children and youth birth through age 18 to hire and embed community health workers as part of their care team. Grants will fund 39 CHW positions within primary care organizations.

Community health workers funded through this grant will provide outreach, informal counseling, and social supports for health-related social needs. In alignment with the intention of the advocacy for this grant and DOH’s CHW pediatric curriculum, community health workers will support one of the following populations and areas of need:



Early Relational Health (ERH) CHW



K12 Mental Health (K12 MH) CHW

Grant Development Process

The CHW grant is being administered directly through HCA. In alignment with HCA’s values of people first, diversity and inclusion, and health equity, the grant application design prioritized communities who face the greatest social vulnerability. HCA also assessed clinics’ understanding of CHW roles and how they would utilize CHWs.

Application Design

HCA collaborated with key external partners, including CHWs, to inform the application priorities, questions for applicants, and structuring of the grant. Feedback received from partners informed:



Allowable use of grant funds, including ability to give CHWs the necessary tools to be successful



Application questions to assess clinic culture and understanding of the CHW role



Sample job description to be used by grant awardees



Data collected during grant to inform future work



New HCA position roles and responsibilities to support and provide technical assistance for clinics and CHWs

Engagement with community partners helped HCA create an application process that met the needs of a diverse applicant pool. Highlights included:

- Extending the Request for Applications from 4 weeks to 6 weeks
- Offering accommodations for language barriers and lack of internet access
- Recognition of Tribal data sovereignty

Application Evaluation

The application included priority questions to identify clinics serving communities that are historically underserved, underrepresented, and with the greatest vulnerability. Priority questions assessed the following characteristics of clinics' pediatric population:

- Percent enrolled in Apple Health (Medicaid)
- Percent who have a preferred language other than English
- Race and ethnicity composition
- Serving rural areas or counties identified using the social vulnerability index (SVI)

Applicants submitted responses to narrative questions describing clinic teams, how their teams reflect the communities served, plans and practices to support integration of CHWs into their care team, and familiarity with CHWs and their role. These questions were reviewed and scored by an evaluation team. Through partnership with DOH, eight members of the Community Health Worker Leadership Committee and one former CHW brought their perspective as CHWs to the review process as application evaluators.

For more information about the CHW Grant Request for Application (RFA) and other RFA resources, visit HCA's [Community Health Worker \(CHW\) Grant webpage](#).

Thank You Community Partners

Over the past few months, HCA has met with community partners, including CHWs, to hear best practices, review draft materials, and design the CHW grant. HCA would like to thank our partners for supporting this effort through giving their time and sharing their expertise with our team. We would like to thank:

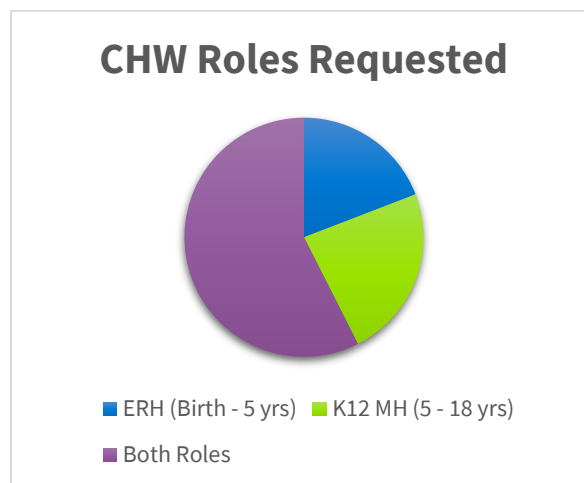
- American Indian Health Commission for Washington State
- Community Health Worker Coalition for Migrants and Refugees
- Community Health Worker Leadership Committee
- Northwest Regional Primary Care Association
- Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
- Washington State Department of Health

HCA would like to express further gratitude for the Community Health Worker Leadership Committee's participation in the grant evaluation process. We appreciate the partnership and willingness to inform this work from your lived experience as Community Health Workers.

Identifying Grant Awardees

Twenty-six organizations from across the state of Washington submitted applications for the CHW grant. Organizations were able to submit separate applications for multiple site locations, resulting in a total of 47 applications received.

Clinics could apply for one or both CHW roles. Of the 47 applications received, 27 clinics requested both CHW roles. Distribution of requests for Early Relational Health (ERH) CHWs and K12 Mental Health (MH) CHWs were fairly even with 9 clinics requesting ERH CHW only and 11 requesting K12 MH CHW only.



HCA would like to thank all clinics and organizations for taking the time to apply. We appreciate your support of the CHW grant and your investment in meeting the needs of communities across Washington.

Grant Awardees

HCA is pleased to announce that 25 clinics have been awarded the CHW grant to incorporate community health workers into their care team.

Clinics with both ERH CHW and K12 MH CHW Roles

- Child and Adolescent Clinic, Longview, WA
- Columbia Valley Community Health, Wenatchee, WA
- Hope Central Pediatrics and Behavioral Health, Seattle, WA
- Lake Chelan Health, Chelan, WA
- Pediatrics Associates of Whidbey Island, Oak Harbor, WA
- Pediatrics Northwest PS Baker Center, Tacoma, WA
- Pediatrics Northwest PS Gig Harbor, Gig Harbor, WA
- Pediatrics Northwest PS James Center, Tacoma, WA
- Seahurst Pediatrics, Burien, WA
- UW Medicine Primary Care Kent Des Moines Clinic, Kent, WA
- Valley View Health Center Chehalis, Chehalis, WA
- Valley View Health Center Raymond, Raymond, WA
- Valley View Health Center Toledo, Toledo, WA
- Yakima Neighborhood Health Services, Yakima, WA

Clinics with only ERH CHW role

- Harborview Medical Center, Seattle, WA
- SeaMar Community Health Centers Grays Harbor County, Elam WA
- SeaMar Community Health Centers Pierce County, Lakewood/Tacoma/Cushman, WA
- SeaMar Community Health Centers Skagit County, Anacortes, WA
- SeaMar Community Health Center Whatcom County, Bellingham, WA

Clinics with only K12 MH CHW role

- Community Health Care Eastside Clinic, Tacoma, WA
- Community Health Care Lakewood Clinic, Lakewood, WA
- International Community Health Services, Seattle, WA
- Summit Pacific Medical Center, Elma, WA
- Northwest Pediatric Center, Centralia, WA
- Wilapa Behavioral Health, Long Beach, WA

What's Next

HCA is working with Apparent Successful Applicants (ASA) to establish contracts for the grant period with an anticipated contract start date of January 2, 2023¹. Once contracts have been finalized, clinics will be able to recruit CHWs. HCA and DOH will support the CHW Grant for the duration of the project.

CHW Curriculum Development

In alignment with HCA's efforts, DOH is partnering with the Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. The partnership will develop training for CHWs in pediatric settings, including developing curriculum, establishing community partners, and implementing training. DOH will lead monthly virtual meetings after the training.

The training includes two areas of focus: support for families with children ages birth-5 and school-aged mental health needs, access, and supports. CHWs hired through the grant will participate in the first training in Spring 2023. After the first training, DOH's CHW training program team will offer ongoing training.

Exploring Sustainable Reimbursement

Additionally, [ESSB 5693, Sec. 211 \(103\)](#) directed HCA to collaborate with stakeholders and communities to explore sustainable reimbursement options for the integration of CHWs in primary care to address the health-related social needs of families.

HCA is meeting with other state Medicaid agencies to gather information on state practices and reimbursement modeling for incorporating CHWs into their Medicaid systems. HCA will share findings with community partners and stakeholders in Spring 2023 to gather feedback and inform next steps.

HCA is working to ensure that a sustainable reimbursement strategy builds on the HCA initiatives currently underway, including [Multi-payer Primary Care Transformation Model](#) and [Medicaid Transformation Project 1115 waiver](#).

HCA will partner with CHW leaders and stakeholders to align with current initiatives throughout the state. We are excited to align efforts with existing work of the CHW Leadership Committee.

Stay Involved

As this project moves forward, HCA plans to create opportunities to bring communities and stakeholders together for input. HCA is currently using the [Pediatric Health GovDelivery list](#) to share updates about the CHW grant and encourages all interested parties to sign up for alerts.

For more information visit HCA's [Community Health Worker \(CHW\) webpage](#) or contact hcachwgrant@hca.wa.gov.

¹If any ASA and HCA cannot reach agreement on acceptable terms for the Contract, then HCA may cancel the selection and Award the Contract to the next most qualified Applicant.