



# Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH)

**New England Regional  
Community Health Workers Summit  
April 30, 2012**



## Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH)

### **Howard K. Koh, MD, MPH** **Assistant Secretary for Health**

Dr. Koh is dedicated to the mission of creating better public health systems for prevention and care so that all people can reach their highest attainable standard of health.





# Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH)

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- **OASH Public Health Offices**

- Office of the Surgeon General (OSG)
- National Vaccine Program Office (NVPO)
- Office of Adolescent Health (OAH)
- Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP)
- Office of Healthcare Quality (OHQ)
- Office of HIV/AIDS and Infectious Disease Policy (OHAIDP)
- Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP)
- Office of Minority Health (OMH)
- Office of Population Affairs (OPA)
- Office of Research Integrity (ORI)
- Office on Women's Health (OWH)



# Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH)



U.S. Department of  
Health & Human Services

## Regions





## The Regional OASH Offices

- Lead essential cross-cutting functions of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on behalf of the Assistant Secretary for Health.
- Focus areas
  - prevention
  - health promotion
  - agency-wide coordination
  - public health integration across federal, state, local, and tribal levels



# Region I OASH

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- **Regional Health Administrator**
  - RADM Michael Milner (retiring 4/30/12)
- **Deputy Regional Health Administrator**
  - Betsy Rosenfeld (Acting RHA 5/1/12)
- **Office of Population Affairs**
  - Kathleen Desilets, Regional Program Consultant
  - Natalia Guevara, Public Health Advisor
- **Office on Women's Health**
  - Marian Mehegan, Regional Women's Health Coordinator
- **HIV/AIDS Regional Resource Network Program**
  - Jennease Hyatt, Regional Resource Consultant
- **Division of the Civilian Medical Reserve Corps**
  - Jennifer Frenette, Regional Coordinator
- **Office of Minority Health**
- **Public Health Advisor**
  - Jessica Cates



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# Community Health Worker Initiatives



## HHS Office of Minority Health (OMH) Promotores Initiative

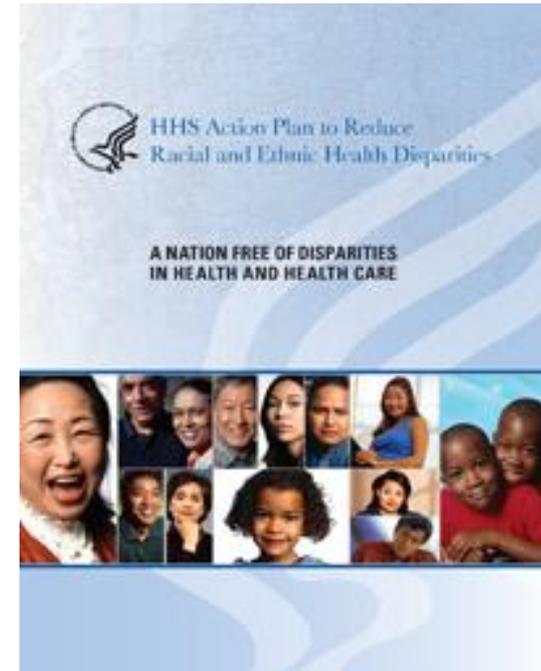
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- The HHS Office of Minority Health recognizes that Community Health Workers (CHWs) are:
  - Important in promoting community-based education and prevention in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner.
  - Skilled in networking and communication, and knowledgeable about their communities.
  - Trusted and a sought out source in communities because they are approachable, accessible, and active members.



# HHS Action Plan to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities

The *HHS Action Plan to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities* outlines goals and actions HHS will take to reduce health disparities among racial and ethnic minorities. With the HHS Disparities Action Plan, the Department commits to continuously assessing the impact of all policies and programs on racial and ethnic health disparities. It will promote integrated approaches, evidence-based programs and best practices to reduce these disparities.



The vision of the HHS Disparities Action Plan is: **“A nation free of disparities in health and health care.”**



## HHS Office of Minority Health (OMH) Promotores Initiative

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- Community Health Workers are an essential component of the HHS Action Plan to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities.
- Goal II: Strengthen the Nation's Health and Human Services Infrastructure and Workforce.
- **Strategy IIB: Promote the use of Community Health Workers and Promotores.**
- **Action IIB.1: Increase the use of Promotores to promote participation in health education, behavioral health education, prevention, and health insurance programs.**



## HHS Office of Minority Health (OMH) Promotores Initiative

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- The HHS OMH Promotores initiative includes:
  - Creating a National Steering Committee for Promotores.
  - Developing a national training curriculum and uniform national recognition for Promotores.
  - Creating a national database system to facilitate recruitment and track training of Promotores.
  - Supporting and linking Promotores' networks across the nation.



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## Office of Minority Health

- The 2012 work plan includes:
  - Identifying and bringing together community partners and New England associations to support Community Health Worker utilization in the six New England states.
  - Expanding workforce development for Community Health Workers and Promotoras.



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## HIV/AIDS Regional Resource Network Program

- Provided training and technical assistance to implement health system navigation into a program in Boston, Massachusetts.
- Offered a presentation on the use of CHWs to Regional Resource Coordinators to enhance their technical assistance toolkit for increasing HIV testing and/or to facilitate access to care.
- The Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts is open to exploring ways to engage with Community Health Workers in their workforce development activities.



# Region I OASH

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## Office on Women's Health

- Women's Health Leadership Institute
  - Expansion of the previously-funded Border Women's Health Promotora Leadership Institute.
  - Developed to improve the leadership and advocacy skills of Promotoras/CHWs by using a public health systems approach to health promotion and disease prevention for women and girls.



# Region I OASH

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## Office on Women's Health

- Women's Health Leadership Institute
  - This program is being replicated to a “training-of-trainers” model.
  - Five Regional Offices on Women's Health are participating in the “Master Trainers” program.
  - Region I will host this training in August, 2012 in New Hampshire.
  - CHWs must complete an application to compete for participation in this training.



# Region I OASH

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## Office of Population Affairs

- Family planning clinics have a long history of the use of lay “family planning counselors” working in clinical settings.
- Counselors are often from the communities where services are provided, and often bilingual and bicultural.
- The roles of family planning counselors and outreach workers are deeply embedded in the program.



# Region I OASH

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## Office of Population Affairs

- Family planning providers have learned that:
  - The roles for CHWs need to be defined and clearly understood.
  - Training and ongoing support are important both to the confidence and competence of the CHWs and to the acceptance of CHWs by clinical staff.
  - CHWs are most effective when they are seen as an important part of the team and recognized for their specific skills and expertise.



# Region I OASH

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## New England Asthma Regional Council (ARC)

- There is strong data from Seattle-King County and now many other communities across the nation about the measurable value of CHWs to:
  - Assist families with asthma.
  - Help with clinical and environmental/housing issues.
  - Work to ensure good control of pediatric asthma to avoid missed school and work days (Krieger et al).



# Region I OASH

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## New England Asthma Regional Council (ARC)

- ARC has recognized this work, especially of partners locally at Boston Medical Center (Dr. Megan Sandel and others).
- ARC, with support from our office, as well as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in Region I, has been supporting these local efforts to work with payers, both public and private, to advocate for certification, reimbursement and measurement for these critical services provided by CHWs.



# Region I OASH

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## New England Asthma Regional Council (ARC)

- As is well-known, services which are reimbursed by the medical care system are likely to be sustained and become a permanent feature of a strong medical home and a healthy community – so these efforts are important to ensuring good outcomes for pediatric asthma.
- More information on these efforts is available by going to [www.asthmaregionalcouncil.org](http://www.asthmaregionalcouncil.org).
- You may also contact Stacey Chacker, Director of ARC at: [schacker@hria.org](mailto:schacker@hria.org) or 617-279-2240, ext. 536.



# Region I OASH

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