Affecting Change from Within the Community: The Role of Community Health Workers
MHP Salud implements Community Health Worker programs to empower underserved Latino communities and promotes the CHW model nationally as a culturally appropriate strategy to improve health.
Who are Community Health Workers?

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 and social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery.

Source: American Public Health Association, Community Health Worker Section 2009
Other CHW Titles

Photo by: Michigan Community Health Worker Alliance
Role of CHWs

- Cultural mediator
- Informal counseling/support
- Health information/education
- Advocacy for individual/community
- Assuring services
- Building capacity
- Direct services

- Community/cultural liaison
- Home-based support
- Health promotion and health coaching
- System navigation
- Outreach and community mobilization
- Case management and care coordination
- Participatory research

Source: National Community Health Advisor Study 1997

Source: Paving a Path to Advance the Community Health Worker Workforce in New York State: A New Summary Report and Recommendations
CHW Program Models

- Promotor(a) de Salud/Lay Health Worker
- Member of Care Delivery Team
- Care Coordinator/Manager
- Health Educator
- Outreach and Enrollment Agent
- Community Organizer and Capacity Builder

Source: HRSA Office of Rural Health Policy, Community Health Workers Evidence-Based Models Toolbox 2011
CHWs have been successful with...

- African American Populations
- Asian Populations
- Latino Populations
- Native American Tribes
- Immigrant Populations
- Disabled
- Homeless
- Veterans
CHW program health topics have included...

- Adolescent Health
- Cancer Screening and Prevention
- Diabetes
- Domestic Violence
- Eligibility Assistance and Enrollment
- Heart Disease
- Housing
- Hypertension
- HIV/STD Awareness and Prevention
- Maternal and Child Health and Prenatal Care
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse
- Nutrition Education and Physical Activity
- Occupational Health and Safety
CHWs in Michigan

- First trained in the 1960s
- Where do they work?
  - Homes, clinics, community centers, schools, hospitals
- Who employs them?
  - Nonprofits, health systems, FQHCs, government agencies, health departments, academic or research institutions

Source: Michigan Community Health Worker Alliance
MHP Salud and Migrant Health Centers

- Camp Health Aide Program
- Infórmate
CHW Results in Michigan

- **Cost Savings**
  - $2.52 savings for every $1.00 of cost at Spectrum Health in Grand Rapids, MI
  - $350,000 in recovered costs at Muskegon Community Health Project
  - $4.00 savings for every $1.00 of cost at Molina Healthcare of New Mexico*

Source: Michigan Community Health Worker Alliance
CHW Results in Michigan (cont)

- Health Outcomes
  - Helped newly released/paroled prisoners find medical homes
  - Decreased low birth weight and inadequate prenatal care in medically underserved women
  - Increased vegetable and fiber consumption in pregnant Latinas
  - Decreased blood glucose levels in program participants
  - Increased cervical cancer screenings among female migrant workers
  - Worked with nurses to lower depressive symptoms among pregnant women
  - Increased HIC counseling and testing among men who have sex with men in Detroit
  - Decreases asthma symptoms and unscheduled health visits among children

Source: Michigan Community Health Worker Alliance
Case Study
National Perspective

- Workforce size
  - 86,000 nationally

- Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act
  - Referenced in three sections

- Recognition
  - American Public Health Association 2009, 2001
  - Bureau of Labor Statistics 2010
  - CDC Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention 2011
  - Institute of Medicine 2003
  - National Prevention Council 2011
  - Office of Minority Health

Source: Michigan Community Health Worker Alliance
Key Current Issues

- Integration into health care workforce
- Sustainable funding
- Standardized training/certification
Questions and Contact Information

Anne Lee
Program Director
MHP Salud
alee@mhpsalud.org
(800) 461-8394, Ext 1021

www.mhpsalud.org