

## Promotores/Community Health Workers(CHW) in Texas *Linking Neighbors to Better Health*

“A Promotor(a)/CHW provides culturally appropriate health education and information in order to assist people in receiving the care they need. They can give informal counseling and guidance on health behaviors; advocate for individual and community health needs; and provide some direct health services, like first aid and blood pressure screening. They perform these services with or without compensation.

To serve in this capacity a CHW is a **trusted member of the community** with a close understanding of the ethnicity, language, socio-economic status, and life experiences of the community who has been trained and certified. Texas AHEC East offers CHW training that can lead to certification.

### **Activities**

- In 2012-2013, facilitated **certified training courses** for over **25 Community Health Workers and CHW Instructors**
- Offered Continuing Education for over 850 Community Health Workers and Instructors.
- Maintained **9 certified training institutions** for CHWs and CHW Instructors to provide core and continuing education training across the state.

### **Impact**

- Based on the American Diabetes Association estimates, if each CHW working with an average of 50 diabetic clients can help their patients make one less ER visit, it would **save the Texas healthcare system** and estimated **\$13.2 million annually**.
- The Center for Disease Control, Health & Human Services and others have recognized CHWs as having the potential to **contribute significantly** to the “**triple aim**” of improving the experience of care, improving the health of populations, and reducing per capita costs of health care in the US.

### **Legislation**

*The Texas Community Health Worker Study report was developed in response to the legislative charge in Texas H.B. 2610, 82 Legislature, Regular Session, 2011 (§48.102, Texas Health and Safety Code).*

### **Our Recommendations**

- Promote CHW education and professional development.
- Promote understanding and recognition of the CHW workforce, including opportunities to enhance understanding of CHW services and roles, CHW certification in Texas, and development of the workforce.
- Explore the feasibility of applying successful Medicaid models from other states in Texas.
- Identify or explore amendments to the HHSC Uniform Managed Care Contract.
- Continue current efforts to incorporate CHWs into Patient Centered Medical Homes and related care management structures.
- Identify opportunities to increase utilization of CHWs in public health and behavioral health programs.
- Consider potential roles for CHWs in the Texas Healthcare Transformation and Quality Improvement Program 1115 Waiver project.