

# COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER INTEGRATION TOOLKIT

**COLORADO  
RURAL HEALTH  
CENTER**

*The State Office of Rural Health*



# IN THE TOOLKIT

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# HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

- Understand the populations that make up your community, the resources available and need, as well as how to advocate for equitable care.
- Continue to expand knowledge, skills, and education around the many vulnerable populations beyond this directory.
- Use this toolkit to:
  - Write grant proposals
  - Build or grow your CHW program
  - Educate your community, staff, and patients
  - Build a business case to your leadership for hiring a CHW
  - Recruit a CHW
  - Integrate a CHW into your healthcare setting
- Look for the  to access the website directly.

# KEY DEFINITIONS

## PRIORITY POPULATIONS

The delivery of healthcare within inner cities and rural areas; and

- Healthcare for priority populations, which include:
  - Low income populations, Racial/Ethnic Minorities, Women, Children/Adolescents, Elderly & Individuals with special healthcare needs.

## MACRO LEVEL CARE

Macro- level factors in healthcare includes social norms, values, regulations, etc.

## CASE MANAGER

A case manager is defined as a healthcare process in which a professional helps a patient or client develop a plan that coordinates and integrates the support services that the patient/client needs to optimize the healthcare and psychosocial possible goals and outcomes.

## SOCIAL WORKER

A social worker is defined as someone who can help clients who face a disability or a life-threatening disease or a social problem, such as inadequate housing, unemployment, or substance abuse. Social workers also assist families that have serious domestic conflicts, sometimes involving child or spousal abuse.

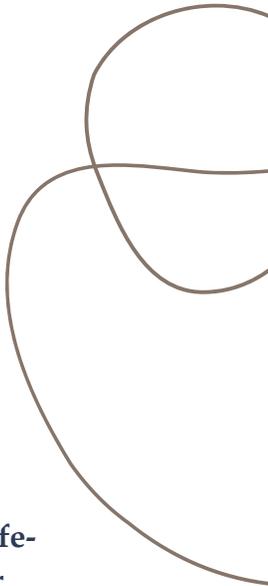
Some social workers conduct research, advocate for improved services, engage in systems design or are involved in planning or policy development. Many social workers specialize in serving a particular population or working in a specific setting.

## PATIENT NAVIGATOR

Patient navigation is defined as a patient-centric health care service delivery intervention, the principal purpose of which is to eliminate barriers, which may occur across the health care continuum, to timely diagnosis and treatment of cancer and other chronic diseases.

## HEALTH EDUCATOR

Health education specialists or health educator is defined as someone who can develop programs to teach people about conditions affecting well-being.



# WHAT IS A COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER?

Note\* The Colorado Workforce is adopting the term Community Health Worker as an umbrella term to be more consistent with other states utilizing Medicaid reimbursement. Common titles include health coach, community health advisor, family advocate, health educator, liaison, promoter, outreach worker, peer counselor, patient navigator, health interpreter and public health aide.

They are a member of the healthcare team who assist individuals overcome barriers to quality care.

They are usually a member of the community and have a close understanding of the community's needs and population.

They are effective at building patient connections by helping to support, educate and assist the care cycle.

They understand community and health resources.

They work to reduce health disparities, improve patient engagement, and enable patients to voice their care needs.

# COLORADO CHW TRAINING PROGRAMS



Click on program titles to be redirected to their website.

## Patient Navigator Training Collaborative

Start your career as a community health worker (CHW) or learn new skills. Grant funds are available for Colorado residents to enroll in this comprehensive training program. Program includes flexible training plans and on-the-job experience during an internship.

## Otero Junior College

Do you enjoy advocating for others and have a commitment to social justice? If so, becoming a Community Health Worker will provide you with a rewarding career in line with your passions. Similar to becoming a social worker, this one-semester certificate prepares individuals to coordinate resources, provide social support and informal counseling, while advocating for individual and community health needs.

## Metropolitan State University of Denver

Take your first steps towards becoming a healthcare navigator and trusted patient advocate in the healthcare field. MSU Denver's online, self-paced, healthcare navigation training has a mission to improve health, one patient at a time, with comprehensive education. Health Navigators help patients overcome barriers to receiving quality care, including understanding insurance coverage, appointments, billing, treatment schedules, and more.

## CU Multidisciplinary Center on Aging

The CU Anschutz Multidisciplinary Center on Aging is offering a unique training program for older adults interested in being trained/dually trained health navigators and older adult research peer specialists.

## Boomers Leading Change

BLC seeks Fellows to serve as Health Navigators at Jewish Family Service of Colorado in Denver. The Fellow will provide emotional support, advocacy at medical appointments, transportation, accompany appointments, and advocate on behalf of older adult clients. The selection process for Experience EngAGED considers each applicant's interests and skills and requires a 10-15-hour weekly commitment. Please contact Susan Kayler-Daly at [skdaley@BoomersLeadingChange.org](mailto:skdaley@BoomersLeadingChange.org) or Merrie Reardon at [mreardon@BoomersLeadingChange.org](mailto:mreardon@BoomersLeadingChange.org).

# CHW REGISTRY



Click on page title to be redirected to their website.

The Community Health Worker Workforce Development Initiative (formerly the Health Navigator Workforce Development Initiative) housed under CDPHE is heading efforts to define CHW competencies and standardization for unlicensed CHWs, introduce credentialing and the Registry

Under the umbrella term “Community Health Worker” those with pre-existing similar titles will not be impacted as these titles offer similar services

Changes to the Colorado CHW infrastructure will not impact those already working as a CHW in Colorado.

If you are already listed in the Colorado Health Navigator Registry, you will remain in the registry under the new CHW Registry.

After successful completion of a CDPHE approved training program, one can apply for the Registry.

Currently approved virtual, and in-person training programs include:

- Patient Navigator Training Collaborative (Level 1, Care Coordination and Basic MI certificates)
- Otero Junior College
- Boomers Leading Change
- Metro State University
- CU Multidisciplinary Center for Aging

# COMMON CHW TASKS

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## 01

### BARRIER REDUCTION

- Assess existing and potential barriers
- Reduce barriers in access to healthcare including:
  - Transportation
  - Housing
  - Social Support
  - Language
  - Health Literacy
  - Childcare
  - Financial Needs
  - Fear

## 02

### NAVIGATION

- Develop a sustainable navigation plan for patients facing:
  - Low health literacy
  - Cultural or religious health ethics
  - Low economic status
  - Priority population
- Clarify the advice or direction already provided by the clinician

## 03

### REFERRALS

- Refer to ancillary services including but not limited to:
  - Mental health
  - SUD
  - Food assistance
  - Emotional support
  - Insurance coverage

## 04

### HEALTH EDUCATION

- Complete applications & new patient paperwork
- The importance of health screenings
- Diabetes management overview
- Help prepare questions for an upcoming appointment
- Assess the patient's understanding

## 05

### 1:1 SUPPORT

- Schedule appointments
- Appointment reminder calls
- Healthcare treatment plan adherence
- Arrangements for meals, lodging, transportation
- Encourage the patient to talk with a provider or other therapies
- Support patient autonomy



# SCOPE OF PRACTICE BASICS

## CORE COMPETENCIES

1. Community Assessment, Engagement and Capacity Building
2. Individual Assessment and Advocacy
3. Effective Communication
4. Cultural Responsiveness and Mediation
5. Education to Promote Healthy Behavior Change
6. Care Coordination
7. Use of Public Health Concepts and Approaches
8. Professional Skills and Conduct

## SCOPE OF PRACTICE WITH EMPHASIS ON PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF CHRONIC DISEASE:

- Support to multidisciplinary health teams
- Outreach to individuals in the community setting
- Educating the patient and their families on the importance of lifestyle change; adherence to their medication regimes and recommended treatments
- Find creative ways to increase compliance with medications
- Help patients navigate the healthcare system; enrollment eligibility, appointments, referrals; transportation, promoting continuity of care
- Providing social support by listening to concerns of the patient and their family
- Helping with problem solving strategies
- Assessment of how well a self- management plan is helping the patient meet their own health goals
- Assisting clients in obtaining home health devices to support self-management
- Supporting individualized goal setting using motivational interviewing

Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Section, Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health. (n.d.). Community health worker: Core competencies and scope ... Nevada Wellness.

## ALWAYS OUT OF SCOPE FOR A CHW

- To give medical advice including the opinion of what the CHW would do in the patients' position
- Interpreting and providing lab, x-ray, or other medical results unless they are actively licensed clinician practicing within their scope
- Influencing a patient's decision based on the CHWs personal beliefs
- Referring a patient to an ancillary service with the CHW has a personal connection with



The role of a Community Health Worker (CHW) is tailored to the needs of the community in which they serve and practice in. A CHWs role should be based on education, training, lived experience and knowledge of specific populations. When adopting a scope of practice, the health entity should consider the services you wish to provide to the community

such as:

Advocacy

Outreach

Enrollment

Education

Health Services &

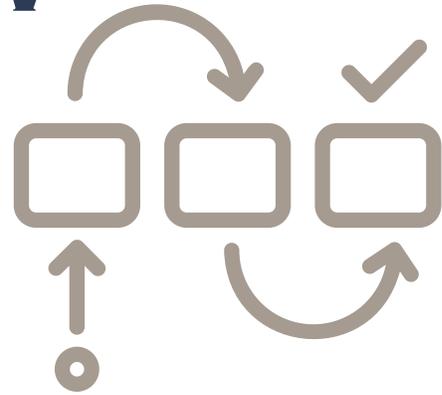
Screenings

Social-emotional Support

# CLINIC WORKFLOW TOOLS



Click on section headers to be redirected to their website.



## Writing a Scope of Practice

New York University has published a simple guide for writing a scope of practice. The Scope of Work (SOW) is the area in an agreement where the work to be performed is described. The SOW should contain any milestones, reports, deliverables, and end products that are expected to be provided by the performing party. The SOW should also contain a timeline for all deliverables.

## Paying for Colorectal Cancer Screening Patient Navigation Toolkit

The NCCRT and the Colorado School of Public Health have developed this suite of resources that provide practical advice on paying for and sustaining colorectal cancer screening patient navigation to help health care professionals at every stage of a navigation program.

## Health Leads Action Plan Workbook

A comprehensive guide to support your organization's efforts to plan and implement a systematic approach to identifying your patient's unmet social needs and navigating them to resources in their community.

## Developing a Community Resource Guide

The community resource guide template is modeled on a community resource guide developed by a Medicaid community-based care management agency in Alabama. It prompts the hospital readmission reduction team to identify community agencies that offer services across a range of clinical, behavioral, and social domains. The guide prompts the developer to identify and list specific contacts at community agencies to facilitate effective referrals from the hospital to a single point of contact.

## Colorado Cancer Screening Program

The Colorado Cancer Screening Program (CCSP) aims to reduce disparities in access to cancer screening among Colorado communities.

Directed through the University of Colorado Cancer Center, the Colorado Cancer Screening Program (CCSP) began as the Colorado Colorectal Screening Program in January 2006 with funding from the Cancer Cardiovascular and Chronic Pulmonary Disease (CCPD) grant program within the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. The program expanded its scope in 2018 to become the Colorado Cancer Screening Program, focused on an expanded portfolio of screenable cancers including colorectal cancer (colonoscopy and stool-based testing methods), lung cancer, and hereditary cancer syndromes.

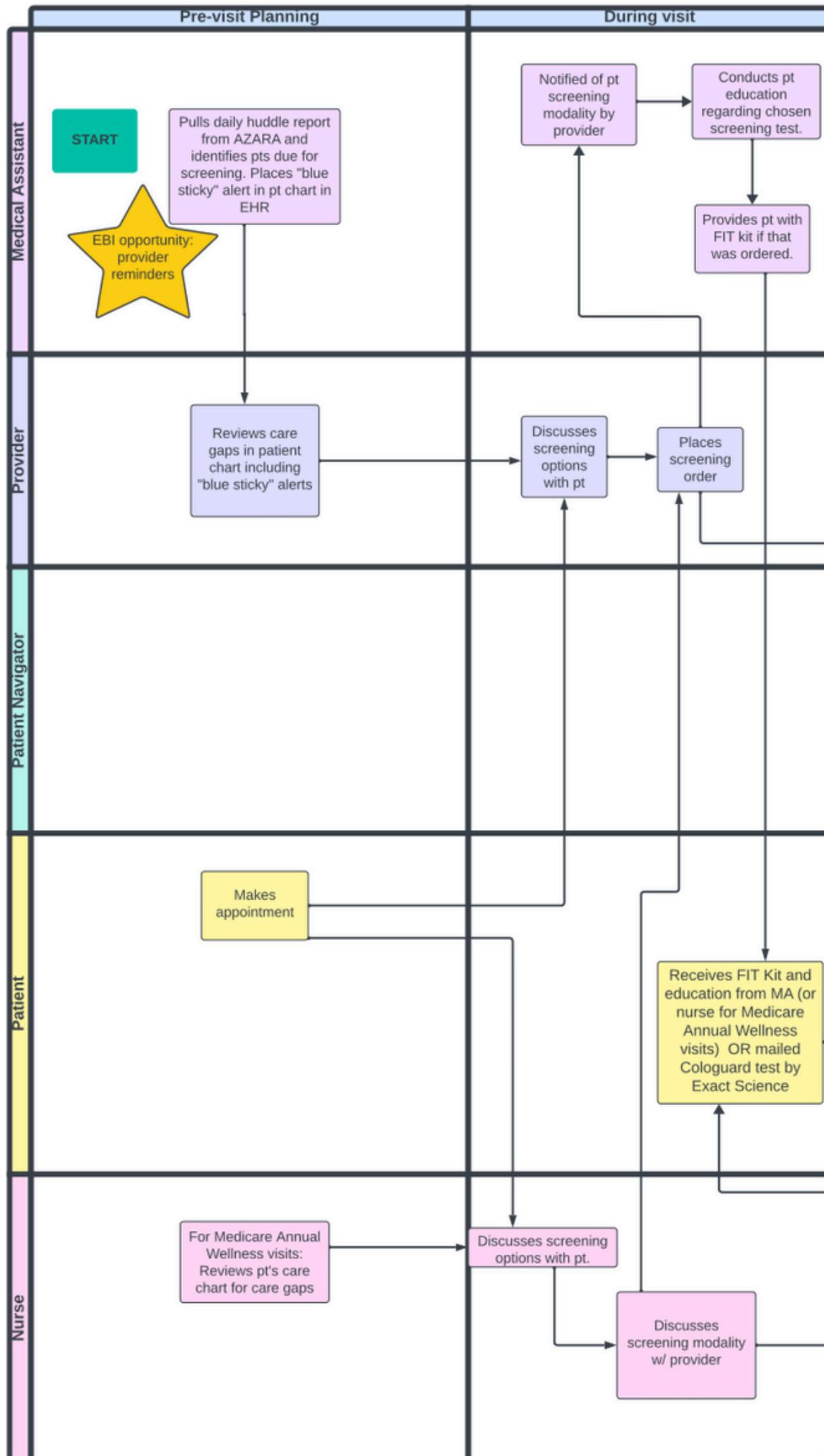
Through partnerships with community-based safety net clinic systems in all regions of the state, CCSP is the only statewide program for lung, colorectal and genetic/family history screening.

Resources include but not limited to:

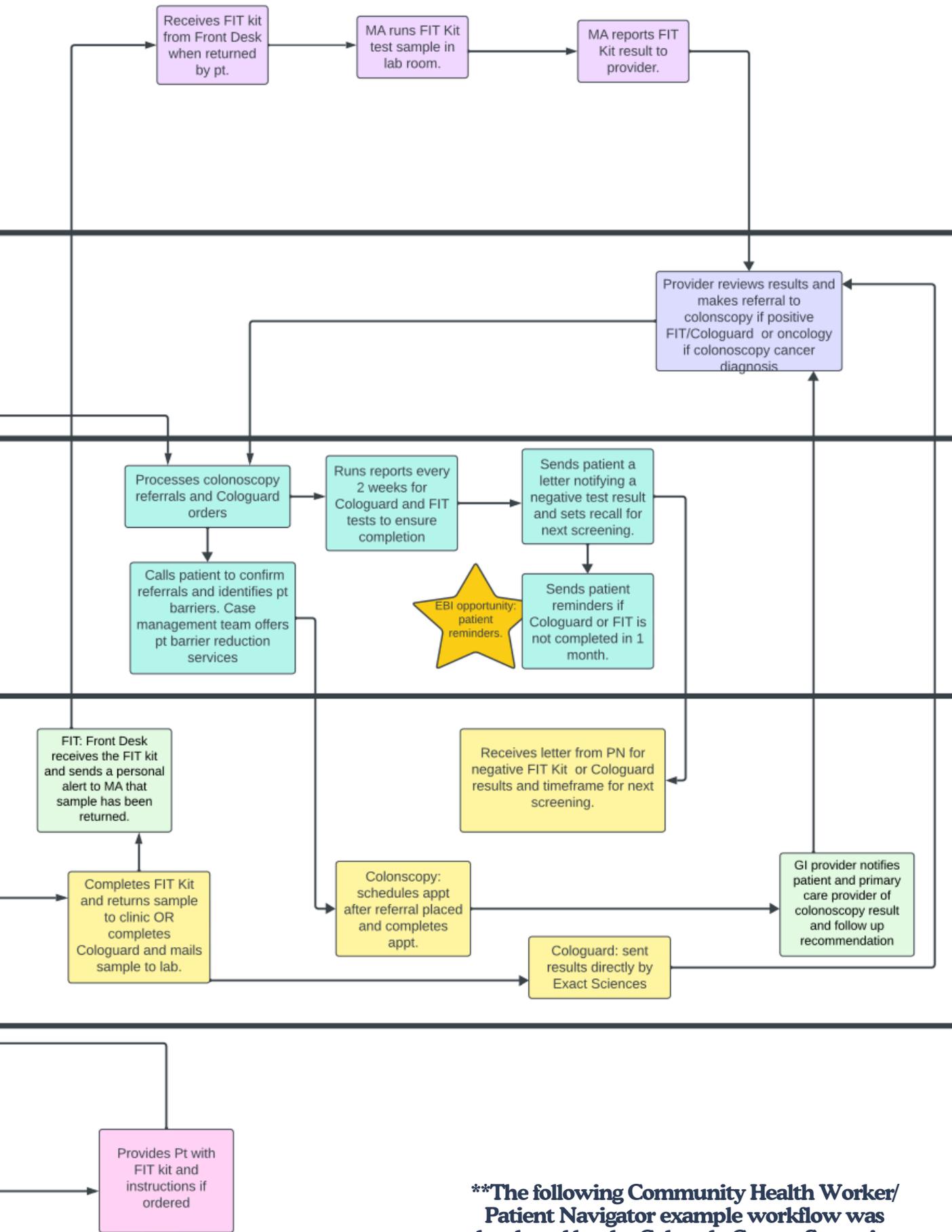
- Sustainability Planning for Patient Navigation
- General Patient Navigator Resources
- Patient Navigation Sustainability Assessment Tool (PNSAT) to Assess Sustainability Capacity for your Patient Navigation Practice and Develop a Sustainability Plan

**\*\*The following Community Health Worker/Patient Navigator example workflow was developed by the Colorado Cancer Screening Program (CCSP) as part of a CCSP initiative\*\***





Post visit



**\*\*The following Community Health Worker/ Patient Navigator example workflow was developed by the Colorado Cancer Screening Program (CCSP) as part of a CCSP initiative\*\***

# CHW IMPACT REPORT



Click on page title to be redirected to their website.

## HELPING OTHERS NAVIGATE THEIR CARE CYCLE.

### PUBLIC HEALTH

- Interventions by CHWs appear more effective for certain health alternatives among underserved communities
- CHW supported mental health interventions show more acceptability among underserved communities
- Increased likelihood of a community member obtaining primary care

### RURAL SPECIFIC

- Texas witnessed improved asthma knowledge, self-management and self-efficacy
- South Dakota witnessed individuals with cancer receiving services during radiation had three fewer days of treatment interruption

### ROI

- In Denver, the ROI was #2.28 for every \$1 spent with an annual savings of \$95,941 (Health Community Voices Program)
- In Nevada, ROI decreased from \$1,223 pre0intervention to \$983
- In Kentucky ROI was \$11.20 saved for every \$1 spent on CHW training

### SALARY SUMMARY

Hospitals	Government	Ambulatory Healthcare Services
\$55,070	\$50,130	\$46,130

### QUICK FACTS

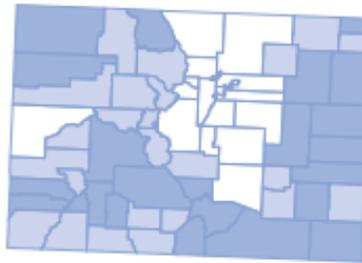
- Median Pay \$48,200 Per Year, \$23.17 Per Hour
- Entry Level Education: High School Diploma or Equivalent
- Job Outlook: 14% (faster than average)

# 2024 SNAPSHOT OF RURAL HEALTH

Community Health Workers address barriers to a patients' access to quality care. These data points from The Colorado Rural Health Centers' 2024 Snapshot of Rural Health showcase areas CHWs can be utilized.



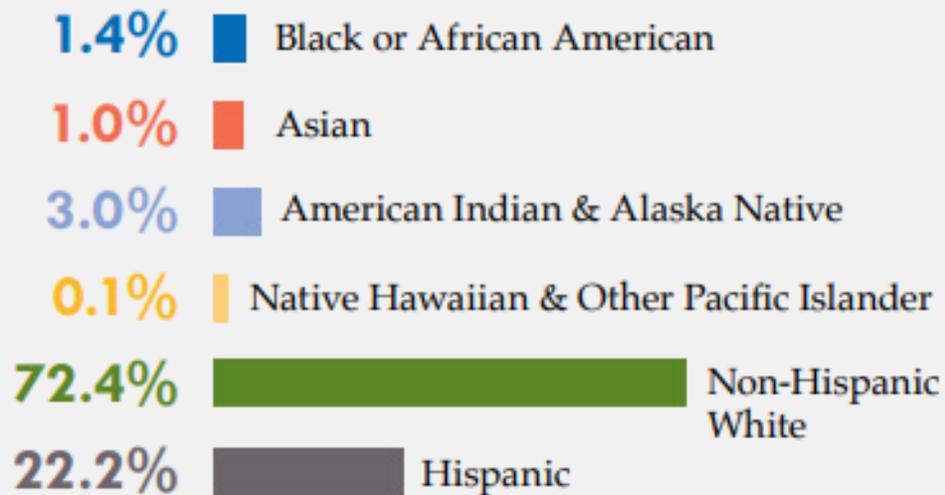
**719,343 people** are the estimated rural population in 2023 (12.2% of the total population)



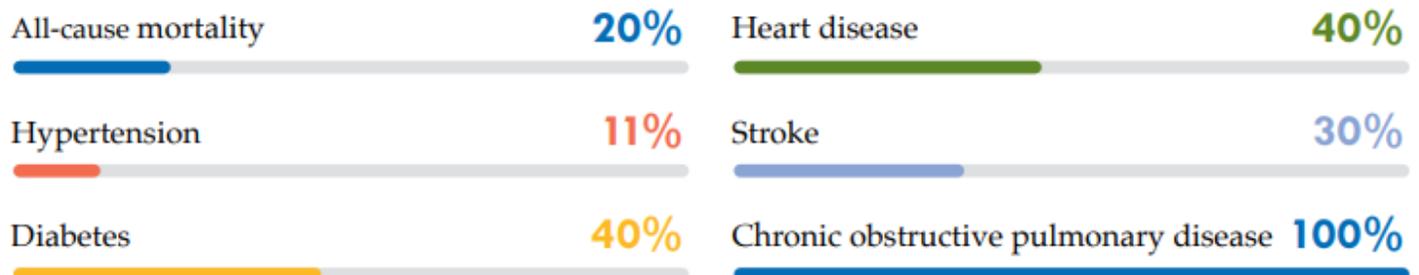
**77%** of Colorado's landmass is considered rural or frontier



## RACE AND ETHNICITY OF RURAL COLORADO



## RURAL OLDER ADULTS EXPERIENCE HIGHER RATES OF MEDICAL CONDITIONS



Adults who have had a heart attack attend cardiac rehab

**35.4%** Rural    **47.1%** Urban    **45.4%** Statewide



Adults ages 20+ reported having a cholesterol screening within 5+ years

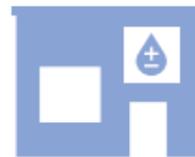
**82.2%** Rural    **85.4%** Urban



### Cost of dental healthcare

is a larger barrier in rural areas

Black and hispanic/latinx are less likely to get dental care



### Only 2 sites in southeastern Colorado

cover Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support (DSMES)



### 36% of rural women

had their first prenatal care visit at 3 months in 2022

Fewer than half of women in rural areas can find perinatal care within 30 miles



**1 in 23** people lack internet service in Colorado

Only **27%** of rural districts have high levels of connectivity, and many have very low levels

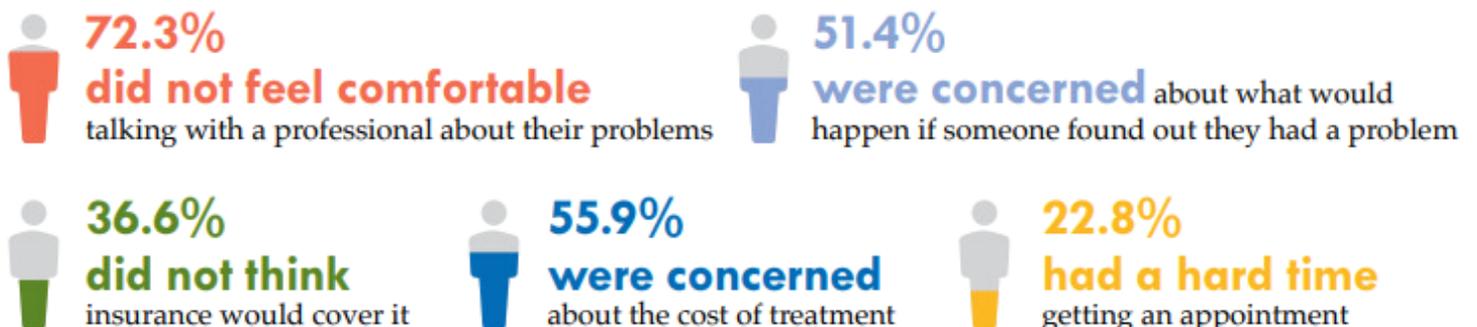


**SCAN ME**

Southeast Colorado has the poorest access to 100/20 Mbps broadband



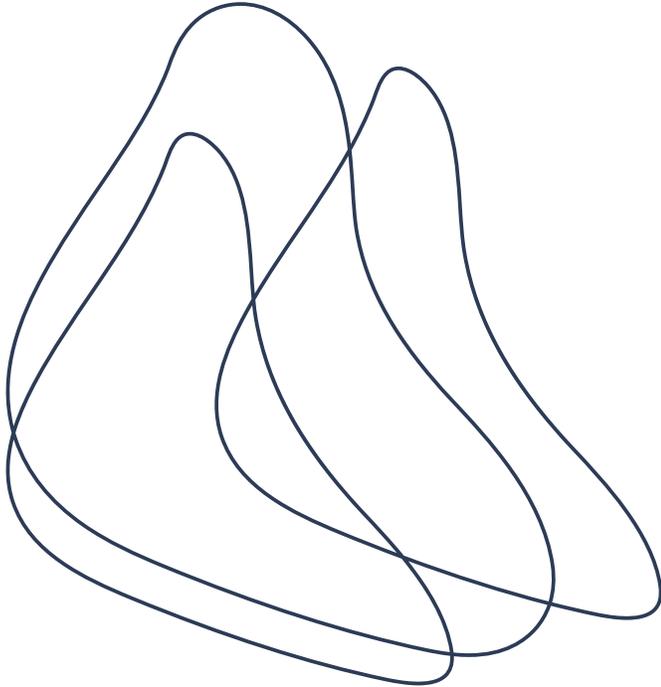
### 80,000 COLORADANS DIDN'T GET NEEDED SUBSTANCE USE TREATMENT IN 2021



# PARTNERS



Click on section headers to be redirected to their website.



## 03. TRAILHEAD INSTITUTE

The Colorado Public Health Works is a groundbreaking AmeriCorps Apprenticeship program providing career entry into the field of public health from local communities throughout Colorado. This innovative program marks the first time AmeriCorps has integrated with a registered community health worker apprenticeship program and is paving new pathways into the field for Colorado's next generation of public health leaders.

Through the Colorado Public Health Works program, AmeriCorps members will serve in regions throughout the state, and many will simultaneously pursue certification as a Community Health Worker through a U.S. Department of Labor registered apprenticeship designed to increase the capacity of local public health agencies.

## 01. CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL COLORADO

The CHW Policy Workgroup Collaborative championed by the Children's Hospital Colorado, led efforts in drafting bill HB1302, SB181 language which provided framework for expanding CHW services in Colorado.

## 02. PATIENT NAVIGATION & COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER TRAINING

This program provides national leadership for the development, education, standardization, and sustainability of the growing navigation workforce.

The Patient Navigation and Community Health Worker Training program (PNCT) offers a full curriculum for patient navigators, care coordinators and community health workers.

## 04. THE ALLIANCE OF COLORADO COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS, PATIENT NAVIGATORS & PROMOTORES DE SALUD

The Alliance believes that every Coloradan has an equal opportunity to obtain healthcare that personally addresses their medical, mental, emotional, social determinants, and spiritual health needs.

We are a group of individuals who promotes policies, programs, and partnerships that:

- reduce and eliminate barriers to quality health care both within health systems and the community;
- reduce disparities in health outcomes; and
- foster ongoing health equity. The Alliance believes that every Coloradan has an equal opportunity to obtain healthcare that personally addresses their
- medical, mental, emotional, social determinants, and spiritual health needs.



# CHW TOOLS

 Click on section headers to be redirected to their website.

## **AHRQ Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit**

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality built this toolkit focusing on helping a patient understand the information you are providing them with in order to ensure success with follow up. Although its focus is health literacy, meeting a patient at their level is key to ensuring successful outcomes

- Communicate Clearly – Tool #4 – pages 16-17
- Use the Teach Back Method – Tool #5 – pages 18-20
- Follow up with Patients – Tool #6 – pages 21-22
- Assess, Select and Create Easy to Understand Materials – Tool #11 – pages 35-38
- Link Patients to Non-Medical Support – Tool #18 – Pages 58-60
- Make Referrals Easy – Tool #21 – Pages 66-68

## **Battling Burnout**

Health Leads outlines self-care and organizational tools to increase community health worker retention and satisfaction

## **Professional Quality of Life Scale**

The University of Buffalo School of Social Work utilizes this Professional Quality of Life Scale is intended for any health care professionals, social service workers, emergency response, etc. to better understand the positive and negative aspects of helping those who experience trauma and suffering and your ability to help them and keep your own balance.

## **Nonjudgmental Listening**

Mental Health First Aid outlines skills like nonjudgmental listening for encounters with patients or people experiencing mental health symptoms and diagnosis. It gives basic tools to assist that are within scope.

## **CO-CARES**

CO-CARES is the Colorado Alliance for Resilient and Equitable Systems serving the health care and public health workforce. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment proudly launched the CO-CARES initiative to support people who helped Colorado through the pandemic – and continue helping every day. CO-CARES is for health care and public health workers of all kinds, including clinical and non-clinical staff at hospitals, long-term care facilities, skilled nursing facilities, emergency medical service providers, public health, coroners, funeral home employees, emergency managers, behavioral health community providers, home health care, and more.

## **Developing Goals and Measurable Objectives**

Developed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), learn more about how to create smart goals and objectives that can be utilized with patients.

## **Patient Decision Aide**

From the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute & University of Ottawa, Canada, this patient decision aide can help guide someone making any health or social decisions (or could be used independently by the person making the decision).

## **The Certificate of Latino Health**

The only graduate public health certificate in the country dedicated to addressing the needs of Latino/Hispanic communities.

## **Denver Health RESTORE**

Denver Health RESTORE trains staff to provide immediate, confidential peer-to-peer support to all Denver Health personnel who experience distress, which can include the loss of a patient, workplace violence, or an adverse clinical care situation.

# **BILLING & CODING**

## **HEALTH EQUITY SERVICES IN THE 2024 PHYSICIAN FEE SCHEDULE FINAL RULE**

 Click on page header to be redirected to their website.

### **Principal Illness Navigation (PIN) Services**

Assist Medicare enrollees with high-risk conditions identify and connect with clinical and support services

G0019 – Community health integration services performed by certified or trained auxiliary personnel, including a community health worker, under the direction of a physician or other practitioner; 60 minutes per calendar month

G0024: Principal illness navigation services, additional 30 minutes per calendar month (List separately in addition to G0023)

G0140: Principal illness navigation - peer support by certified or trained auxiliary personnel under the direction of a physician or other practitioner, including a certified peer specialist; 60 minutes per calendar month

G0146: Principal illness navigation - peer support, additional 30 minutes per calendar month (List separately in addition to G0140)

G0511 – Payment of PIN services in FQHCs/RHCs

---

### **Community Health Integration (CHI) Services**

Address unmet health-related social needs (HRSN) that affect diagnosis and treatment of a Medicare enrollee's medical conditions

G0019 – Community health integration services performed by certified or trained auxiliary personnel, including a community health worker, under the direction of a physician or other practitioner; 60 minutes per calendar month

G0022 – Community health integration services, each additional 30 minutes per calendar month (List separately in addition to G0019)

G0511 – Payment of CHI services in FQHCs/RHCs

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### **Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Risk Assessment**

Assessment of Medicare enrollee's SDOH/social risk factors that influence diagnosis or treatment of medical conditions

G0136 – SDOH risk assessment 5-15 minutes, not more than every 6 months

**Beginning in 2024, Medicare providers can use these new billing codes to seek payment for community health worker and patient navigation services provided to Medicare enrollees**

# POLICY & THE COLORADO CHW WORKFORCE

## Big WIN for Colorado CHWs!

 Click on underlined sections to be redirected to their website.

The Colorado Legislature passed [Senate Bill 23-002](#) in May 2023 to add community health worker (CHW) services as a Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid program) benefit starting July 1, 2025.

The bill defines "community health worker" as a frontline public health worker who serves as a liaison between health care or social service providers and community members to facilitate access to physical, mental, or dental health-related services, or services to combat social determinants of health. Services provided by community health workers must, at a minimum, include preventive services, screening, and assessments, and individual support and health advocacy.

## What's next?

Colorado will seek federal authorization from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) by July 1, 2024, to add CHW services as a covered benefit. The state will also conduct a series of stakeholder meetings to get input on how to meet federal requirements to add CHW services.

Through the stakeholder and federal approval process, the state department must determine the qualifications for an individual to qualify for state reimbursement for community health worker services. The requirements will include completion of a state-approved training program and clinical supervision.

## Get Involved!

### Colorado Community Health Worker Community of Practice

- The Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE) facilitates a quarterly Community of Practice for CHWs
- If you are a CHW, Health Navigator, Patient Navigator, Promotora de salud or similar role you are invited to join a network of CHWs from all over Colorado, to share best practices and identify training opportunities that fits your needs
- Please register at [Colorado CHW Community of Practice](#)

### CDPHE Training Program Recognition Review Committee

- CDPHE will convene a committee to review Community Health Worker training program applications
- CDPHE is expecting up to 5 applications within the next year and are looking for as many applicants as possible to create multiple review committees and limit the number of applications each committee participant will need to review. Pending approval, application review committee members will be compensated for their time
- If you or someone you know would be interested in being part of CDPHE Training Program Recognition Review Committee, please complete the [reviewer application](#)

If you would like to be added to the email list for CHW updates, please fill out the [Community Health Worker Stakeholder Contact Form](#).

# SOURCES

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About Social Workers. NASW, National Association of Social Workers. (n.d). <https://www.socialworkers.org/News/Facts/Social-Workers#:~:text=Social%20workers%20assist%20people%20by,the%20United%20States%20in%202020.>

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# COLORADO RURAL HEALTH CENTER

The Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC) is Colorado's nonprofit State Office of Rural Health. CRHC works with federal, state, and local partners to offer services and resources to rural healthcare providers, facilities and communities. We have a diverse and inclusive statewide constituency serving organizations in every corner of the state.

Established in 1991 by members of the Colorado Rural Health Consortium, Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC) was created with start-up support from the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy and several other public and private organizations around the state. CRHC was developed as a nonprofit organization and is one of only three nonprofit offices of rural health in the country.

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## CRHC CONTACT



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[coruralhealth.org](http://coruralhealth.org)

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