Community Health Workers and COVID-19

MHP Salud Technical Assistance Call

September 17, 2020

OUTCOMES-DRIVEN
EXPERIENCED
INNOVATIVE

www.mhpsalud.org
Introductions

• Name
• Title/Role
• Location
• Organization
• Any specific COVID-related resources or needs?
Technical Assistance Calls

**Promote capacity building** among organizations by helping to **identify underlying needs** and **long-term goals** that improve service delivery.

**Ask Questions**

**Peer Support**

**Resources**
Community Challenges

General barriers for our communities:

- Fear of accessing services (due to Public Charge and/or immigration status)
- **Self-medication and self-diagnosis** (due to lack of health insurance)
- **Lack of health information** available in their language and/or literacy level
- **Lack of effective communication** with health providers (due to language and culture barriers)

Covid-19-related barriers:

- **Misinformation** on COVID-19 spread and risk
- Fewer social services resources available, such as food banks and shelters
- Fewer medical services available, including longer waiting times
- **Lack of transportation** due to limitation and restriction applied as COVID-19 response
- **Unavoidable exposure** to COVID-19 (especially due to “essential” job requirements)
Community Health Workers (CHWs)

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 worker 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.

Therefore, CHWs are uniquely equipped to help the community cope with challenges faced due to COVID-19

Source: https://www.apha.org/apha-communities/member-sections/community-health-workers
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access Barriers</th>
<th>CHWs Unique Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fear of accessing services (due to Public Charge or immigration status)</td>
<td>CHWs can <strong>clarify Public Charge and immigration myths</strong> by using reliable resources and making referral to community programs</td>
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<td>Self-medication and self-diagnosis (due to lack of health insurance)</td>
<td>CHWs can <strong>help clients to apply health insurance</strong> or know <strong>where to access</strong> low-cost services (i.e. FQHCs)</td>
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<td>Lack of health information available in their language and literacy level</td>
<td>CHWs can <strong>translate information</strong> for clients and <strong>explain the meaning</strong> of important health documents</td>
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<td>Lack of effective communication with health providers (due to language barriers)</td>
<td>CHWs can act as <strong>intermediary between patient-health provider communication</strong></td>
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## CHW Response to COVID-19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COVID-19 Challenges</th>
<th>CHWs Unique Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Misinformation on COVID-19</td>
<td>CHWs can educate on COVID-19 risk and share credible resources in clients’ language</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fewer social service resources available</td>
<td>CHWs can connect to available social services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fewer medical resources available</td>
<td>CHWs can connect community members to available medical resources (i.e. mobile services)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of transportation (due to limitation and restriction applied as COVID-19 response)</td>
<td>CHWs can educate on virtual services and resource available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unavoidable exposure to COVID-19</td>
<td>CHWs can educate on how to minimize risk and provide resources (i.e. face masks)</td>
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How Do CHWs Conduct Outreach?

• Phone calls and text messages

• Virtual services

• Physical outreach (use protective gear)

• Mobile sites

• Clinic and community sites (as permitted)
Upcoming Opportunities

**Webinar Event**

"Identifying the Enabling Services Workforce for SDOH Screening and Documentation"
Wednesday, September 30, 2020 at 2:00 PM (ET) / 1:00 PM (CT): [Registration Link]

**Learning Collaboratives**

“Screening Methods and Using Outreach and Enabling Services to Address Social Determinants of Health”
October 7, 2020 – November 18, 2020 [Registration Link]

"Unique Challenges for Agricultural Workers During COVID-19"
October 7, 2020 – November 18, 2020 [Registration Link]
Bilingual (English/Spanish) Resources:


- How to Properly Use a Face Covering: [https://mhpsalud.org/portfolio/how-to-properly-use-a-face-covering/](https://mhpsalud.org/portfolio/how-to-properly-use-a-face-covering/)


Q: Who is the point of contact when doing outreach with Farmworkers?

A: It’s best to directly contact the owners of the farm. If it’s a corporate farm, you can contact the HR department about outreach to their locations. **Best practices for outreach include:**

- Sharing information about services your clinic can provide
- Sharing [additional information about COVID-19](#) and resources for farm owners
- Asking if you can come at lunchtime (or a breaktime) to present information to farmworkers
- Consistent communication and outreach with farm owners and workers, so that your clinic and outreach is recognized (creating “trusted face” in community)
- **Example (case study):** one health center reached out to farms that were not receiving their services and shared a letter, outlining how the health center can provide services to their workers. They also including information on COVID-19 and bilingual educational resources to be directly share with farmworkers. As a result, many farms responded and requested outreach and services from this clinic.
Q: How does funding for COVID testing work? How many “times” are we allowed to test the same group of farmworkers before insurance won’t cover? (Context: New Jersey)

A: This answer may vary depending on the state. You can check the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials page for state-level updates. The following answer will address the state of New Jersey:

• As of May 2020, the NJ Department of Health, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Labor and Workforce Development created the following guidelines:
  “Once a worker is confirmed to have COVID-19 … “Costs related to testing and treatment for COVID-19 will not be charged to employer or worker… Any hospitalization or isolation housing provided by the State of New Jersey will not be charged to employers or workers.”

• As of July 2020, the state of NJ also confirmed FREE TESTING by FHQC’s to farms:
  “One program that is being implemented FREE OF CHARGE for all farms is a COVID-19 testing and education program through Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and local health departments.”
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