Building and Supporting a Community Health Worker Workforce in Iowa

April 23, 2019
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Introductions
What We’ll Cover

- Definition of Community Health Workers
- CHW presence in Iowa
- National level CHW activity
- CHW Implementation and Apprenticeship Project
- Implementation partnerships:
  - One Iowa
  - Primary Health Care, Inc.
  - UnityPoint Clinic

Stronger Collaborations, Better Health
What is a Community Health Worker?

American Public Health Association and World Health Organization:

• A community health worker 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/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery.

• A community health worker also builds individual and community capacity by increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency through a range of activities such as outreach, community education, informal counseling, social support and advocacy.
What We Know: The National CHW Picture

- National Academy of State Health Policy Map
  - 36 states have some form of approved CHW training, are developing training, or have approved competencies
  - 20 states have Medicaid or Managed Care payment or reimbursement
  - 22 states have state certification (voluntary or required) or are studying certification
  - 35 states have a statewide association and/or state agency designated
  - 13 states have CHW legislation
What We Know: There are CHWs in Iowa

- Dallas County Health Navigation
- Crescent Community Health Center, Dubuque
- Family Resource Center, Guttenberg
- EMBARC, Des Moines, Waterloo
- Black Hawk County Public Health
What We Know: There are Parallel Roles in Iowa

- Child Health Specialty Clinics Family Navigators
  https://chsciowa.org/programs/family-engagement/what-family-navigator
- I-Smile and I-Smile Silver
  http://ismile.idph.iowa.gov/,
  http://ismile.idph.iowa.gov/about-ismile/silver
- Peer Support Specialists
  https://iowapeakeppsupporttraining.org/#home
What We Know: This is a Valuable Workforce

• Cost effectiveness: CHW interventions are cost effective for cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes management (*American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 2019)

• Effective integration into the health care team in PCMH: study of integration in South Bronx, New York (*Journal of Ambulatory Care Management, Jan-March, 2014*)
What We Know: This is a Valuable Workforce

Challenges: Definition

Care coordinator
Community coordinator
Navigator
Family advocate
Outreach worker
Family support worker
Health coach
Outreach educator
Case manager
Parent liaison
Peer educator
Home care worker
Intake specialist
Outreach advocate
Challenges: Funding

- Largely grant funded
- Reimbursement structures not keeping pace (i.e. Social Determinants of Health)
- Payers are beginning to create payment mechanisms
Milestones and Timeline

- Identified need, CHW Alliance (2016)
- Building support, Pilot training (2017)
- Iowa CHW Implementation and Apprenticeship Project (2019)
Iowa CHW Implementation and Apprenticeship Project

- Secured funding
- Two primary features:
  - Demonstration project
  - Apprenticeship / Training program
Apprenticeship and Training Program

• DOL Registered Apprenticeship Program
  • Iowa Workforce Development
  • “Classroom” and on the job training
  • Results in national CHW credential

• Training Program
  • Same robust, skills based training
  • Without Registered Apprenticeship requirements/credential
CHW Demonstration

- Three years – Supporting the Nonprofit Sector
- Nine – 12 CHWs
- Range of settings
- Provide training and support
- Participate in Registered Apprenticeship
- Outcomes – both individual and overall
- Year 1 partners: One Iowa, Primary Health Care, Inc., UnityPoint Clinic
Iowa CHW Implementation and Apprenticeship Project - Status

- Year one
- Developing training content
- Three CHWs in place
- Registered Apprenticeship application
- Working on additional and year two partnerships
Chris McCarthy
UnityPoint Clinic

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UnityPoint Clinic

• History - Neighborhood Health Initiative
  • Lessons learned
• Why we’re partnering on this project
• Project details
• How the CHW fits into the care team
• Desired outcomes
• Chris’s view of the future for CHWs
PHC, Inc – History of CHWs in FQHCs

• 1950s: Pholela, South Africa (during apartheid) – extensive use of community members, visit from Dr. Jack Geiger

• 1960s: First community health centers (FQHCs) stem from Civil Rights movement, Family Health Workers hired from the community, to provide care and create jobs

• 1980s: Healthcare for the Homeless programs include community participation, PHC hires bilingual Outreach Workers

• Present: Each PHC site has a Family Support Worker, 2 CHWs at the Family Wellness Center
PHC, Inc – Why We Are Involved

• Primary Care and Public Health are not meeting the needs (poor outcomes, high costs)
• We must be able to engage patients in their care.
• We need alternative approaches to care
PHC, Inc – Project Details

- FSWs will continue; new CHWs are focusing on prevention and wellness
- Longer visits focused on nutrition, exercise, stress
- Use of groups of peers
- CHWs will:
  - Gather most of the wellness related history
  - Primary facilitators of the groups
  - Extensive planning, scheduling, and pre- and post follow-up activity
  - Home visits where appropriate and invited.
PHC, Inc – Desired Outcomes

• Address things not well addressed currently, but vital for good health (i.e. loneliness)
• Improve care of chronic conditions, aging, SUDs, dementia
• Advocate for addressing social determinants of health
PHC, Inc – Future of CHW Workforce

- Insurance is slow to change
- What we are doing is not working – especially for the marginalized
- What will the role of technology be?
- To decrease cost and improve outcomes, people must be empowered to care for themselves more effectively
  - Pouring billions into a new diabetic drug is not the answer
  - Helping people to eat better and exercise more is an answer
  - Let’s research how we do that!
- CHWs will be there
Our Third Partner Organization
Wrap Up

- DOL projections for CHWs
  - Bright Outlook Occupation (O*Net) (grow faster than average and/or have more than 100,000 openings between 2016-2026

- How our project will bring value to Iowa efforts
- Training, partnerships available!
- Sharing platform
For More Information. . .

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Thanks, thanks, thanks!