



Implementing a Community Health Worker Program in Local Public Health

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Overview

- Introduction
- What is a CHW?
- Building Phase
- Implementation Phase
- Funding and Compensation
- Current Work and Data
- Evaluation and Sustainability
- Resources
- Q&A



Introduction

Andria "Andi" Benvenuto, MPH (she/her)

MPH: Tufts University School of Medicine, Population Health Promotion

Community Health Worker Manager for the City of Somerville's
Department of Health and Human Services since June 2023

Worked in local public health in CT from 2019-2022; organized
community events, managed MRC, coordinated emergency response
during COVID-19 pandemic



What is a Community Health Worker?

“The Health Equity Workforce”

General Overview of CHWs



From Mass.gov:

“CHWs are public health workers who apply their unique understanding of the experience, language and/or culture of the populations they serve in order to carry out various health related services.”

Many CHW positions are integrated within:

- Hospitals
- FQHCs
- Community Based Organizations
- Social Assistance Facilities
- Behavioral Health Centers
- Public Health Departments
- Schools
- Libraries

CHWs are...

1. A bridge
2. A navigator
3. An advocate
4. The “boots on the ground”
5. A reliable source of data collection

BOTTOM LINE: An effective CHW program
complements, and does not compete.

CHWs in Somerville Local Public Health

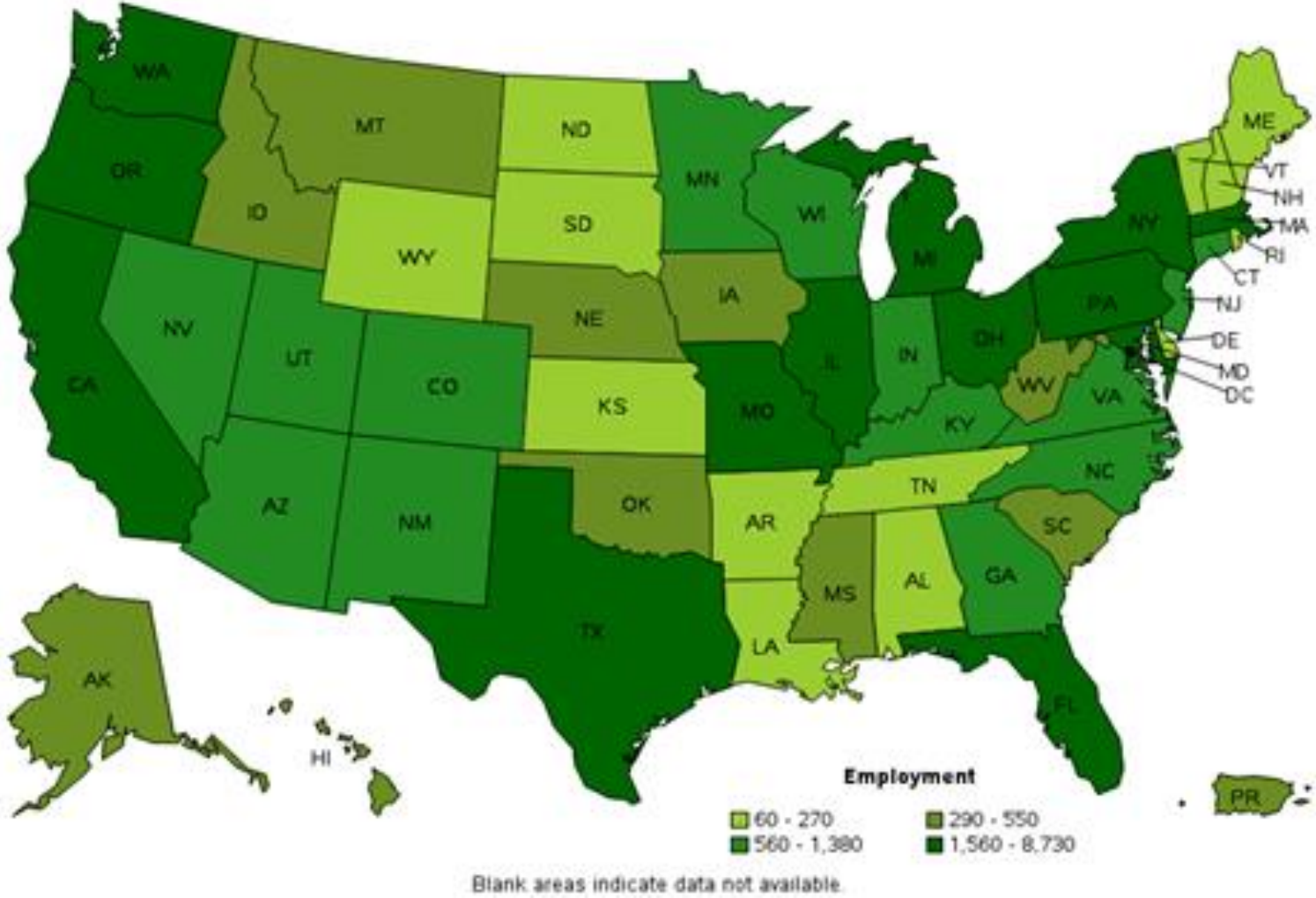


Industry	Percentage of Workforce	Hourly Mean Wage	Mean Annual Wage
Local Government (including FQHCs)	~30%	\$26.23	\$54,500
Private Contractor (individual/families)	~25%	\$22.69	\$47,200
Medical and Surgical Hospitals	~15%	\$28.43	\$59,100
Outpatient Care centers	~15%	\$23.10	\$48,040
Offices of Physicians (Private practice)	~12%	\$23.11	\$48,080

National CHWs by the numbers

**US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Employment of community health workers, by state, May 2023



**US Bureau of Labor Statistics

- Understand the context of CHWs in the workforce
- Define the role of a CHW
 - Different from other front line workers
 - Appropriate scope of practice
- Engage with subject experts
 - MACHW
 - Edward M. Kennedy Health Center
- Building Best Practices
 - Recruitment, hiring, onboarding, retention, etc.



EDWARD M.
KENNEDY
COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTER

Building a CHW program

October 2022- June 2023

CHW Manager is hired and onboarded. Becomes familiar with DoN Grant and requirements of pilot program



Summer 2023

MACHW provides guidance on best practices and procedures. CHW Manager begins documentation procedures and engaging with CBOs and subject experts



Fall 2023

1/3 CHWs is hired and onboarded. Preliminary Implementation of CHW Workforce Integration program begins. CHW and Manager begin strategizing outreach and community engagement

Ex: Timeline: Building Phase

Implementation Phase



Elements of a Successful CHW program include:

- Well rounded/well researched recruitment
- A clearly defined role
- An organized, standardized training module(s)
 - With opportunities to build upon baseline
- Supervision/Management
- Documentation and Data Management system
 - Referrals
 - Activity Tracking
- Opportunity for advancement
- Community involvement and engagement
- Linkages to Healthcare Systems
- Program and Individualized Evaluation

Timeline: Implementation Phase

Winter 2024

2/3 CHWs are now hired and onboarded. Outreach efforts and stakeholder relationship building have begun.

Harm reduction efforts and collaboration with Office of Prevention have also begun.



Spring 2024

3/3 CHWs hired and onboarded.

6 HHS Staff trained as Certified Application Counselors (MassHealth)

City of Somerville designated as SNAP Outreach Partner



Summer -Fall 2024

Procured data management system
Increased presence in CBOs and community outreach

Solidified Infrastructure (SOPs, Workflows, Policies, Schedule)

Current Work

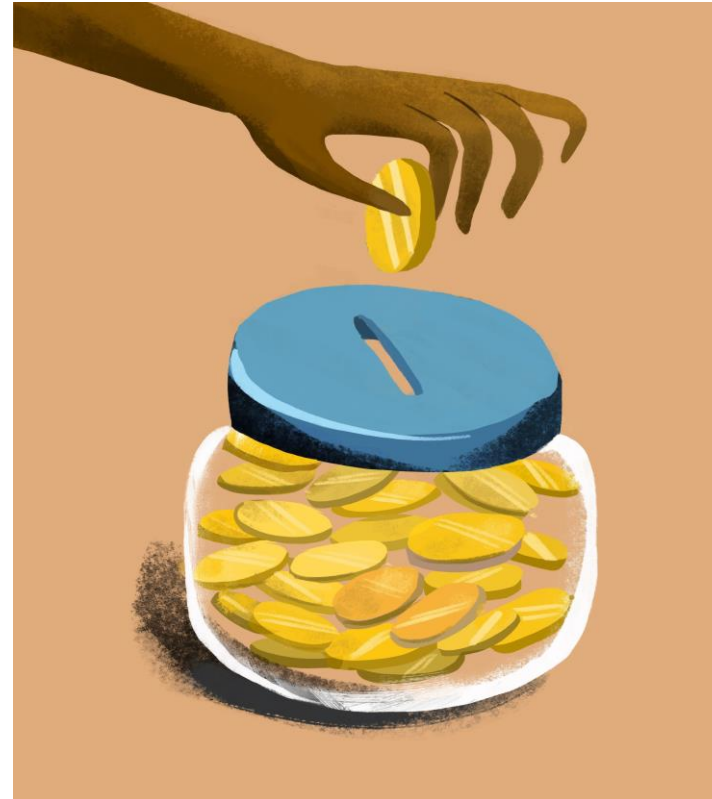
- Naloxone (Narcan) and Harm Reduction
- Health and Screening Clinics
- New Arrival Assistance
- Grant Management
- Community Impact: Career/Job Growth
- Data Collection
- Public Benefit Navigation and Assistance
- Outreach and Community Engagement

Work Continued...

- **4** Community Health Workers hired, trained, and state certified
- **6** workforce professional development trainings
 - (Trauma informed care, Vicarious trauma and self care, Verbal and nonverbal de-escalation, Trauma informed conflict resolution, Professional boundaries, and Cultural responsiveness)
- **10+** sites and locations we have gone to for outreach/engagement
- **15+** partners/community based organizations actively engaged
- **100+** Somerville community members assisted from January 2024 to now
- **\$12,500** invested in career building and generational wealth opportunities for vulnerable community members
- **38** new MassHealth enrollment applications since May 2024
- **37** new SNAP enrollment applications since January 2024
- **16** Naloxone distribution events since March 2024
- **7** Naloxone administration trainings
 - **20+** individuals certified

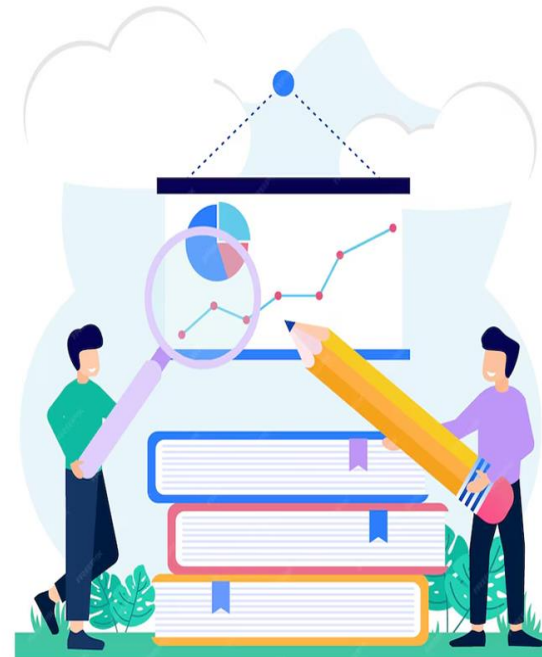
Funding and Compensation

- Reimbursement for services
 - Medicaid (MassHealth)
 - Medicare
- City of Somerville Operating Budget
- Grants
 - PHE
 - Determination of Need (MGB/CHA)
 - CTC DPH
- Academia
 - Tufts COHERE



Evaluation and Sustainability

- Establish indicators of success
 - This will look different for everyone
- Advisory Group
 - Who should be there?
- 3rd party options i.e., public health consultants, academia, etc.
- Your CHWs are the best tool!
 - Retention is key



Resources



SCAN ME



Thank you

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