Introduction to Community Health Workers in HCH Guide

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Presenters

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Overview of CHW

- CHWs are used to address health disparities in vulnerable communities through health education, outreach, enrollment, navigation, community advocacy, and translation services.
- Dates back to the 17th century
- Used mostly in developing nations
- Documented use in US since 1970’s
Who are CHWs?

- Community
- Passion
- Experience
- Education
- Agility
Health Disparities

• CMS recently established that CHW intervention resulted in a significantly increased use of health screenings among minority patients

• HRSA has published several studies establishing that community health work has the potential to increase access to health care and reduce cost of care with a community-centered approach
Cost Effectiveness

• Several studies indicate that there is a potential for a large return on investment in community health work
  – Study at Denver health found a ROI of $2.28/$1
  – Study in Hawaii found 75% drop in overall health spending (while improved quality of life reported)
  – One Austin hospital saves average of $300,000 per year as a result of CHW intervention
Health Reform

• Affordable Care Act authorizes the CDC to fund community health work, especially with respect to:
  – Education and outreach
  – Promote positive health behaviors
  – Enrollment in Medicaid, CHIP, and Medicare
  – Enroll underserved into health care agencies
  – Home visits for maternal and prenatal care
Roles for CHW in HCH

• Outreach and enrollment

• Logistical support (Navigation)

• Community Advocate/Educator
Lamont’s Introduction
What I’ve Learned

• How I learned to overcome barriers that I use to help others overcome their obstacles
• How I became involved in community health outreach
• What I’ve learned over the years that others should know about doing this work
Engagement

- Truly listen and show interest
- Show respect and confirm dignity of person
- Meet client where they are at
- Share some personal background
- Ask about their background
- Building relationship is primary purpose
Motivation

- Listen to what they need
- Be collaborative
- Help develop short-term goals – eventually will lead to long-term goals
- Provide basic mental and physical health information
- Motivational interviewing
Enrollment

• Provide information about benefits and services
• Provide opportunities to come to clinic without requiring treatment (art group, writing group, men’s or women’s group, etc.)
• Explain benefits and services in terms of goals
• Be available for support and guidance but do not do the work for them
Don’t

• Tell clients what they “should” do
• Be passive, clients experience too many dismissive and passive interactions
• Think you are better than the client
• Push too hard
• Take the credit for the client’s improvement
• Be impatient
Training and Support

• **Helpful Trainings:** Motivational Interviewing, Mental Health Counseling, HIV Counseling, PATH trainings, life experiences

• **Support:** Autonomy and freedom, emotional support with burnout prevention, setting boundaries and limits, how to not take the work home
Success Story
Question and Answer
Resources

• Look for Policy Brief on CHW Funding and Regulations in September at nhchc.org
• Contact Katy at kvalesky@nhchc.org for additional questions
• Request technical assistance at: http://www.nhchc.org/TArequest.html