



American Heart Association®

## Community Health Workers Role in Cardiovascular-Kidney-Metabolic Care

### Contents

- Value of Community Health Workers (CHWs) in whole person care
- How CHWs can be integrated as part of the care team



### Trusted

Community health Workers are trusted front line public health workers who understand the needs of the community.



### Connectors

CHWs bridge gaps between the person, health care, and community care.



### Support

CHWs promote CKM health through self-management support for people with chronic conditions.



### Coordination

CHWs are critical for whole person care.

 [heart.org/CKMHprofessional](https://heart.org/CKMHprofessional)

Community Health Workers leverage their skills to provide whole person centered care. Visit our website to learn more about our resources for CHWs.



# Who is a Community Health Worker (CHW)?

Community Health Worker is an umbrella term for a frontline public health worker who is a trusted member of the community and/or has an unusually close understanding of the community served.<sup>1,2</sup>



## Other Titles

- *Promotor de salud*
- Community health representative
- Outreach specialist
- Outreach worker
- Patient navigator
- Prevention navigator
- Care manager
- Case manager
- Health advocate
- Health advisor
- Community health educator
- Social work associate
- Community health coordinator
- Community navigator



## Core Roles<sup>3</sup>

Community Health Workers are critical for whole person care and can support care teams in clinical and community settings.

- Assist with cultural mediation
- Identify and connect people to local community resources
- Health education and information dissemination
- Insurance navigation
- Case management
- Care coordination
- Scheduling appointments
- Home visits
- Coaching and social support
- Implementing assessments
- Outreach
- Advocacy for individuals and communities
- Evaluation support
- Research co-design and engagement



## Core Skills<sup>3</sup>

- Communication
- Interpersonal and relationship building
- Service coordination and navigation
- Education and facilitation
- Advocacy
- Individual and community assessment
- Knowledge base
- Evaluation and research



## Bridge to Care

CHWs help bridge the gap between health care and community support. They improve the quality and cultural competence of public health service delivery. CHWs work with multidisciplinary care teams and community groups to facilitate access to care and improve delivery of health care services for individuals through:

- Health education
- Raising awareness about specific health issues and disease management
- Community outreach
- Health screenings
- Informal counseling
- Social service support
- Advocacy



## Enhancing Value

CHWs can be critical in enhancing value for Cardiovascular-Kidney-Metabolic (CKM) care by supporting clients in navigating complex care delivery models.<sup>4</sup> CHWs promote CKM health through self-management support for people with conditions such as diabetes mellitus, hypertension, and obesity. Their roles may include:

- Patient navigator
- Health promoter, health educator
- Diet education
- Risk factor screening (e.g. blood pressure)
- Healthy lifestyle support
- Addressing and assessing social drivers of health
- Helping monitor vitals at patients' homes
- Ensuring adherence to medication and care plan
- Health system advocacy





## What Research Says

The value of CHWs in population health is supported by scientific research:

- A randomized controlled trial in Latino adults found that CHW-led diabetes management intervention was associated with a 0.4% to 0.6% greater reduction in HbA1c compared to standard care.<sup>5</sup>
- A systematic review found that CHW intervention has been associated with significantly improved hypertension control, especially in under-resourced settings.<sup>6</sup>
- A systematic review determined CHW interventions were cost-effective for cardiovascular disease prevention and for management of type 2 diabetes.<sup>7</sup>
- The data suggests that the use of CHWs can be economically viable and sustainable. New ways to incentivize reimbursement models and restructure payments are suggested to embrace a new cadre of health workers in CKM care.<sup>4</sup>



CHWs also provide education to support patients with CKM syndrome. Visit the CKM Health for Professionals webpage for more details.



 [heart.org/CKMHprofessional#resources](https://heart.org/CKMHprofessional#resources)

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