

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS: *Essential to the success of health reform*

Community health workers (CHWs)...

- Connect hard-to-reach individuals to health, public health, and human services.
- Reflect the diversity of the communities they serve.
- Have at least 50 different job titles; Work at health centers, community and faith based organizations, and hospitals; Pursue the following activities:
 - ⇒ Health system navigation
 - ⇒ Outreach
 - ⇒ Health education
 - ⇒ Client advocacy

“Community health workers are cost-effective, often resulting in improved health, more visits for preventative and primary care (and less for costly urgent care) and fewer hospitalizations, all of which translate into cost savings.”

— National Conference of State Legislatures, 2008 Policy Brief ¹

How do CHWs contribute to healthy communities?^{1, 2}

Increase Access to Health Care by:

- Enrolling clients in and help them maintain health insurance coverage.
- Ensuring clients utilize primary and preventive care.

Improve Health Care Quality by:

- Helping clients navigate complex health and human service systems.
- Contributing to improved health literacy, patient engagement, and patient outcomes.

Increase Health Equity by:

- Delivering culturally and linguistically appropriate services.
- Addressing social, environmental and economic barriers to health.

Contact Massachusetts Association of Community Health Workers by visiting www.machw.org or calling Lisa Renee Holderby Fox, Executive Director at (617) 524-6696 x102.

¹ Kristine Goodwin and Laura Tobler, *Community Health Workers: Expanding the Scope of the Health Care Delivery System* (Washington, D.C.: National Conference of State Legislatures, 2008).

² Massachusetts DPH Community Health Worker Advisory Council, *Community Health Workers in Massachusetts: Improving Health Care and Public Health* (Boston, MA: Massachusetts Department of Public Health, 2010).