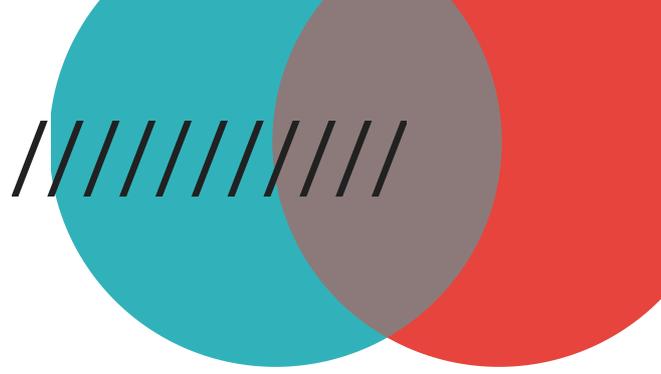


COMMUNITY HEALTH REPRESENTATIVE WORKFORCE ASSESSMENT 2019-20



In 2018, the Community Health Representative (CHR) workforce celebrated their 50th year and serves as the oldest and only federally funded Community Health Worker (CHW) workforce in the United States. Since 2015, 19 Tribal CHR Programs of Arizona have come together with university, health policy allies to form the Arizona CHR Coalition, which advocates for inclusion of CHRs in state and national level dialogue regarding workforce standardization, certification, training, supervision and financing.

OBJECTIVES

1. Document current and emerging CHR core roles across the CHR workforce, especially how CHRs address the social determinants of health.
2. Explore CHR program organizational structure, including CHR recruitment, training, financing, integration within care teams and evaluation
3. Generate CHR workforce policy recommendations.

Links to Reports:

[Phase I \(2019\)](#)

[Phase II \(2020\)](#)

KEY FINDINGS

CHR programs in Arizona are valued members of the healthcare system serving American Indian communities and play a critical role in care coordination and case management for their clients through close working relationships with other Tribal programs, state entities, and the Indian Health Service system.

Barriers to health system integration include gaps in communication and information sharing practices as well as a lack of understanding of the CHR workforce among critical stakeholders, including providers.

CHR are highly focused on improving Social Determinants of Health for their clients.

CHR Programs employed a variety of financing strategies to sustain their programs, supplementing IHS funding with limited Medicaid reimbursement, Tribal General Funds, and grants.

CHR Programs prioritize evaluating the impact of their program yet face multiple barriers to program evaluation, most importantly a lack of access to effective data tracking systems that enable both process and outcomes measures.

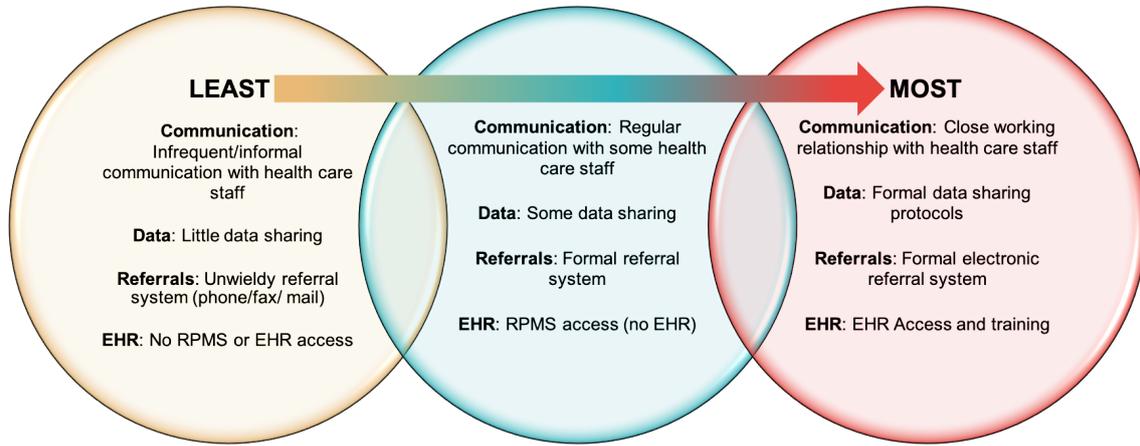
WORKFORCE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase awareness and acceptance of CHRs among the health care team by mandating orientation to CHR workforce competency, roles, and responsibilities for all medical and public health care staff.
2. Establish a mechanism for reimbursement of CHR activities through Medicaid.
3. Engage CHR Programs to establish a comprehensive evaluation system.
4. Establish procedures and policies for integrating CHRs as a functioning member of the health care team.
5. Establish formal mechanisms for data collection and communication between CHR and public health and health care systems to ensure coordination of care and referrals among shared clients and patients.



The CHR Workforce Assessments were a partnership among the Arizona Advisory Council on Indian Health Care (AACIHC), the Arizona Community Health Representative Coalition and the Northern Arizona University Center for Health Equity Research (NAU-CHER). This report was commissioned by the AACIHC in coordination with the Arizona Community Health Representative Coalition.

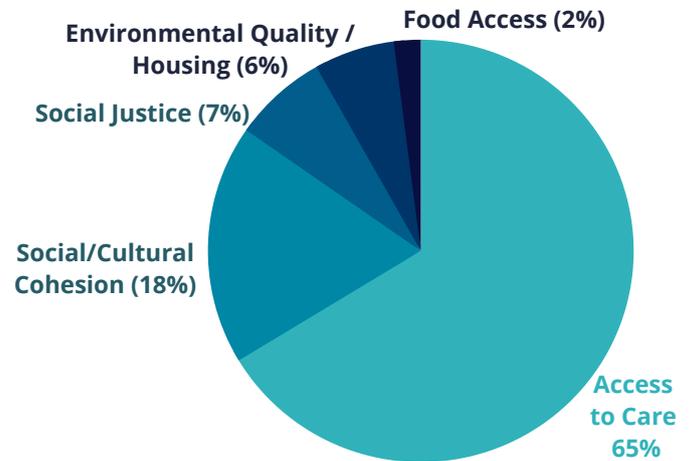
CHR-HEALTH SYSTEM INTEGRATION SPECTRUM



CHRS & SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Domain	Definition ¹	Health Impacts ¹	Example CHR Activities
Access to Health Care	Affordable, accessible and high-quality health care; community paramedicine/care coordination; health literacy; access to behavioral health services	Disease prevention, mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Screening / Case Find / Outreach Health Education / Literacy Referrals Case Management Care Coordination with Service Providers Transportation Coordination
Social and Cultural Cohesion	Supportive relationships, families, homes and neighborhoods; support services for behavioral health needs, community empowerment that can lead to systems change	Economic stability, mental health, public safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translation/ interpretation Cultural liaison Community capacity-building
Social Justice	Addresses historical trauma and structural racism; resolves the social and physical differences adversely affecting disadvantaged groups; pursues fair distribution of resources	Live longer, physical and mental health, economic stability, intact families, resiliency, public safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patient, community and systems level advocacy Case management and coordination Assist patients in applying for benefits or services File complaints on behalf of patients
Environmental Quality	Clean air and waterways, healthy and clean soils; water supply protection and water security; tobacco and smoke-free spaces	Asthma and other respiratory diseases, disease prevention, exposure to environmental contaminants including lead, early brain development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess community environmental hazards Home safety assessments Coordinate client participation in IHS sanitation improvement program Coordinate maintenance of client homes
Affordable Quality Housing	Affordable, high quality, socially integrated housing	Economic stability, disease prevention, air quality, mental health, exposure to extreme climate, exposure to lead, early brain development, injury prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct home safety assessments Coordinate repair or maintenance of client homes Coordinate client participation in IHS sanitation improvement program
Food Access	Affordable, accessible and nutritious foods; promoting a variety of healthy food access opportunities	Nutrition, obesity, disease prevention, mental health, early brain development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor client nutritional status Deliver emergency food boxes Assist with applications for food assistance programs Promote nutrition literacy

Social Determinants of Health Impacted by CHR Activities



"We're the binding component between the health care provider and the patient...and the reason why, is because they trust us. Because they are our grandmas, our aunts, our brothers, our sisters...they are our family."

CHR MANAGER



¹ Vitalyst. Elements of a Healthy Community. Vitalyst Health Foundation. <http://vitalysthealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Healthy-Communities-and-social-determinants-final.pdf>.