

Wisconsin CHW Network Newsletter

May 2026

This month we're sharing new insights from the Wisconsin CHW Workforce Survey, highlighting key challenges strengths, and opportunities shaping the field.

You'll also find ways to get involved through network committees, explore job opportunities across the state, and stay connected through upcoming trainings and events

In This Issue

Workforce Insights

Key findings from the Wisconsin CHW Engagement Survey

In the Field

Featured article from the Wisconsin Health News

Get Involved

Meet our committees and co-chairs

Employment & Training Opportunities

Current CHW job openings, upcoming trainings, and opportunities to connect across Wisconsin



State of the Wisconsin CHW Workforce

We surveyed Community Health Workers across Wisconsin to better understand workforce needs, challenges, and opportunities. Here's what you told us.

Why This Matters

Community Health Workers are trusted leaders within their communities, often serving diverse populations and addressing complex health and social needs.

Despite their impact, survey findings highlight inconsistencies in how CHWs are supported, integrated, and sustained across organizations

What CHWs are Experiencing Across Wisconsin

CHWs play a critical role in bridging healthcare and community systems, yet many report facing significant barriers related to workload, role clarity, and organizational support

40% of respondents reported experiencing significant workplace barriers

Top Workplace Barriers Reported by CHWs

- 51.6%- Limited resources/tools
- 48.3%- Unclear job roles
- 48.3%- Lack of CHW role understanding
- 45.1%- Low pay/benefits
- 41.9%- Limited advancement opportunities
- 38.7%- High workload/caseload



State of the Wisconsin CHW Workforce

CHW Workforce Snapshot: Strengths & Gaps

To better understand these findings, we translated survey insights into a workforce SWOT analysis

Strengths

- Strong community trust and connection
- Workforce is diverse and mid-career
- Majority feel their role is valued
- Demonstrated resilience despite emotional demands

Weaknesses

- Inconsistent training pathways and preparation
- Limited advancement and leadership opportunities
- Low pay and lack of benefits
- Limited resources and organizational support

Opportunities

- Standardize CHW training and entry pathways
- Expand career ladders and leadership development
- Strengthen organizational understanding of CHW roles
- Invest in workforce wellbeing and protective factors
- Increase cross-sector collaboration and integration

Threats

- Funding instability and short-term funding cycles
- Employment gaps and workforce turnover
- Limited availability of CHW positions in some areas
- Ongoing emotional burden and risk of burnout
- System-level barriers impacting CHW effectiveness

FEATURED UPDATE

RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION DOLLARS WILL SUPPORT COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

March 2026 | Wisconsin Health News

Federal funding aimed at transforming rural healthcare is expected to expand support for Community Health Workers across Wisconsin. The Department of Health Services has already received over \$200 million, with additional funding anticipated over the next several years.

These investments are intended to support the integration of CHWs into care teams and improve health outcomes for underserved populations. Long-term efforts may also include advancing Medicaid reimbursement strategies to help sustain CHW services across the state.

Why This Matters

- Strengthens CHW workforce stability
- Advances integration of CHWs into healthcare systems
- Signals progress toward Medicaid reimbursement

Key Takeaways

- Significant federal funding is being invested
- Integration into healthcare systems is expanding
- Long-term sustainability is being explored

RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION DOLLARS
WILL SUPPORT COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

Mar 27, 2026 | On The Record, Top Stories |



Read the
full article
[here](#)

Upcoming Events & Job Opportunities

Explore upcoming trainings, webinars, job opportunities, and events across the Wisconsin CHW Network

Featured Event



Special Olympics Wisconsin CHW Training

📅 May 19, 2026
🕒 11:30am-1:00pm
📍 Virtual

Training focused on intellectual disability, healthcare access, and inclusive care strategies for CHWs

[Register Here](#) →

Featured Event



CHW Enrichment Series

📅 May 21, 2026
🕒 10:00am-11:00am
📍 Virtual

Explore behavior change models and practical strategies to help clients create sustainable health changes through trust, motivation, and client-centered engagement.

[Register Here](#) →

Featured Event



Community Health Worker Gathering

📅 June 4-5, 2026
📍 Kalahari Resort,
Wisconsin Dells

Hosted by the Wisconsin Association for Community Health Workers and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, this gathering brings together CHWs and allies for networking, training, and collaboration focused on strengthening the CHW workforce and advancing community health across Wisconsin.

[Register Here](#) →



Community Connector Position

Aurora Healthcare

📍 Milwaukee, WI

Connects residents to health and social resources through outreach, advocacy, and community engagement.



Community Health Advocate Position

Children's Wisconsin

📍 Neenah, WI

Supports children and families through community outreach, care coordination, and connection to healthcare and social resources.



Community Health Navigator Position

Forest County Potawatomi Family Services

📍 Milwaukee, WI

Assists clients with navigating healthcare systems, accessing community resources, and addressing social needs.

What's Happening

In The Wisconsin CHW Landscape



The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) recently launched a multi-part Community Health Worker (CHW) Certification Series focused on building shared understanding around CHW certification and its potential impact on the workforce in Wisconsin. During the May 4th session, participants explored key concepts including certification, licensure, accreditation, and training certificates, while discussing how certification policies may influence CHWs, employers, training programs, and Medicaid reimbursement.

What Is CHW Certification?

Certification is a formal process where a CHW is recognized as meeting professional standards set by an authorized organization. In policy discussions, the terms "certification," "licensure," and "accreditation" are often mixed up and can be confusing, but each one actually has a different meaning. This handout explains these terms clearly so everyone has the same understanding of what each one means before moving into more detailed policy discussions.

Key Terms

Certificate (i.e., "Earning a Certificate")

A certificate is a document that shows you successfully finished some type of program or training.

For example: You've finished a CHW training program and earned a certificate to show you successfully completed it. CHWs in Wisconsin earn a training completion certificate after finishing their core competency training.



Certification

Certification means that an official institution has reviewed your application, training, and experience, and given you the official title of a certified CHW to show that you meet the state's CHW standards. The official institution that grants this certification can be different in each state- sometimes it is a government institution and sometimes it's an organization like a CHW association.

For example: You submit an application to the authorizing institution to show that your skills and knowledge meet the state's CHW standards, and you receive the title of a certified CHW.



Licensure

Licensure means that the state government has given an individual official permission to practice their profession in the state. In professions that have state licensure, practicing without a license can have legal consequences. There are currently no states that require CHWs to have a state license.

For example: The state government issues a license that allows doctors to legally practice in the state. If a doctor wants to work in multiple states, they must apply for a license in each of those states.



Accreditation

Accreditation applies to organizations and training programs, not individuals. When an organization or training program is accredited, it means its operations have met the set quality standards for working with CHWs.

For example: If a hospital CHW program wants to be accredited, they may have to show that they give CHWs fair pay, have equitable hiring practices, or provide opportunities for career growth. If a training program wants to be accredited, they may have to show that they provide a complete curriculum and have quality teaching methods.



Why This Matters

Certification policies have the potential to shape the future of the CHW workforce in Wisconsin-impacting wages, career opportunities, training expectations, and access to employment. Keeping CHW voices at the center of these conversations is essential.

Join the Community Clinical Linkages Committee!



About the Committee

The goal of the community clinical linkages committee is to strengthen connections between healthcare systems and community-based organizations to better support individuals and families. This committee works to ensure CHWs are effectively integrated as bridges between clinical care and community resources.

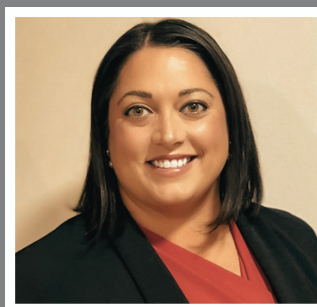
Co-Chairs



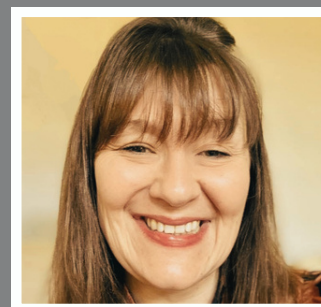
Mark Briggs



Tanisha Stokes



Heidi Odegaard



Jessica Kainer

Monthly Meetings
Every 2nd Wednesday
9am-10am



Join the Advocacy Committee!



About the Committee

The goal of the advocacy committee is to elevate the voice of CHWs and advance policies that support the workforce and the communities they serve. This committee identifies policy priorities, engages CHWs and partners in advocacy efforts, and helps translate community experiences into actionable recommendations for decision-makers

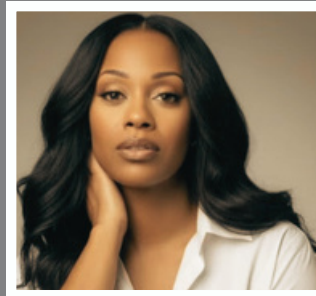
Co-Chairs



DJ Johnson



Alexa McGee-
Lawson



Tamecia
Jefferson-Gordon



Ariel Berry

Monthly Meetings
Every 4th Monday
4pm-5pm



Join the Research & Evaluation Committee!



About the Committee

The Research & Evaluation Committee supports data-driven strategies that strengthen the CHW workforce and improve community health outcomes. Members collaborate on surveys, evaluation efforts, resource development, and opportunities to better understand and highlight the impact of CHWs across Wisconsin.

Co-Chairs



Andrea Kressin



Debra Lipscomb



Dathan Simpson

Monthly Meetings
Every 3rd Tuesday
3pm-4pm



SUBMIT TO THE WISCONSIN CHW NETWORK NEWSLETTER

Want to share an opportunity or highlight your organization with the Wisconsin CHW Network? Submit your information below to be featured in our newsletter and on our job board.



[Submission Form](#)