

# NACHW

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

## **Community Health Workers: Building a Movement for Equity and Social Justice during COVID-19**

**April 8, 2021  
NIHCM**



DENISE OCTAVIA SMITH, MBA, CHW  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS



## **ABOUT NACHW**

**VISION :** Community Health Workers united nationally to support communities in achieving health, equity and social justice.

### **ENGAGE**

CHWs, Allies, Supporters, Partners,  
Sponsors, and Influencers

### **EXPAND**

Membership, Recognition,  
Opportunities, and Collective Action

### **ENHANCE**

CHW Leadership Skills and  
Opportunity

### **EDUCATE**

Stakeholders on the Impact  
of CHWs

### **ESTABLISH**

National Voice and Sustainable  
Strategies On Issues Related To  
CHW Workforce





**“I’ve had difficulty getting a response from the emergency response teams in my community. I’ve called, emailed the city, joined their Facebook groups, answered their questionnaires, etc. It is very frustrating.”**

**- CHW respondent to NACHW March 2020 Survey**

#### HEALTH AFFAIRS BLOG

RELATED TOPICS:

COVID-19 | PUBLIC HEALTH | PANDEMICS | ACCESS TO CARE | SYSTEMS OF CARE

## To Strengthen The Public Health Response To COVID-19, We Need Community Health Workers

Denise O. Smith, Ashley Wrennstrom

MAY 6, 2020

10.1377/hblog20200504.336184



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# COVID-19 RESPONSE

Strengthening public health emergency  
response with Community Health Workers



"Testing millions of people  
per week will require hiring a  
large number of Community  
Health Workers."

The Rockefeller Foundation, 2020

## 3 Ways to Amplify the Work of CHWs



Classify CHWs as "essential, critical infrastructure  
workers" and pay them to respond to COVID-19.



Mobilize funding to scale CHW networks  
and association capacity for contact tracing  
and care coordination training and services.



Recognize CHWs as leaders in COVID-19 community  
recovery & health system transformation efforts.



LOST  
HOME  
HEALTH



Partners  
in Health



IMPACT



HealthEngine



Community Health



Health Leads

## NACHW

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

Community Health Workers (CHWs) united nationally to  
support communities in achieving health equity & social justice  
[www.nachw.org](http://www.nachw.org)

Response and recovery efforts must be  
embedded in and in partnership with  
communities to be equitable and  
effective.

I would like to be included in the planning  
rather than being told something after the  
fact. I feel what I am expected to do is  
being decided without my input.

- CHW respondent to NACHW March 2020 Survey

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# CHW Roles in Building an Equitable Vaccine Infrastructure



CHWs can co-design, develop, distribute and evaluate materials and strategies that appropriately respond to community health beliefs, misinformation and cultural concerns.



CHWs can coordinate and administer screenings for food, housing, financial needs and mental health services and help people navigate to or directly access these services.



CHWs can navigate technology, literacy, language, enrollment and transportation barriers to ensure access to vaccines, emergency services and health care coverage.



CHWs can coordinate mobile testing and vaccination sites, organize tabling and registrations, collect data and monitor symptoms, and engage home-bound, house-less and transient community members.

# CHWS Address Historic and Systemic Racism

Understand and respond to low trust, mistrust and distrust among Black, Latinx, Native and other communities of color as well as a history of medical apartheid.

Avoid terms like “vaccine hesitancy” which reduce centuries of mistreatment to surface solutions that more information will resolve these concerns.

Unethical and harmful medical treatments and experimentation are not things of the past.

Misinformation in effective COVID-19 vaccines is magnified when community members cannot reach trusted individuals to answer questions, address concerns and help navigate increasing complexities.

## Why Black and Indigenous Americans are skeptical of a vaccine

Their fears are anchored in the past.

By Ananya Ghoshal | Oct. 15, 2020



### *'I Won't Be Used as a Guinea Pig for White People'*

Mistrust of vaccines runs deep in African-American communities. Against formidable odds, Father Paul Abernathy and his team are trying to convince residents of Pittsburgh's historic Black neighborhoods to volunteer for trials testing a Covid-19 shot.



# CHWS Promote and Protect Social Justice

## Stop AAPI Hate Reporting Center



We encourage all who have witnessed or experienced micro-aggressions, bullying, harassment, hate speech, or violence to help us document. The more information we have, the better we can respond and prevent further incidents from occurring.

## COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS AND COVID19

THREE WAYS TO SUPPORT ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITIES

### BACKGROUND

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) represent nearly 5.6% of the US Population and are expected to grow to 10% by 2050, faster than any other racial or ethnic group. Far from being a monolith, these communities have diverse cultures, languages and lived experience, and trace their origins to at least 19 countries in East and Southeast Asia. The "myth of the model minority" promotes a belief that AAPIs have few problems with health and with racism when in fact they share significant disparities in both areas.

The National Association of Community Health Workers offers three ways that Community Health Workers can inform and advocate for AAPI communities to improve their health and well-being during the pandemic and beyond.

01

**Language Access:** Title VI of the Civil Rights Act requires interpreter services for all patients with limited English proficiency who are receiving federal financial assistance, however in most states these services are an unfunded mandate.

**What CHWs Can Do:** Inform AAPI communities with Limited English Proficiency of their rights and connect them to high quality resources. Learn more about the Cultural and Linguistic Access Service Standards.

Visit <https://nachw.org/covid-19-resources/> for more COVID19 resources for CHWs



All About Health Advocates: A CHW provides telemedicine services.

02

**Data Disaggregation:** Data collection analysis and reporting are needed to understand the impact of COVID-19 and ensure that Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities are visible and heard.

**What CHWs Can Do:** Data collection is one of the critical roles of the CHW profession and can improve services and outcomes. CHWs can advocate with employers and in communities for data collection that reflects the diverse communities we serve.

03

**Racial Discrimination:** AAPIs are more likely to report negative experiences because of their race or ethnicity since the coronavirus outbreak, including being subject to slurs or jokes, and fearing someone might threaten or physically attack them.

**What CHWs Can Do:** Use and share local and national Stop AAPI Hate Reporting Center website with AAPI communities and service providers (available in English and 11 other languages).



# NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



**The role that CHWs play as first responders in the outbreak of COVID-19**

**Expert Panel**

Betty Rodriguez, BSN, MBA, OCE  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Colleen Barbera, PhD  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Denise Octavia Smith, MBA, CHW, PN  
National Association of Community Health Workers





**ASTHOExperts**

Community Health Workers (CHWs) and COVID-19:  
The Importance of Recruiting CHWs into State COVID-19 Responses

With Denise Octavia Smith, MBA, CHW, PN  
Executive Director, National Association of Community Health Workers

**Role of community health workers and COVID-19**





**HEALTH AFFAIRS BLOG**

RELATED TOPICS  
COVID-19 | PUBLIC HEALTH | PREVENTION | ACCESS TO CARE | SHOOTING OF CARE

**To Strengthen The Public Health Response To COVID-19, We Need Community Health Workers**

Denise O. Smith, Ashley Wimmerbrook

APRIL 6, 2020



**“CHWs – and NACHW – should be front and center as federal and state leaders seek to move out of the pandemic and re-open society.”**

**Claire Qureshi, Community Health Acceleration Partnership at the World Health Organization**

**COMMUNITY BASED WORKFORCE ALLIANCE**



# Reports and Playbooks for Employers

**NACHW**  
LEADERS IN  
COMMUNITY  
HEALTH

## FROM CRISIS TO OPPORTUNITY: Resources and Guidance that CHWs Want from Employers During the Pandemic

Over three weeks in June 2020, NACHW collected responses from Community Health Workers (CHWs) on their needs and how employers can best support CHWs to protect themselves, provide services safely and adapt services to the changing environment. NACHW wanted to hear directly from these frontline public health workers about:

- The areas of work where CHWs would like more guidance
- The resources CHWs want employers to have access to or to develop to support their work
- What are the critical attributes that should be included in these resources

There were 70 respondents as of June 30, 2020, when the window to provide feedback closed. Almost half of respondents were NACHW members. Data was available for NACHW members to understand the roles and expertise of survey respondents. 82% of the NACHW members who completed the survey were CHWs, and NACHW member respondents represented 19 states.



### Recommendations for CHW Employers

1. **Health and Safety:** Ensure adherence to OSHA guidelines and develop and implement other health and safety policies and practices to ensure CHW and community safety.
2. **Recognize and respond to infrastructure and support needs of CHWs.**
3. **Partner with CHW employees to identify best practices for CHW practice during COVID-19 and adapt existing practices to respond to changing needs.**
4. **Provide training for CHWs in best practices for meeting client and community needs during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Special thanks to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention CHW Working and PHHW for their contributions to survey development and analysis.



Community-Based  
Workforce Alliance

## Advancing CHW Engagement in COVID-19 Response Strategies

A Playbook for Local Health Department  
Strategies in the United States

The National Community-Based Workforce Alliance



## Joint Statement On Ensuring Racial Equity In The Development And Distribution Of A COVID-19 Vaccine

10.26.2020



## Webinar: Overcoming Barriers To Equitable And Effective COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

12.07.2020



**COVID-19 Sparked A Health Equity Movement – And Vaccines Are Just The Beginning**

## The National Association of Community Health Workers Calls on Public and Private Institutions to Respect, Protect, and Partner with Community Health Workers to Ensure Equity During the Pandemic and Beyond

CDC CHW Section Members will distribute the NACHW Policy Platform to their members and encourage them to consider using and citing this document as a reference tool and checklist ANY time they give a presentation or write about CHWs...in other words, make sure they explicitly take into account and/or incorporate the items listed.

- CDC CHW Workgroup Co-chairs

I have shared this with our colleagues who work on the hill. I will also plan to include this in our next edition of the population health and prevention newsletter. - ASTHO Senior Staff



# Our Work Continues.

*J Ambulatory Care Manage*

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## Insights on COVID-19 From Community Health Worker State Leaders

*Susan Mayfield-Johnson, PhD, MCHES;*

*Denise O. Smith, MBA, CHW, PN; Sara A. Crosby, MPH;*

*Catherine G. Haywood, BSW; Joelisa Castillo, CHW;*

*Dolontria Bryant-Williams, MBA, CHW;*

*Kim Jay, BA, CHW; Milagrosa Seguinot, AS, CCHW;*

*Terra Smith, CHW; Nicole Moore, CHW;*

*Ashley Wennerstrom, PhD, MPH*

**Abstract:** Community health workers (CHWs) leverage their trusting relationships with under-resourced populations to promote health equity and social justice in their communities. Little is known about CHWs' roles in addressing COVID-19 or how the pandemic may have affected CHWs' ability to interact with and support communities experiencing disparities. A focus group with CHW leaders from 7 states revealed 8 major themes: CHW identity, CHW resiliency, self-care, unintended positive outcomes of COVID-19, technology, resources, stressors, and consequences of COVID-19. Understanding the pandemic's impact on CHWs has implications for workforce development, training, and health policies. **Key words:** community health, community health worker, COVID-19, health equity, resiliency, workforce development

Promote, Protect and Pay CHWs as essential critical infrastructure workers

Create Workforce Infrastructure to Support CHW Physical and Psychosocial Mental Health

Share Insights to Adapt and Improve COVID-19 Response



Integrate CHW Leadership in the Design and Development of COVID-19 Response Strategies

Encourage CHW Engagement in Local, County and State CHW Networks

Strengthen Support for CHW Self-Care and Develop Targeted Approaches to Address their Concerns

## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS







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## Thank You

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