

Illinois Community Health Workers Review Board Annual Report: September 22, 2024

I. Legislative Mandate for Community Health Workers Review Board

The Illinois Community Health Workers Review Board was established to advise the Illinois Department of Public Health when developing the Illinois Community Health Worker (CHW) Certification Program. The board is responsible for: 1) developing rules for certifying individuals, including those using the work experience pathway and academic and community-based training programs; 2) recommending standards and reviewing proposed regulations; and 3) providing feedback about training programs and reimbursement schedules.

The board shall submit an annual report about the program's progress to the Office of the Governor and the General Assembly. The first annual report shall be submitted one year after the board's first meeting, and every year after that, for each year, the board remains active.

II. Membership

The board shall be co-chaired by a representative from a statewide association of community health workers (*Wandy Hernandez, co-executive director, Illinois Community Health Worker Association*) and an Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) representative (*Dr. Janice Phillips, IDPH assistant director*). Dr. Phillips replaced Luvia Nunez-Montelongo as co-chair in October 2023. Other board members include:

- Director of Public Health or their designee:
 - *Luvia Nunez-Montelongo, manager of Community Public Health Outreach*
- Director of the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) or their designee:
 - *Kristin Hartsaw, HFS special assistant to the director, Medical Policy*
- Secretary of the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) or their designee:
 - *Kathryn Gunter, DHS deputy chief of staff*
- Secretary of the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (DFPR) or their designee:
 - *Dr. Shami Goyal, DFPR chief medical coordinator*
- A member from the Office of the Governor appointed by the governor:
 - *Ryan Croke, first assistant deputy governor for Health and Human Services*
- Three members appointed by the Senate president:
 - *Monica Cuevas, supervisor of Community Health Workers and Community Outreach, Pillars Community Health*
 - *Angela Ellison, senior director, Office of Community Engagement and Neighborhood Health Partnerships (OCEAN-HP)*
 - *There is one vacancy*
- A member appointed by the Senate minority leader:

- *Ketkesy Herena, manager of Community Outreach, Chinese Mutual Aid Association*
- Three members appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives:
 - *Representative Latoya Greenwood*
 - *Representative Maura Hirschauer*
 - *Representative Camille Lilly*
- A member appointed by the House of Representatives minority leader:
 - *There is one vacancy*
- A member from a Statewide Association of Community Health Workers appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives:
 - *Leticia Boughton Price, president, Illinois Community Health Workers Association*
- A member from a statewide association of community health workers appointed by the Senate president:
 - *Noelle Moore, vice president, Strategy and Implementation, The HAP Foundation*
- As appointed by the IDPH director, in addition to the members specified in this subsection, the board has balanced representation from the:
 - CHW workforce:
 - *Emma Villareal, community health worker*
 - *Ofelia Figueroa, manager of Community Health Impact, Esperanza Health Centers*
 - CHW employer:
 - *Tracey Smith, director of Community Health, Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA)*
 - *Ashley Colwell, vice president of Clinical Services + Workforce Development, Illinois Primary Health Care Association (IPHCA)*
 - CHW training and educational institutions:
 - *David Sanders, president, Malcolm X College*
 - *Esther Sciammarella, executive director, Chicago Hispanic Health Coalition*
 - Community members who are recipients of services:
 - *Kevin Wood, board member, Community Health Partnership*

III. CHW Review Board Meetings

In its second year, the CHW Review Board held monthly meetings on the following dates:

- September 29, 2023
- October 27, 2023
- November 30, 2023
- December 15, 2023
- February 23, 2024
- March 22, 2024
- April 24, 2024
- May 31, 2024
- June 28, 2024
- September 13, 2024

IV. Activities

Activities undertaken from September 23, 2023 through September 22, 2024, include the following:

CHW Review Board

IDPH conducted 10 CHW Review Board meetings. The meetings focused on:

- Review and feedback of draft CHW Certification Program administrative rules:
 - Subpart C: Community Health Worker Certification
 - Subpart D: Training Program Requirements
 - Subpart E: Registry
 - Subpart F: Training Program Curricula and Instructor Requirements
- The ad hoc Competency Committee, comprised of volunteers from the CHW Review Board, was formed to refine CHW core competencies.
- The Ad-hoc Education Committee, comprised of volunteers from the CHW Review Board, was formed to focus on minimum classroom hours requirements, student pass rates for training programs, instructor training, and CHW refresher training.
- Review of research findings to help inform implications for administrative rules. This review focused on research conducted by the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) Cancer Center as part of an IDPH contract to develop the following reports: Best Practices in State CHW Certification Programs, Illinois CHW Survey, and Illinois Environmental Landscape on CHW Training Programs.

IDPH's CHW Certification Program Development

Key UIC elements of program development:

- Hired a full-time program manager (Sarahjini Nunn).
- Hired a full-time administrative assistant.
- Collaborated with HFS to define a timeline to develop/submit the Medicaid State Plan Amendment (to secure Medicaid reimbursement for CHW services) and identify individuals for an informal workgroup to establish a process.
- Collaborated with the Illinois Board of Higher Education, Illinois Community College Board, and the Illinois State Board of Education to secure guidance regarding the development of CHW academic training program requirements.
- Collaborated with DFPR regarding certification renewal, continuing education documentation, and provider registry.
- Presented program updates at CHW summits, conferences, and meetings, including:
 - 2nd Annual Illinois Community Health Workers Association Community Health Worker Summit (2024)

- 3rd and 4th Annual Illinois Public Health Association Community Health Worker Summit (2023 and 2024)
- Health Resources and Services Administration Thrive Program
- Environmental Scan of Community Health Worker Assets (ENACT) Workgroup
- Extended work orders under intergovernmental agreements with two state university partners who completed the following deliverables:
 - Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC)
 - Subcontracted with a vendor to develop the IT platform for the CHW Certification Program.
 - Began development of the IT platform, including a site map, website build, mock-up of CHW application, and training program application.
 - UIC Cancer Center
 - Completed report: *Best Practices in State Certification Programs*.
 - Conducted a statewide CHW survey and landscape analysis of CHW training and professional development programs (ENACT Project).
 - a) Presented results during two public information sessions.
 - b) Provided final report of findings.
 - In collaboration with IDPH, issued a request for proposal for a curriculum partner to develop a CHW refresher training, CHW instructor training, and CHW core competency model curriculum.
 - Awarded a subcontract for curriculum development.

V. Next Steps

For October 2024 through September 2025:

CHW Review Board

- Complete a review of draft administrative rules and vote on recommendations.
- Review the HFS Medicaid reimbursement schedule for CHW services and provide feedback.

IDPH's CHW Certification Program Development

- Provide board recommendations on administrative rules to the IDPH director.
 - Significant changes will be forwarded to the IDPH Division of Legal Services and the Office of the Governor's legal counsel.
- Obtain State Board of Health Rules Committee approval.
- Submit to the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR) for review.
- Work with SIUC and IT subcontractor to complete foundational IT platform and processes.
- Work with UIC and the curriculum subcontractor to complete curriculum deliverables.

- Work with UIC to develop continuing education processes, training program monitoring processes, and a model student assessment.
- Continue implementation of the program's communications and promotion plan.
 - Support a campaign on integrating CHWs into health care teams.