

# Community Health Workers in Vermont

Addressing diverse patient needs to improve health outcomes.



## Vermont Community Health Worker Definition



### Understand the community

They are frontline public health professionals who are a trusted members of or have a close understanding of the community being served.



### Build relationships

They use a person-centered approach to build trusting relationships that enable them to serve as a liaison between health and social services and the community. This facilitates access to services and improves the quality, and cultural and linguistic competence, of service delivery.

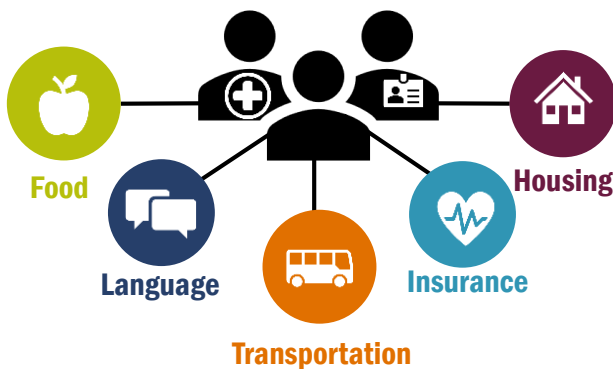


### Increase positive health outcomes

They increase self-sufficiency, wellbeing and positive health outcomes through a range of activities. These include outreach, community education, supportive guidance, self-management, coaching, and the provision of social support and advocacy.



## Connecting Patients to Resources



Community health workers collaborate with health care teams and social service agencies to make sure patients are connected to resources they need to improve their health outcomes.

**“With a community health worker, we can get a call and immediately provide a helpline to support an individual [with needed services]. If we are not there dealing with it immediately, it continues to escalate at higher rate. Flexibility is the key to the role.”**

- Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging

Source: 2019 Vermont Community Health Worker Environmental Scan  
September 2019

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 VERMONT  
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# Community Health Workers in Vermont

Addressing diverse patient needs to improve health outcomes.

## Community Health Workers work with diverse patient populations:

- ✓ Older adults
- ✓ Patients with complex social, physical or medical needs
- ✓ LGBTQ
- ✓ People in substance use recovery
- ✓ Experiencing homeless
- ✓ People with mental health conditions
- ✓ Migrant farmworkers
- ✓ Parents and young families



## Training Needs

- Person-centered communication
- HIPAA
- Ethics and professional boundaries
- Social isolation and U Matter suicide prevention
- Motivational interviewing
- Social determinant of health
- State and local services and support



## Funding Sources

- Many programs use more than one funding stream, including grants, Blueprint for Health, Medicaid, OneCare VT.
- Organizations can hire community health workers with funding that does not require licensed professionals.
- The primary barrier to growth is funding.

Findings are from the Community Health Worker Steering Committee's 2019 environmental scan of community health workers in Vermont. A total of 19 phone interviews were conducted in April and May of 2019. Participants included 12 community health workers and 7 community health worker supervisors from health care settings and community organizations across the state. Read the full evaluation report at <https://www.healthvermont.gov/CHW-scan>

The Steering Committee includes partners and community health workers from the Health Department, Blueprint for Health, OneCare VT, SASH (Support and Services at Home), Visiting Nurses Association, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont, Northern Counties Health Care, Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital, and Good Beginnings.

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