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The National AHEC Organization supports and advances the AHEC Network to improve health by leading the nation in the recruitment, training and retention of a diverse health workforce for underserved communities.

**C3**

## Community Health Worker Common Core Project: An Overview

**Release of Project Report anticipated in fall 2015 following review by US CHW Networks**

### Community Health Worker (CHW)

According to the American Public Health Association (APHA), “a CHW is a frontline public health worker who is a trusted member of and/or has an unusually close understanding of the community served. This trusting relationship enables the CHW to serve as a liaison/link/intermediary between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery. A CHW also builds individual and community capacity by increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency through a range of activities such as outreach, community education, informal counseling, social support and advocacy.”<sup>1</sup>

### Project Origins & Methods

Community Health Worker Common Core (C3) Project is coordinated by the University of Texas Institute for Health Policy Project on CHW Policy and Practice with funding from the Amgen Foundation and administered by the National Area Health Education Center Organization in collaboration with CHW Section of the American Public Health Association.

The C3 Project builds on work carried out in the late 1990s as a part of the National Community Health Advisor Study (NCHAS). Since its release in 1998, many in the US have relied on the NCHAS as a guide to help identify CHW roles or scope of practice (SOP) and CHW core competencies (skills & qualities). Recognizing this, the C3 Project, including a core team from the 1998 Study joined by other experts in the field including members of a majority-CHW Advisory Committee, are undertaking a “contemporary” look at CHW roles and competencies based on an analysis of secondary data in select benchmark documents.

In summer 2015 a “Working Report” with role and competency recommendations will be circulated for consideration and refinement by US CHW networks and other CHW leaders. Following the CHW Network review, the C3 Project team expects to release its findings and then work to build national consensus around the updated role and competency recommendations. Longer term, the Project team aims to achieve endorsement and utilization of the field-based recommendations by local, state, and national organizations seeking to further CHW education, practice, and policy.

### Project Aim

The C3 Project aims to offer CHW and stakeholder-driven contemporary recommendations for national consideration and adoption related to:

- CHW Core Roles/Scope of Practice
- CHW Core Skills and Sub-Skills; and to
- Affirm existing knowledge about CHW Core Qualities

## Project Goals

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- **Short Term:** Release of C3 Project findings on contemporary roles/Scope of Practice; skills and sub-skills; and discussion of importance of CHW core qualities or attributes for consideration and refinement by CHWs, CHW leaders, and other stakeholders
- **Medium Term:** National consensus on and wide distribution of C3 Project recommendations on roles and competencies and their proposed use
- **Long Term:** Utilization and endorsement of C3 Project recommendations by local, state, and national organizations and entities seeking to start and/or strengthen CHW education, practice, and policies

### The C3 Project Believes CHWs Should

- Come from the communities they serve
- Be recognized as members of a unique profession with a unique scope of work
- Be meaningfully involved in efforts to create policy for their field
- Be trained and supported to play a full range of roles and work across all levels of the socioecological model
- Be recognized and rewarded for their experiential knowledge
- Participate in initial and on-going training that is informed by and based on popular education and adult learning and that includes relevant and practical content
- Receive sufficient and appropriate supervision that supports their professional growth
- Be compensated at a level commensurate with their skills and as they gain experience, be involved as trainers for new CHWs<sup>2,3</sup>

## CHW Self-Determination

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A core value of the C3 Project's implementing team is promoting CHW self-determination<sup>4</sup> supporting CHWs to define their own practice and polices that influence that practice. CHWs and other stakeholders provide leadership to the C3 Project through a range of approaches including:

- A majority-CHW national Advisory Committee that provides a critical feedback and creative input to the process
- CHW key consultants and C3 CHW Fellows who are members of the core implementation team, Fellows chair Advisors
- Feedback sessions at APHA annual meetings to share findings and gather input from CHWs and other stakeholders
- A Reader's Panel made up of individuals from the CHW field, allies, and other decision makers
- Solicitation of feedback on C3 Project findings from the nation's CHW leaders, especially CHW network leaders

## C3 Project Leadership and More Information

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### Project Leadership Team

- E. Lee Rosenthal, Project Director
- Carl Rush, Research Director
- Leslie Hargrove, Manager
- Rob Trachtenberg, Administrator
- Noelle Wiggins, Sergio Matos, Don Proulx, Consultants
- J. Nell Brownstein, Special Advisor
- Jacqueline Ortiz Miller and Catherine Haywood, Advisory Committee Chairs/CHW Fellows
- Durrell Fox and Gail Hirsch, Readers Panel Chairs
- Jessy Uriarte and Caitlin Allen, Research Assistants

For more information, please contact: [info@c3project.org](mailto:info@c3project.org)

### Sources

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3. Catalani, C., Findley, S., Matons, S., Rodriguez, R., (2009). Community Health Worker Insights on Their Training and Certification. *Progress in Community Health Partnerships: Research, Education, and Action*. Fall 3.3: 227-235. 43. American Public Health Association. (2009). Policy Number 20091: Support for community health workers to increase health access and to reduce health inequities [online]. Retrieved January 6, 2013, from <http://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2014/07/09/14/19/support-for-community-health-workers-to-increase-health-access-and-to-reduce-health-inequities>
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