



Michigan Community Health Worker Alliance (MiCHWA)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Katie Mitchell, *Project Coordinator*

Phone: 734-615-7972

Email: katie@michwa.org

First Standardized Community Health Worker Training Launches in Michigan

Grand Rapids, MI & Detroit, MI – The [Michigan Community Health Worker Alliance \(MiCHWA\)](#) and its partners have launched Michigan’s first ever standardized Community Health Worker (CHW) training. Twenty-five CHWs are enrolled in the pilot course and will receive a certificate of completion from [Grand Rapids Community College](#) or [Henry Ford College](#) upon successful completion.

The MiCHWA CHW Curriculum is an endeavor among MiCHWA partners to standardize CHW training in Michigan, with a goal to eventually pursue sustainable financing and recognition of the profession. The 126-hour Michigan-specific curriculum was developed collaboratively by Grand Rapids Community College, Henry Ford College, [Henry Ford Health System](#), the [Institute for Population Health](#), and [Spectrum Health](#). Training classes launched in Grand Rapids on January 26, 2015, and in Detroit on February 4, 2015.

“Spectrum Health is thrilled to have been the catalyst to help bring the first standardized Community Health Worker curriculum for the state of Michigan into fruition,” said Mark Lubberts, director, community health education, Spectrum Health Healthier Communities. “To create a course that will not only bring recognition to the vital role CHWs have within the community, but also earn them credibility with our patients and health care providers was very important to our education team. We are excited to see the first class complete the course.”

MiCHWA will evaluate the success of curriculum implementation in coordination with its host agency, the [University of Michigan School of Social Work](#). MiCHWA will work with students, instructors, and employers to assess best practices and how CHWs are using their training knowledge and skills in the field.

“The Institute for Population Health is looking forward to building a strong partnership with Henry Ford College with the goal of providing quality training to Community Health Workers in Michigan,” said Loretta V. Davis, MSA, President and CEO, IPH.

“This type of collaborative work shows what GRCC does best, building individual skill sets needed by employers to serve our communities. We are happy to be a part of this outstanding project,” said Julie Parks, Executive Director, Workforce Training, Grand Rapids Community College.

CHWs are a vital part of Michigan’s health and human service workforce, and they help to promote better health in at-risk or underserved communities statewide.

####more####



Michigan Community Health Worker Alliance (MiCHWA)

In 2014, MiCHWA's partners began the process of creating a core competency-based CHW training curriculum using Minnesota's standard CHW curriculum as a base. The curriculum covers the following competencies: Role, Advocacy and Outreach; Organization and Resources: Community and Personal Strategies; Teaching and Capacity Building; Legal and Ethical Responsibilities; Coordination, Documentation and Reporting; Communication Skills and Cultural Competence; Healthy Lifestyles; and Mental Health.

Funding for curriculum development was made possible by the Metro Health Foundation, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Spectrum Health Healthier Communities. Metro Health Foundation is a private Detroit grant-making foundation supporting Michigan organizations in health care and health-related field.

"MiCHWA has worked hard since 2011 to unite partners statewide around common education and training standards for CHWs," said Katie Mitchell, MiCHWA project coordinator. "We're thrilled to launch the curriculum pilots and continue supporting Michigan's hardworking CHWs as they engage their communities."

CHWs are trusted members of the communities they serve, and complement existing care providers by delivering information, building relationships, and coordinating care with high-needs residents. Studies consistently show that CHWs help produce better health outcomes in their communities. In Michigan, CHWs are also referred to as *promotoras*, community outreach workers, community health advocates, and many other titles.

About MiCHWA

The Michigan Community Health Worker Alliance (MiCHWA) is a statewide coalition that unites CHWs and stakeholders from health systems, health plans, community organizations, federally qualified health centers, academic research units, CHW programs, workforce development organizations, community colleges, and local health coalitions. Housed by the University of Michigan School of Social Work, MiCHWA's mission is: *To promote and sustain the integration of Community Health Workers into Michigan's health and human service systems through coordinated changes in policy and workforce development.* Learn more at www.michwa.org

#####