



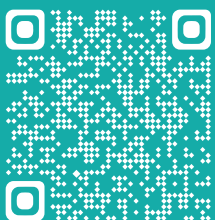
What Makes Community Health Workers Different?

Community Health Workers (CHWs) are frontline public health professionals who often have similar cultural knowledge, practices, and beliefs, chronic health conditions, disabilities, or life experiences as other people in the same community.

CHWs help to improve timely access to healthcare and social services that affect upstream **social determinants of health**. These are conditions related to where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age, and other factors that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.

While CHWs can perform tasks that overlap with some other healthcare or social services workers, as individuals or on teams, they are a distinct group of professionals. Here's one example:

Social Workers	Community Health Workers (CHWs)
Are frequently clinicians	Act as bridges to appropriate services including clinicians
Degree: MSW (Master of Social Work)	Degree: Variety of degrees and experience, eligibility based on lived experience and connection to the community
Credentials: LMSW (Licensed Master of Social Work) or LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker)	Credentials: CCHW (Certified Community Health Worker, necessary for reimbursement); CHWs can also earn endorsements that recognize specialized areas of expertise
Reimbursement: LCSWs can bill insurance companies, Medicare, and Medicaid	Reimbursement: Reimbursable by Medicaid and Medicare
Supervision: A LCSW requires 3,000 supervised hours provided by a LMSW	Supervision: 50 supervised hours required for certification, ideally provided by CCHW supervisors, but often by other team members



Learn more about Community Health Workers at health.ri.gov/chws.

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