



BUILDING A COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER PROGRAM

The Key to Better Care, Better Outcomes, & Lower Costs

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Alliance Overview:

The American Hospital Association (AHA) formed a strategic alliance with the National Urban League (NUL) to advance health equity as well as diversity in health care leadership in communities across the United States. The organizations collaborate to promote shared policy solutions to persistent challenges that impact the health of vulnerable communities, match NUL leaders with opportunities on governing boards at hospitals and health systems, and develop resources and share best practices on community health worker (CHW) programs. As a part of the CHW initiative, the AHA and the NUL hosted the

Community Health Worker Consortium in Chicago, in November of 2017. Representatives from hospital and health system organizations, federal and state agencies, academic institutions and community-based organizations attended the consortium. The session focused on three main topics: defining of the CHW role, credentialing of CHWs, and funding sources and strategies for sustainability. Post the consortium, the AHA and the NUL, along with Community Health Works, Inc. formed a strategic advisory group that worked together to apply findings from the consortium to the *Building A Community Health Worker Program: The Key to Better Care, Better Outcomes, & Lower Costs* toolkit. This resource is intended to help administrative and clinical leaders implement successful and sustainable CHW programs.

Toolkit highlights include:

- Best practice evidence
- Case studies, resources and references
- Definitions of key terms
- Funding considerations
- Talking points for strategic stakeholders
- Program implementation considerations
- Sample job tools and templates used by CHWs
- Suggested outcome measures

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Background:

Imagine a program that allows hospitals and health systems to address the needs of high-risk or at-risk populations (multiple chronic conditions, premature birth), social determinants of health, readmissions, emergency department (ED) over usage and provide direct services.

This is the true potential of a CHW Program.

A growing body of evidence-based practices demonstrates that implementing a CHW program is a solution that delivers meaningful and measurable results to hospital and health systems. Research has shown that CHW programs have resulted in an average savings of \$2,245 per patient served, and hospitals and health systems can save \$2.28 for every \$1.00 it invests in a CHW program – all while improving the health outcomes of patients and communities.

Just as you do, we recognize the need for novel approaches to expand patient access to primary care services, decrease unnecessary ED visits and patient readmissions, prevent disease, increase patient adherence, improve health and wellness and meet the needs of an aging population.

This CHW toolkit will cover what CHW programs are and what is suggested to implement a program on your own as well as the benefits to your organization, your patients and your community.

Using the information within the toolkit, you will be able to design and implement a CHW program to serve the patients within your community and achieve better patient experience, improve health and increase affordability.