



CT Community Health Worker Wellbeing Study

Background:

Community Health Workers (CHWs) are frontline public health workers with an in-depth understanding of the experiences, languages, cultures, and socioeconomic needs of the communities they serve. They go by many names including lay health workers, navigators, and peer support workers, among others.

Extensive research has shown CHWs help to improve clinical outcomes and reduce health care costs.

CHWs are routinely exposed to work stressors that may adversely affect their well-being, including physical and mental health, and social connections. Yet, they have been largely excluded from occupational health research and evidence-based guidelines for the systems in which CHWs work are lacking.

In June 2023, Connecticut passed legislation requiring Medicaid to cover comprehensive CHW services. This moment is an opportune time for congruent efforts to ensure the well-being of this essential workforce.

Project Overview:

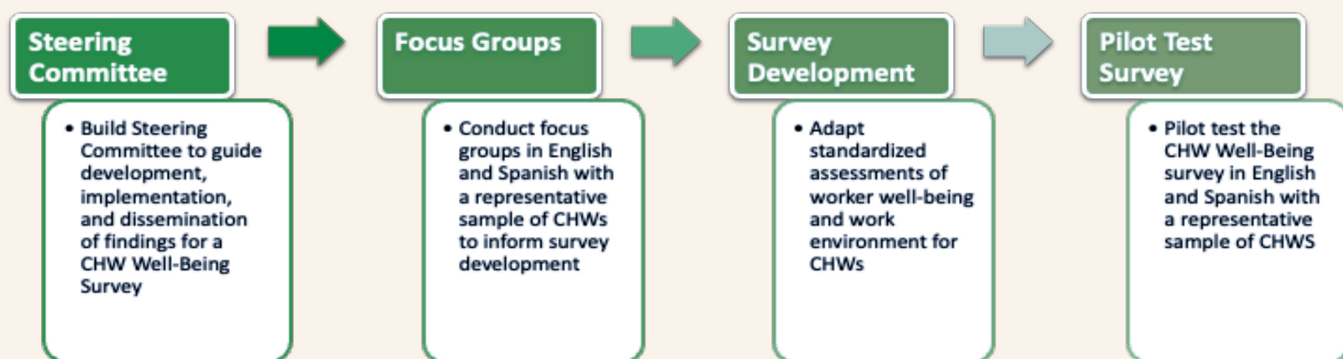
This project aims to employ a holistic approach to characterize, determine root causes of, and identify interventions that promote the wellbeing of CHWs in Connecticut.

The concept of wellbeing includes physical and mental health, as well as social connections both in and out of work.

All aspects of the study will be guided by a Steering Committee consisting of CHWs, and representatives from organizations that are CHW employers or advocates.

The project is being funded by a seed grant from the Community Research Alliance and the UConn Health Department of Public Health Sciences

Approach:



Value-Added of the Study:

This study will provide evidence to support ongoing advocacy efforts to support CHW sustainability in Connecticut.

It will lay the foundation needed, through formation of the Steering Committee and generation of preliminary data, to apply for grants to support larger research efforts to promote CHW well-being in partnership with local stakeholders.

The CHW Well-Being Survey developed can be used assess and improve CHW well-being nationwide.