

Community Health Worker Advisory Body

Meeting Summary

September 7, 2023

Meeting Date	Meeting Time	Location
September 7, 2023	10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Via Zoom

Member Name and Attendance

Community Health Worker Advisory Body Members					
Rachel Rusnak	R	Erika Lynch	R	Liza Estevez	R
Laura Morris	X	Nilda Paris	R	Fernando Morales	X
Kim Barry	X	Derricia Parker	R		
Stephen Fran Thung	X	Adriana Rojas	X		
Mildred Landock	R	Milagrosa Seguinot	R		
Supporting Leadership & Other Participants					
Leslie Greer, OHS	R	Ayesha Clarke, HES	R	Mariae Jackson, The Workplace	R
Adry Sotolongo, Grossman Solutions	R	Elizabeth Conklin, DPH	R	Tanya Barrett, United Way of CT	R
Evelyn Mantilla, Grossman Solutions	R	Cynthia Jean-Mary, Health Education Center	R		
R = Attended Remotely, X= Did Not Attend					

Meeting Information is located at: <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Pages/Community-Health-Worker-Advisory-Body/Meeting-Materials>

	Agenda	Responsible Person(s)
1.	Welcome and Introductions	Rachel Rusnak
	Call to Order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting of the Community Health Worker Advisory Body (CHWAB) was held on Thursday, September 7, 2023, via zoom. Rachel Rusnak chaired the meeting. The meeting convened at 10:05 a.m. Rachel Rusnak introduced herself as the Interim Chair. She took a roll call and announced that Randi Metzenbacher has resigned from the CHWAB. Dr. Stephen Thung has joined the CHWAB and will join us at the October meeting. There are currently 2 vacancies for CHWs. 	
2.	Public Comment	Rachel Rusnak
	There was no public comment.	
3.	Review and Approve June 2023 Meeting Summary	Rachel Rusnak
	There were no changes requested for the March 2023 Meeting Summary. Milagrosa Seguinot Moved acceptance and Mildred Landock seconded. The motion passed unanimously.	
4.	Update from the CHW Association	Milagrosa Seguinot

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milagrosa Seguinot reported that they had great success with the trainings that occurred in July and August. There will be more trainings schedule through the end of the year. • The association is working to make the implementation of the new legislation successful. The next step will be to meet with stakeholders to plan the implementation. • They continued to distribute pins to certified CHWs. Some CHWs may not have received them as they have changed employers. 	
5.	Update on 2023 Legislative Session	Ayesha Clarke
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayesha Clarke, Executive Director of Health Equity Solutions reported on the results of the 2023 legislative session. She highlighted the work that went into achieving Medicaid reimbursement for Community Health Workers. • The arguments that were presented to the state legislature included research on the impact of CHW reimbursement in other states. Evidence shows that providing CHW support through Medicaid is likely to reduce health disparities, which are tied to social and economic factors as well as medical factors. Without this reimbursement, funding has been unpredictable. • Ms. Clarke presented the timeline of the legislative process with the CHW coalition • Many CHWs and members of the CHW coalition participated in the legislative advocacy process, including advocating for S.B. 10 and also supporting changes recommended in S.B. 991. For example, 74 people submitted written testimony and the coalition was able to reach out to 36 Senators and over 100+ Representatives. Ultimately, more than 100 people attended lobby day. • Some of the next steps included meeting with DSS and future efforts will include reconvening in September, to include participation by a member of DSS. 	
6.	Apprenticeship Program Update	Adry Sotolongo
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adry Sotolongo reported on the work of the Apprenticeship working group of the CHWAB. Meetings of the this group included discussion on the experience of apprentices in Connecticut, the value of apprenticeships and comparisons to work in other states. • As of 2022, there are 8 federally recognized CHW apprenticeship programs in the US, approved through the Department of Labor. Apprenticeships are not required for certification. Also, we learned that many such programs receive federal funding through Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA), HHS, or through AmeriCorps. • Host organizations must meet a number of criteria in order to be recognized as a registered apprenticeship through the Department of Labor. Such criteria includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Paid work performed during apprenticeship ○ On-the-job training ○ Classroom learning ○ Mentorship ○ Awarding of credentials upon completion • The subcommittee on apprenticeships explored the many benefits of such a program, including: 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developing a stable and reliable talent pipeline ○ Developing a diverse workforce and help address inequities in labor market ○ Address local health priorities through apprenticeships that align with CHW initiatives ○ Enhance employee retention ○ Providing leadership opportunities to current employees ○ Retaining knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Next steps include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The working group wants to identify hurdles for employers to further refine their thinking by participating in a regional multistate group as well as brainstorming with the CT CHW coalition 	
7.	Review Committee Update	Leslie Greer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leslie Greer reported that we have received an application for a certified trainer which has been approved. ● Two other applicants registered with the portal but have not yet submitted actual applications. ● There was a brief discussion regarding the requirements for trainers to be approved. It was agreed that the CHWAB would work toward distributing application information more widely. 	
8.	Marketing and Outreach Update	Elizabeth Conklin
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There was no update on Marketing and Outreach. 	
9.	DPH Update	Elizabeth Conklin
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Elizabeth Conklin reported that DPH just ended their 1815 grant which includes funding for promotion of CHWs. They submitted 3 grants focused on heart disease, diabetes and dementia and have been awarded all 3 grants for 5 years. ● Ms. Seguinot reported that we now have approximately 379 certified CHWs. 	
10.	General Questions	Rachel Rusnak
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ms. Rusnak floated the idea of switching the meeting times to bi-monthly and/or evening hours. Discussion ensued regarding these ideas, but consensus was that evening meetings would not work for most members. Leslie Greer committed to distributing a survey among all members to assess their preferences. ● Milagrosa Seguinot reported on her participation on the CHW conference in Texas. It was a great conference that provided many resources. 	
11.	Next Steps	Rachel Rusnak
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The next meeting of the CHWAB will be on October 5, 2023. ● Moving forward, meetings will be scheduled for one hour. ● Ms. Rusnak announced that DSS is looking for some stakeholders in the CHW community to give feedback on the process for Medicaid reimbursement. She indicated that Jasmin Johnson at DSS is our main contact for this. ● Cynthia Jean-Mary the new Director of Workforce Development and Training at the Health Education Center. She will soon be joining the CHWAB. 	
12.	Adjourn	Laura Morris
	Milagrosa Seguinot moved adjournment and Mildred Landock seconded. The meeting adjourned at 11:02 a.m.	