

**STATE OF CONNETICUT**  
**State Innovation Model**  
***Community Health Worker Advisory Committee***  
**Meeting Summary**  
**Thursday, November 2, 2017**  
**2:30 pm – 4:30 pm**

**Location:** Hartford Room, CT Behavioral Health Partnership, Crandall Room (4<sup>th</sup> Flr), 500 Enterprise Drive, Rocky Hill, CT 06067

**Members Present:** Grace Damio (chair), Loretta Ebron, Linda Guzzo, Milagrosa Seguinot, Tiffany Donelson, Ashika Brinkley, Darcey Cobbs-Lomax, and Liza Estevez

**Members on the Phone:** Thomas Buckley, Mayce Torres, Yolanda Bowes

**Members Absent:** Juan Carmona, Michael Corjulo, Terry Nowakowski, Lauren Rosato, Chioma Ogazi, Robert Zavoski, Peter Ellis, Jacqueline Ortiz Miller, and Nicholas Peralta.

**Other Participants:** Katharine London, Jenna Lupi, Bruce Gould, Meredith Ferraro, Stanley Zazula, Maggie Litwin, Fatawu Mahama, Tekisha Everett, Supriyo Chatterjee, Jonathan L., Stephanie B.

**1. Call to Order and Introductions**

Grace Damio served as Chair and called the meeting to order at 2:40 pm.

**2. Public Comments**

No public comments were submitted for discussion.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

Motion: to approve minutes from 6/28/17 – Grace Damio

First: Millie Seguinot

Second: Liza Estevez

Vote: all in favor

**4. CHW Legislation Review**

Jenna Lupi reviewed the two-part legislative language from Public Act 17-74, and the charge of the SIM CHW Initiative and this Committee to work with the CT's Department of Public Health (DPH) to determine the options for developing a certification program in CT.

Katharine London asked Tekisha Everett if she had anything to add to Jenna's review about what the legislation might be expecting and any additional insight on what the feeling is surrounding this issue. Tekisha Everett stated that Jenna Lupi's summary was complete and that most of the attention has been on the state's budget, but the folks in Public Health specifically, were very excited about this and wanting more information and next steps. Tekisha Everett added, "Outside of that, there's a lot of I don't know."

Jenna Lupi reviewed the projected timeline from November 2017 through October 2018 whereby the Committee members will draft legislative language for CHW certification consideration in the next legislative

session, develop comprehensive certification requirements, and pending the outcome of the proposed bill, take action to fulfill the requirements as outline in the bill. Note a correction in the PowerPoint: timeline should reflect a date of 2018 for the second and third arrows.

Thomas Buckley ask Jenna Lupi to clarify the last part of the curriculum timeline, asking if DPH is looking for curriculum that would allow a CHW to sit for a certification exam, or do we need to piece that out more? Jenna Lupi stated that in the process of defining the certification process, there would be an approved curricula within. Thomas Buckley asked if there was an entity that had curriculum, they would have to get approval from DPH first. Jenna Lupi stated that this level of detail is exactly what the Committee is here to talk about – what we think DPH’s role will be and what the Committee’s role will be. Grace Damio stated, “In other words, one essential requirement is an approved curriculum. In order to get certified, there’s still decisions to be made... so exam is up for discussion.” Dr. Bruce Gould said that any curriculum would need to be approved in some way and have met certain requirements. Jenna added that it’s up to this Committee at this time as to what those requirements will look like.

Darcey Cobbs-Lomax ask for clarification on what the Committee’s role will be in this timeline. Jenna Lupi stated that the Committee’s role is still to be determined, and its part of what our discussion is now.

Tiffany Donelson asked who is putting this legislation forward, if we decide to move down that path, knowing that the state cannot be a part of this process. Jenna Lupi responded stating that our hope is that like last year, another partner will take on this advocacy role. Grace Damio added that based on what Tekisha said this morning, it is our hope that DPH would be on board with supporting this agenda. Tekisha reiterated Health Equity Solutions’ commitment to supporting the work of this group in any way that requires legislative or policy change with others who are interested. Jenna Lupi confirmed for the Committee that DPH is engaged, stating that DPH Chris Andresen has been working closely with the PMO, is aware of where we are in the process, and is providing valuable information to generate options for today’s meeting.

Linda Guzzo recognized one recommendation that was not included from our previous discussions, which was to include a higher education representative on the Committee. Jenna Lupi acknowledged and agreed to confirm and update the record.

## **5. CHW Advisory Committee Recommendations Review**

Kathryn London reviewed the Committee’s previous recommendations on certification, including characteristics or principles of an ideal process, additional key elements to be included in that process, and details of what Grandfathering, Re-Certification and Registration should look like.

With no questions, Kathryn London presented the key components of three main options for establishing a certification process in CT: (1) DPH e-License Certification; (2) CHW Association Approved & DPH Posted Registry; (3) Third Party Assessment & DPH Links to Registry. The elements of each option, along with a visual describing each process, is available on the presentation slides.

Jenna Lupi stated that these options are examples that exist today and might be more feasible to accomplish with CHWs. However, these can be modified as needed and other options can be explored, but we have to keep in mind what is more likely to be passed through legislation.

Dr. Bruce Gould asked from a cost perspective, how the three options play out. Jenna Lupi responded saying that she does not have all the details yet, but for option 1, through DPH, it may be shy of one hundred dollars, which would also require a half time person at DPH to review the materials and investigate the complaints –

would include a fiscal note. Kathryn London asked if the cost of the certification would fund the half-time person, and if DPH gets retained revenue. Additional follow-up with DPH is needed to answer this question.

Mayce Torres asked what the cost would be for option three. Jenna provided an example for the current CNA model program, which is currently priced around \$125 for the initial application, then \$75 for re-certification. Tiffany Donelson asked if the third party would have a cost associated with engaging the third party. Jenna Lupi suggested that the cost may not be as high as 0.5 FTE like option 1, but that there would be some costs involved because they would be required to investigate any concerns.

Grace Damio commented on the various options within grandfathering and utilizing a test for certification, stating that depending how the specifics of each unfold, may depend on which certification option may be best. Millie Seguinot commented stating that other states are not using an assessment for this initial grandfathering process and that it's all based on previous experience and recommendations from employers. Millie Seguinot added that she wants this issue to be clear, that there should be no assessment during the grandfathering process. Grace Damio stated that she remembers a different version, a two-track approach, where in one you take a class, complete it and take some level of assessment to become certified, and a second track where there's experience but also an assessment. Darcey Cobbs-Lomax commented from an employer's point of view, having some type of assessment allows her to know whom she is hiring, but that what she is concerned about is that if I hire someone, I would be responsible for training them. Dr. Bruce Gould responded by stating that if we took a certified course, there would be some assessment, but one that would not put the workforce off in any way. Kathryn London referred back to slide 13 on grandfathering, where this issue was debated and addressed in the past, and read through the recommendation. Millie Seguinot added that not every applicant would take an assessment in the grandfathering period. Grace Damio and Kathryn London clarified that there can be many tracks towards certification.

Linda Guzzo asked for clarification on the two-year grandfathering window, stating that is should be reworded to introduce more clarity on that point. For example, add, "Grandfathering for the first two-years of the program."

## **6. CHW Certification Opportunities - Comparison Discussion**

Jenna Lupi opened the discussion on which certification option out of the three options presented may best fit the Committee's recommendations and Kathryn London walked through a chart that outlined the suggestions of which option would "meet", "not meet" or "requires discussion" for each committee recommendation.

Tiffany Donelson stated that option two is still confusing, and wanted clarity on what the medical assistant's association setup is like. Jenna Lupi stated that the association gathers information on a national level compiles it and provides it to DPH, who then posts it on their website. Jenna Lupi added that this would be an additional step for an entity like the CHW Association of CT, because there is no national standard for training at this time, and additional processes would need to be established to accomplish this task. Ashika Brinkley asked how the medical assistant's association is funded, asked if they are volunteers, but additional research is needed to answer this question. Tiffany Donelson added that the question is more around the expertise in doing this and around sustainability. Ashika added, especially the costs for maintaining records, such as a database and software costs – many hidden costs to be considered once you get past the initial setup.

In reviewing the Committee's recommendations for certification, Linda Guzzo stated that some of the CNA programs do have a competency test, both written and practicum, that has to be submitted to DPH for approval. Linda Guzzo also stated that Capital Community College has a written exam to complete the CHW core

competency training, but it's not submitted to DPH. In the case of their CNA program, they receive a certificate of completion and provide that to Prometric.

Grace Damio stated that it's an important consideration to have an assessment as an option and the flexibility to create different types of assessment to meet our needs. Grace Damio also felt it was important to think about an assessment that is approved by DPH, but maybe not provided by DPH. When discussing the grandfathering process Millie Seguinot stated this could be achieved by providing previous training certificates or employer approval of hours worked as a CHW. Mayce Torres was concerned that she does not have training certificates or the ability to have hours worked approved by an employer because she has been a volunteer CHW. Jenna Lupi stated that it is good to raise these concerns now because DPH does not have the expertise to make these decisions. Tiffany Donelson stated that she was still concerned about the capacity to support this infrastructure. Darcey Cobbs-Lomax asked if there was the ability to have DPH get the CHW Association of CT involved with expertise decision making. Mayce Torres was concerned with other CHWs voices not being heard. Stanley Zazula validated Mayce Torres's concern and suggested it as something to be discussed further. Tiffany Donelson stated that she did not feel ready to answer all of these questions yet. Jenna Lupi stated that she asked DPH about having the CHW Association of CT as advisory group to DPH, but DPH does not usually have this.

At the conclusion of Kathryn London's presentation, Kathryn London asked members to give a preliminary opinion on which option they are leaning towards to pursue certification. Millie Seguinot stated that the CHW Association of CT has to staff or funding. The question was opened to Tekisha Everett who clarified if pursuing the second option with the CHW Association of CT; this would still require a fiscal note. Tom Buckley stated that he was concerned about liability with the CHW Association of CT. Ashika Brinkley raised her concerns about the cost with the third option, as well as not over professionalizing CHWs and unintended consequences. Dr. Bruce Gould reiterated that it should not be cost prohibitive of the people you want doing this work. Jenna Lupi raised the question about how many people are foreseen to be certified in the first two years.

Stanley Zazula asked the group if option two was a track still to be explored and there was consensus among members not to rule it out, but to obtain research of what other states have done to accomplish this option. Tiffany Donelson stated that she would like more information on the details and feasibility of each option before making a determination. Other members agreed with this assessment.

Jenna Lupi reviewed the final slide with additional questions for this Committee to address between now and January 2018.

## **7. Next Steps and Adjourn**

Jenna Lupi stated that additional research and information on each option is needed to inform the Committee and that efforts will be made to gather this information prior to our next meeting.

Grace Damio made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:25 pm.