

Community Health Worker Curriculum

The protocol manual builds upon over 20 years of developing, implementing, and training Community Health Workers (CHWs). The training includes 40-hour didactic training and 80-hour practicum (shadowing experienced CHWs) within the three month orientation period. The training covers the major health and social problems encountered by Kentuckians. The manual was developed in consultation with health providers, experience of CHWs and from researching current health information. Components of every client's care include emphasis on prevention, chronic disease self-management and encouragement of a healthy lifestyle.

All CHWs are required to complete all training modules included in the Community Health Training program.

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Community Health Worker Training Agenda

DAY 1 (8 hours)

MODULE 1: INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

Objectives:

- Define community health workers.
- Understand the scope of practice and core competencies of a community health worker.
- Discuss various community health worker models.

MODULE 2: COMMUNICATION AND HEALTH LITERACY

Objectives:

- Be respectful and culturally aware during interactions with clients.
- Listen carefully, repeating back important information as necessary to confirm mutual understanding and continually work to improve communication and revisit past topics as trust develops with client.
- Pay attention to expressive (non-verbal) behavior.
- Ask neutral, open-ended questions to request relevant information.
- Speak clearly and honestly.
- Use language that conveys caring and is non-judgmental.
- Explain terms or concepts whose meanings may not be obvious to clients, community members or to professional colleagues.
- Clarify mutual rights and obligations, as necessary, such as client confidentiality or CHW reporting responsibilities.
- Use written and visual materials to convey information clearly and accurately.
- Take care to prevent situations involving conflict. Address conflicts that may arise in a professional and safe manner.
- Seek assistance from supervisors as necessary to address language barriers, personal relationships, or other challenges.
- Be knowledgeable and comfortable working with a variety of special populations.

MODULE 3: USE OF PUBLIC HEALTH CONCEPTS AND APPROACHES

Objectives:

- Recognize the role of formal and informal data in setting program priorities and targets.
- Understand differences as well as connections between public health and health care.
- Understand how individual health is shaped by family, community, neighborhood and wider social conditions (such as education, poverty, housing, safety, transportation and environmental quality).
- Understand public health's emphasis on prevention and the role of policy change in preventing injury and disease, and CHW roles in prevention strategies and reducing health inequities.
- Understand the relationship between public health and social justice.
- Demonstrate the relationship between public health equities, health disparities and social justice.
- Gain and share basic knowledge of specific health topics.

DAY 2 (8 hours)

MODULE 4: HEALTH COACHING CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Objectives:

- Apply information from client and community assessments to promote strategies to improve health.
- Develop individual health improvement plans in cooperation with clients, providers and other partners that recognize and build upon client goals, strengths to promote self-efficiency.
- Understand how to use multiple techniques for helping people understand and address health risks for themselves, their family members, or their communities. (Examples may include informal counseling, motivational interviewing, active listening, harm reduction, community-based participatory research, group work, and other strategies.)
- Learn and convey information accurately, using culturally and linguistically accessible methods and materials.
- Coordinate education and behavior change activities with the care that is provided by professional colleagues and team members.
- Facilitate constructive discussion in informal and group settings with clients and their families.
- Provide on-going support and follow-up as necessary to support healthy behavior change.
- Remove barriers and create solutions by communicating with providers and community based organizations to inform them about community and individual needs, culture and behavior to improve the effectiveness of services they provide.

DAY 3 (8 hours)

MODULE 5: OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY

Objectives:

- Education and outreach plans are based on individual and community strengths, needs and resources and developed in collaboration with others in order to accomplish assigned goals and objectives for the clients and /or community.
- Identify and share appropriate information, referrals, and other resources to help individuals, families, groups, clients, and organizations meet their needs.
- Communicate effectively with diverse populations in a variety of community and service provider settings.
- Adapt and employ effective, culturally responsive strategies to address identified issues and behaviors.
- Initiate and sustain trusting relationships with individuals, families, and social networks.
- Establish and maintain cooperative relationships with community-based organizations and other resources to promote client services, care, education, and advocacy.
- Conduct outreach with attention to possible safety risks for self, clients, and colleagues.

MODULE 6: CARE COORDINATION AND SYSTEM NAVIGATION

Objectives:

- Obtain and share up-to-date information about health insurance programs and eligibility, public health and social service programs, including the ACA and additional resources to protect and promote health.
- Provide referrals and follow-up for services to help clients access needed services.
- Provide care coordination, including basic care planning with individuals and families based on their involvement, needs assessment, and facilitating care changes.
- Provide information and support for people in using agency and institutional services.
- Provide support for people to follow provider and/or caregiver instructions and advice.
- Inform care providers about challenges that limit the ability of clients to follow care plans and navigate the health care system, including barriers as outlined in the current version of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

DAY 4 (8 hours)

MODULE 7: DOCUMENTATION REPORTING AND OUTCOMES MANAGEMENT

Objectives:

- Organize one's thoughts and write at the level necessary for communicating effectively with clients, other community members, supervisors, and other professional colleagues.
- Comply with reporting, record keeping, and documentation requirements in one's work.
- Use appropriate technology, such as computers, for work-based communication, according to employer requirements.
- Provide assessment results in ways that support on-going agency and community planning and program evaluation.

MODULE 8: LEGAL, ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Objectives:

- Practice in compliance with the Kentucky Code of Ethics for Community Health Workers (under development).
- Observe the scope and boundaries of the CHW role in the context of the agency team and agency policy.
- Respect client rights under HIPAA and applicable agency rules.
- Understand issues related to abuse, neglect, and criminal activity that may be reportable under law and regulation.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries that balance professional and personal relationships, recognizing dual roles as both CHW and community member.
- Seek assistance from supervisors as necessary to address challenges related to work responsibilities.
- Establish priorities and organize one's time, resources, and activities to achieve optimal efficiencies.
- Work proactively and creatively to identify and address client, community, and agency needs.
- Utilize and advocate as necessary for supervision, training, continuing education, networking, and other resources for professional development and lifelong learning for self and colleagues.
- Knowledge and adherence to all local state, federal policies and regulations pertaining to the CHW scope of work.

MODULE 9: RESEARCH

Objectives:

- Train CHWs to provide evidence-based information.
- Improve health disparities, health outcomes, health policy, and health care delivery.
- Be able to raise public awareness of rural health issues via dissemination of research findings through publications presentations and technical assistance to health practitioners, scholars and public groups.