

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
**State Innovation Model**  
**Community Health Worker Advisory Committee**

**Meeting Summary**

Thursday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018

2:30 pm – 4:30 pm

**Location:**

**Behavioral Health Partnership, Hartford Room (Suite 4D, Crandall Room)**  
**500 Enterprise Drive, Rocky Hill, CT 06067**

**Members Present:** Grace Damio, Liza Estevez, Lauren Rosato, Thomas Buckley, Darcey Cobbs-Lomax, Terry Nowakowski, Juan Carmona

**Members on the Phone:** Mayce Torres, Loretta Ebron, Millie Seguinot, Tiffany Donelson

**Members Absent:** Migdalia Belliveau, Linda Guzzo, Robert Zavoski, Peter Ellis, Nicholas Peralta, Ashika Brinkley, Chioma Ogazi, Michael Corjulo

**Other Participants:** Jenna Lupi, Katharine London, Bruce E. Gould, Fernando Morales, Maggie Litwin, Ula Uszynski, Fatawu Mahama, Cecil Tengtenga, Keturah Kinch, Randy Domina, Chris Andresen (phone), Giselle Carlotta-McDonald (phone), Dana Robinson Rush (phone), Supriyo Chatterjee (phone), Nina Holmes (phone), Ken Lalime (phone), Cindy Dubuque-Gallo (phone)

**Call to Order and Introductions**

Grace Damio served as Chair and called the meeting to order at 2:36pm.

**Public Comments**

No public comments were submitted for discussion.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion: to approve minutes from July 17<sup>th</sup>

First: Lauren Rosato

Second: Liza Estevez

All in favor

**Purpose of the meeting:**

The purpose of this meeting is to review the public comment received regarding the Report to the Legislature on CHW Certification and approve a final version of the Report for the SIM Steering Committee.

Jenna Lupi started the meeting by thanking everyone who submitted public comments in regards to the Report to the Legislature on CHW Certification. Many changes were made due to the public comments. Looking forward to today's discussion of the public comment responses for the group to review, approve, and make comments or suggestions.

### **Review & Discussion of Report to the Legislature on CHW Certification**

Jenna Lupi went over major changes that were made and Katherine London facilitated discussion. Some of the changes that were done to the report were changes in wording for example, pathways to certification previously called "new" and "experienced" were changed to "Path 1" and "Path 2". There was another change done regarding the eligibility for certification, minimum age requirements, and continuing education requirements for certification, code of ethics, advisory body composition, and instructor qualifications. Additional changes to the report were made in real-time during the meeting.

Jenna Lupi reviewed the slide deck that was prepared for the meeting and the structure of the meeting for the group and reminded the committee that the purpose of this report is for legislative or policy changes within the state. Once approved from the committee, this report will go to the SIM Steering Committee, and hopefully, after that to the legislation.

**The following items were the major themes that appeared in the public comments; these items were the focus of the review and discussion during the meeting:**

- Pathways to Certification – New/Experienced vs. Path 1/2
- Eligibility to Certification – Preferred Minimum age
- Certification issuance and renewal – Continuing Education
- Continuing Education – When should it be completed?
- Establishing a Code of Ethics for CHWs
- Advisory Body and CHW representation
- Instructor Qualifications

The following are the changes that were made to the recommendations, based on public comments, review and discussion.

**Recommendation 1:** Based on several recommendations received through public comments, the two pathways to certification were renamed as "Path 1" and "Path 2" to reduce confusion with the terms "new" and "experienced" CHWs. There was also a public comment regarding experienced CHWs and out of state CHWs moving into the State to recommend certification process be used primarily to grandparent existing experienced CHWs in Connecticut and for CHWs transferring from other states, and to be phased out. There was a strong belief from the Committee to maintain a path to certification that did not require training since experienced and working CHW who do not wish to get certified right away, might eventually chose to do so. Additional clarity was added that this experience did not have to be from CT, but could come from out of state; this would also address CHWs new to CT who may choose to become certified. There was also a public comment about the 1,000 hours of training in the past 3 years required for new CHW to be certified. The

recommendation was to reconsider the proposed hours of required training and possibly decrease that amount. This public comment was not accepted because these hours and this experience was felt to be necessary and reasonable for certification. The majority of the recommendation remained intact the only change made based on public comment was to include “Path 1” and Path 2” instead of “new” and “experienced”.

Katherine London added that Jenna Lupi pulled together these responses on behalf of the committee, for the committee to approve or make changes or suggestions too. If anyone has any comments or suggestions they would like to make, now is the time to make them.

**Recommendation 2:** Public comments suggested changing the recommendation for applicants to be at least 18 years of age. Since the Committee discussed this in length, there was a strong feeling for the recommendation should remain unchanged. Lauren Rosato shared on behalf of the Deign Group that discussed this, they discussed this in great length and that she strongly advocated for this because her organization has youth programs where individuals could accumulate internship and volunteer hours for this age group to make them eligible for CHW certification.

Jenna Lupi added that not every comment is included in today’s slide deck for sake of time. The public comments that appeared the most and required more discussion were pulled out for today’s meeting. A copy of the full list of public comments and responses was provided to the group via email before today is meeting. Katherine London added that the meeting slides focus on changes to the recommendations. Changes to the report will be addressed at the later part of the meeting.

**Recommendation 3:** No changes were made to this recommendation.

**Recommendation 4:** No changes were made to this recommendation.

**Recommendation 5:** Based on public comment on continuing education requirements the recommendation was changed to read, “Certification should be issued for two years and for renewal, applicants should be required to attest to the completion of 20 hours of continuing education requirements (CERs), including two hours focused on cultural competency and two hours focused on social determinants of health. Applicants may be required by the certifying entity to produce evidence of completion of CERs, but it should not be a routine requirement”. Based on the Committee’s discussion it was suggested to add “systemic racism/oppression” as an option of the continuing education requirements. Tom Buckley shared concerns of DPH’s ability to review and approve for credit hours. Chris Andresen said almost all professions have a cultural competency requirement and DPH is very flexible and respectful to meeting these continuing education requirements. This suggestion was approved by the Committee and added to the recommendation. There were public comments suggesting extending the length of certification to 3 years and change the required number of CERs to 30 hours. This was a change to the Committee’s original recommendation, but was felt to be less burdensome on the CHWs. The Committee then approved this change.

**Recommendation 6:** Based on public comments, it was recommended that conferences, webinars, workshops, seminars, trainings, presentations and self-studies should count toward continuing

education hours, and do not have to be completed outside of employment hours. A designated tracking sheet should be completed for each activity. The Committee agreed with this change.

**Recommendation 7:** Based on public comment, CHW certification applicants should commit to abide by a CHW Code of Ethics. The Advisory Body should review and approve a Standard of Conduct based on those developed in other states. In the event of an alleged Code of Ethics violation, DPH should follow its established investigation, adjudication, and disciplinary proceedings. Katherine suggested that the Advisory Body should establish, review, and adapt to the specific code of ethics. Millie Seguinot added Code of Ethics is not the right language for this, but that there should be a customized Standard of Conduct developed specifically for the state. The recommendation was changed to state, “The Advisory Body should review and approve a Standard of Conduct based on those developed in other states”.

**Recommendation 8:** Based on public comment, recommendation 8a was added regarding the fees, the Committee recommends that the certification and re-certification fees be as nominal as possible to reduce barriers. Added to recommendation that “To help offset these costs, outside funding should be allowed to support the start-up costs for CHW Certification”. The Committee agreed to this addition.

**Recommendation 9:** No changes were made to this recommendation.

**Recommendation 10 & 10a:** Public comment wanted to know why the CHW Association of CT was to be the lead administrative role for the Advisory Body, this was done because other states with successful CHW programs have a strong CHW association, and this will give the CHW Association of CT that opportunity to have a critical role in certification. Public comment also raised questions about why it was recommended that DSS, DMHAS and commercial payers have no voting role for the advisory body. This was because of concerns of the size of the advisory body, smaller was seen as more efficient, and mainly because it should be the voice of the CHWs developing standards for their certification. There were concerns with payers developing certification standards, because that should really be coming from the workforce. There was also public comment about CHW employers who are healthcare organization based and community-based, to satisfy this removed the role of a health educator to include a CHW employer that is healthcare organization based and a CHW employer that is community-based. Public comment also raised concerns of training organization voting on training organizations, so it was decided to not have training organization voting on training organizations. This Committee agreed on these changes to the recommendation.

Further discussion enabled modification of this recommendation to remove “such as the process used to select SIM Advisory committee members” and instead state “a neutral appointment process, still to be determined”. Based on the discussion it was felt that using the SIM process or the SIM CHW Advisory Committee was not the right place for this. The committee felt that this required further discussion later.

**Recommendation 11:** No changes were made to this recommendation.

**Recommendation 12:** No changes were made to this recommendation.

**Recommendation 13:** No changes were made to this recommendation. Based on public comment a clarifying change was made to a table in the report. This was reviewed with the committee.

**Recommendation 14:** No changes were made to this recommendation.

**Recommendation 15:** No changes were made to this recommendation.

**Recommendation 16:** Public comments were submitted around the instructor qualifications. The recommendation was changed to read, “Instructors for CHW training should be inclusive of CHWs with experience in the field, as well as non-CHWs who meet the requirements of the training vendor. Instructors should demonstrate past experience training individuals who provide community health work services, including, but not limited to: Promotores, CHWs, or other health care professionals and paraprofessionals in the previous six years. They should have the knowledge, skills and competence to effectively teach a CHW Core Competency curriculum. Instructors who are not CHWs should provide a resume to demonstrate their experience training in the past six years. The training vendor (i.e. educational background) may additionally define other requirements. Instructors who are CHWs should have at least three years of experience working full-time as a CHW, proof of completion of a CHW Core Competency Training, and knowledge of the community and community resources”. The group discussed questions around the way of validating the actual completion of such trainings, and it was clarified that current trainings provide a certificate of completion; this would serve as the proof of completion. The questions arose if the CHW should have experience training or have received a facilitation training. It was felt that the purpose of having a trainer who is not a CHW would have knowledge of facilitating a training, in the event that the CHW did not have this, but that if the CHW had this it would certainly be beneficial. In conclusion, the group recommended a change to the recommendation to remove CHW Trainer requirement of “knowledge of community” and replaced it with “knowledge of group facilitation”.

**Recommendation 17:** No changes were made to this recommendation.

**Recommendation 18:** No changes were made to this recommendation.

#### **Other edits to report.**

Jenna Lupi asked the group if there were any other particular comments or changes to the recommendations the Committee would like to raise. Any questions and/or comments? Jenna Lupi also pointed out minor changes that were added to recommendations and finally, Jenna Lupi reviewed the changes from the meeting the will be included in the report.

Motion made by Grace Damio to accept the report with changes:

First: Thomas Buckley

Second: Lauren Rosato

Abstentions: none

All in favor

#### **Review & Next Steps**

Jenna added that the report will be shared with the SIM Steering Committee on September 7<sup>th</sup>, reviewed next Thursday, September 13 and asked for approval. Following approval, the Report will be submitted to the Legislature.

Next CHW Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for October 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Adjourn**

Grace Damio made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:30 pm.