

# The State of CHW Employment and Funding in Cook County

May 31, 2023

## Context

Sinai Urban Health Institute (SUHI) and the Health and Medicine Policy Research Group (HMPRG) have released results from a first-ever survey of employers utilizing Community Health Workers, aimed at mapping the landscape for CHWs across the region. The [Cook County Common Indicator Employer Survey](#) showed strong use of CHWs in the wake of the pandemic, but that Cook County faces some tough decisions as the public health emergency ends with 64% of the respondents serving Cook County reporting that none of their funding comes from a sustainable source.

## Financing:

As pandemic-related funding opportunities that bolstered the CHW workforce in Illinois end, leveraging braided multi-source funding mechanisms is critical to sustain CHW employment. Medicaid reimbursement for CHW activities is considered a sustainable source of funding and can be currently accessed in a variety of ways:

### Current Medicaid reimbursement options:

- Diabetes Prevention Program services
- Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) - Administrative expenditures
- Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) - Total cost proposal per visit rate

### Future Medicaid reimbursement options (Pending Illinois CHW Review Board processes and approval of a Medicaid State Plan Amendment):

- CHW activity Fee For Service billing under a certified Medicaid provider\*
  - \*Billing accessibility for community-based organizations will be explored in the future

### Other funding opportunities we're exploring:

- Medicaid 1115 Waiver
- Billing with Z Codes for Social Determinates of Health activities
- Apprenticeships and Workforce Development Funding

## Take Action:

Illinois CHW Association and Health & Medicine Policy Research Group offer technical assistance to organizations and individuals interested in getting involved in CHW advocacy efforts. Email Angela Eastlund, [aeastlund@hmprg.org](mailto:aeastlund@hmprg.org) for more information.

- [Sign on to ILCHWA advocacy letter: Advance & Sustain the Illinois Community Health Worker Workforce](#)
- Provide written or oral testimony to Illinois CHW Review Board meetings
- Advocate for large scale statewide bridge funding to support CHW employment through Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS)

## Get Involved:

- ILCHWA's Workforce Development Committee (email: [ilchwa2018@gmail.com](mailto:ilchwa2018@gmail.com))
- Public Health Workforce Collaborative (email: Anna Yankelev, [ayankelev@hmprg.org](mailto:ayankelev@hmprg.org))
- National Association of CHWs (NACHW) Policy Committee (visit [nachw.org](http://nachw.org))
  - Read NACHW Report: "[Sustainable Financing of Community Health Worker Employment](#)"