

Community Health Worker

Follow Your Heart to a Caring Career

*Find your fit in health care
employment that makes a real
difference in the lives of others*



Community Health Workers (CHWs) are trusted, knowledgeable frontline health personnel who typically come from the communities they serve and have a shared life experience. CHWs serve as a liaison between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve health outcomes and the quality and cultural sensitivity of service delivery. CHWs empower individuals and communities for better health through a range of activities such as system navigation, education, connection to resources, informal counseling, social support and advocacy.

This position might be right for you if you enjoy working with individuals to increase health knowledge, self-sufficiency, and access to care and resources.

JOB OUTLOOK



CHWs are an emerging workforce, newer to most “mainstream” public health and health care settings—but with deep roots in many communities. Nationally, employment of community health workers is projected to grow [14 percent from 2022 to 2032](#), much faster than the average for all occupations.

OTHER JOB TITLES FOR POSITIONS THAT DO SIMILAR WORK:

Community Health Representative (American Indian communities), Promotora de Salud (Latine communities), Outreach Worker, Care Guide, Community Health Advisor, Healthcare/Patient Navigator, peer educator, health educator, insurance navigator, program coordinator, and more.

EDUCATION

A high school diploma or GED is typically required for someone working as a CHW. Experience living in and/or sharing the culture and language of the community served is often a preferred job qualification. Employers also provide on-the-job training and [Registered Apprenticeship Opportunities](#). Some employers may require completion of the 16 credit, academic CHW Certificate program offered by accredited post-secondary colleges and universities in Minnesota. Look at the job description and ask the employer about what is needed during your job interview.

Tuition assistance may be available through an academic institution or through the MN CHW Training Program grant: [CHW Certificate Scholarship \(mnchwalliance.org\)](https://mnchwalliance.org).

LICENSING INFORMATION

No health care-related licensing is required. Some positions may require a driver's license. Ask your employer about what is needed during your job interview.

CERTIFICATION INFORMATION

No health care-related certification is required. Some organizations may require that you complete the academic CHW Certificate Program and register your certificate with MN DHS. Ask the employer about what is needed during your job interview.

BACKGROUND STUDY

People who want to work as a CHW in certain settings such as health care must complete and pass a comprehensive criminal background check as required by state law.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

People who are bilingual in English and languages other than English are encouraged in this occupation. Some employers may require that you take a language skills test. Ask the employer during your job interview about what is needed and how your language skills can be used to help others.

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER

CAREER GROWTH

There are opportunities for career growth after a person gains experience as a CHW. Sometimes employers pay for training for workers to become certified in higher levels of health care such as Social Work or Nursing and earn more money. Ask the employer during your job interview about opportunities for career growth. Some CHWs may also obtain other credentials such as a Certified Nursing Assistant, Medical Assistant, Doula, and others.

WAGES

Hourly rates may vary based on education, experience, geographic area, and job duties. The mean CHW hourly wage in MN is approximately \$22.70/ hour based on 2023 data from the [US Bureau of Labor Statistics](#). The hourly pay can range from \$15- \$35 per hour.

DAILY WORK ACTIVITIES

CHWs work in a variety of sectors including health care, public health, communities, schools, and more. In healthcare, CHWs work in hospitals and clinics, home visiting, and public health and community organizations. Daily work activities in different settings may vary and include:

- Meet with individuals and families in the home, health care setting or community to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate health information, resources, and system navigation.
- Serve as an advocate and liaison between the client and the medical team (e.g. doctors, nurses, and social workers) to understand and meet health and social needs.
- Assist clients in and teach skills to access health, dental and social services by assisting to schedule appointments, medical transportation, and interpreter services.
- In some settings, CHWs may assist with clinic rooming and front desk processes or conduct health related screenings (e.g. height, weight, blood pressure, diabetes risk test, etc.).
- Work with clients to understand and breakdown barriers to taking medications as prescribed, assist with access to prescriptions (e.g. refills, financial support programs).

- Work with clients to set health goals, develop and follow-up on care plans.
- Screen clients for health and social needs (e.g. housing, food, financial, employment, school, etc.) and link them to social and community resources.
- Provide basic needs (e.g. direct provision of food, household supplies, delivery of medications, etc.).
- Assist clients with completing paperwork and applications for programs such as health insurance and public assistance.
- Assist clients with reading mail, billing questions, and arranging payment plans.
- Teach people how to use technology and phones for accessing virtual care and services.
- Assist with care transitions and facilitate continuity of care by providing follow-up between health care visits, which may include home visits.
- Articulate and advocate needs of community and individuals to others and teach client self-advocacy skills.
- Promote wellness by providing culturally appropriate health information to clients and providers.
- Deliver health promotion and chronic disease management education (1:1 and group activities)
- Assist clients in self-management of chronic illnesses, including medication adherence, healthy eating, physical activity, and other health promotion activities.
- Provide dental education and support services (e.g. fluoride varnish)
- Organize and/or facilitate support groups.
- Provide coaching and social support, such as nutrition training, recovery services for mental health and substance use disorders, and chronic disease management and prevention.

HOW TO FIND WORK AS A COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER

- Talk to someone at a CareerForce location near you:
 - Visit CareerForceMN.com/locations
 - Call 651-259-7500
- Go to the MN CHW Alliance website: [Home \(mnchwalliance.org\)](https://mnchwalliance.org)

CareerForceMN.com/CaringCareer

651-259-7500 – language interpretation services available