

Community Health Workers in Vermont

Professional Identity Snapshot

November 2020

Introduction

This brief provides a summary of key data points derived from a May 2020 surveyⁱ of 85 community health workers (CHW) and 24 CHW supervisors from across Vermont. The survey, conducted by the Vermont Department of Health (VDH), in collaboration with the Vermont CHW Steering Committee, represents an initial effort by VDH to collect information about the roles, scope of work, skills and training of the current CHW workforce in the state.

CHW Job Titles

CHWs can go by many titles, but still fulfill the same duties as a CHW. CHWs listed over 40 different job titles, with SASHⁱⁱ Coordinator (21%), CHW (9%) and Care Coordinator (9%) being the top three most common titles. In comparison, CHW supervisors listed over 20 different titles, with CHW (42%), family support worker (33%), and recovery coach (25%) being the most common titles.

CHW Profile

Most CHWs identify as female (85%) and White (93%). About a quarter (24%) younger than 35, 39% are 35-54 years of age, and 38% are 55 and older.

In terms of education, almost a quarter (24%) have a graduate degree, 59% have a bachelor's degree, 8% have an associates degree, 4% completed some college, and 2% or less have a professional or trade certificate, high school diploma or GED, or some high school. Finally, just over half (51%) reported not being licensed health professionals.



91% of CHWs have a degree beyond high school

51% of CHWs are not licensed health professionals

Highlights

CHW Profile

85% identify as female

93% identify as White

71% are 35-64 years of age

82% work full-time

76% make \$25-55k/year

CHW Work & Roles

20+ job titles

84% work with low-income populations

71% work with chronic health conditions

Top 3 Funding Sources

\$ Grants

\$ Community Health Team/Blueprint for Health

\$ Organizational operating budgets

Source: 2020 Vermont Community Health Worker Landscape Assessment

Learn more at healthvermont.gov/CHWs

CHW PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

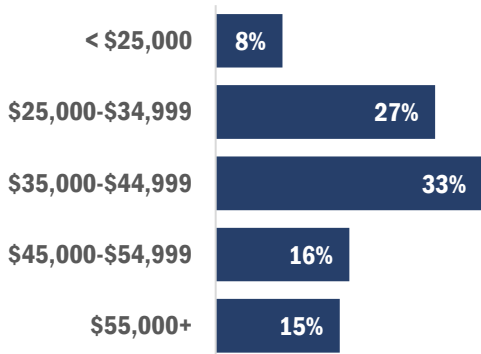
CHW Employment & Compensation

Most CHWs (82%) work full-time and report being engaged as care-team members within their organizations. Around 41% have been serving in the CHW role for three years or less, 39% for 4-10 years, and 20% for 11 or more years. In terms of compensation, 8% reported making less than \$25,000 per year, 60% report making \$25,000-44,999 per year, and 32% make \$45,000 per year or more. According to CHW supervisors, the most cited funding sources for CHW positions are grants (54%), Community Health Team (CHT) / Blueprint for Health (42%), and organizational operating budgets (33%), with just under half (45%) reporting one or more funding sources.

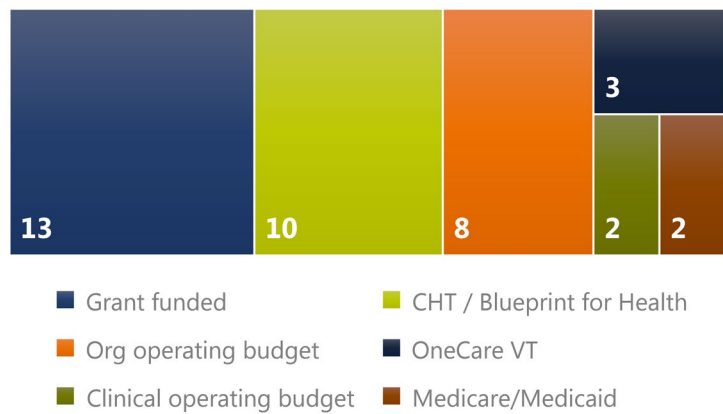


59% have served in a CHW role for 4+ years

CHW Self-Reported Salary Range



Supervisor-Reported CHW Funding Sources



CHW PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

Populations Served & Health Conditions Addressed

CHWs work with a variety of populations and with a variety of mental and physical health conditions. The most common populations CHWs work with are those with low-income (84%), people with disabilities (77%), and older adults (74%).

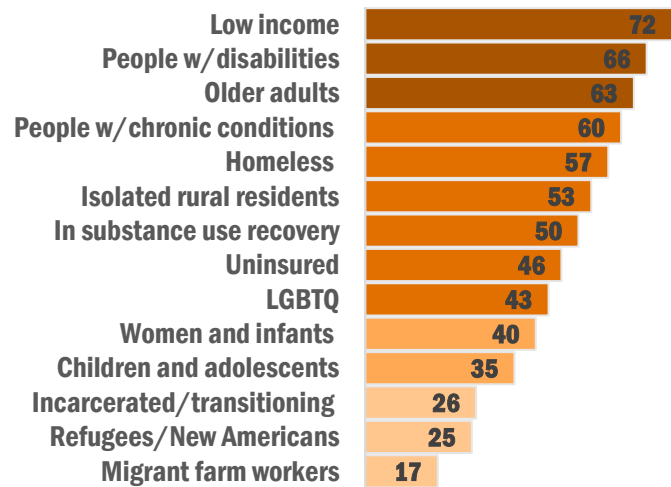
CHWs reported working on many different health conditions. The most cited are mental / behavioral health (68%), substance use (49%), diabetes (42%), heart disease (41%), tobacco cessation (36%), obesity (34%), and asthma (30%).

Next Steps

The Vermont Community Health Worker Steering Committee directs efforts to accomplish sustainable change in promoting and supporting the work of Community Health Workers in Vermont. The committee will conduct an annual survey to collect critical information to inform the statewide priorities to recognize and advance the work of Community Health Workers in Vermont.

For more information: Visit Healthvermont.gov/CHWS or contact Jennifer Woolard, jennifer.woolard@vermont.gov

Populations Served by CHWs



CHW PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

ⁱ **A note about survey methods and respondents:** Data for this brief was gathered from a web-based survey (administered 05/18/2020 –06/15/2020) of a convenience sample of CHWs and CHW supervisors across Vermont. A total of 24 CHW supervisors from 13 organizations (at least one survey respondent from each county) and 85 CHWs (working across 84 Vermont towns) responded to the survey. This was a first effort of VDH to gather baseline information about CHW professionals and organizations that engage CHWs; therefore, it is unclear the extent to which the responses are representative of all CHWs or all organizations that engage CHWs in Vermont.

ⁱⁱ Support and Services at Home

The Vermont Community Health Worker activities are in part, supported through the DP18-1815 Vermont Department of Health grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Improving the Health of Vermonters through Prevention and Management of Diabetes and Heart Disease and Stroke