

Community Health Workers (CHW) “CHW Home” National Virtual Platform

Create an innovative national platform for CHWs to connect, share resources, access learning and professional development, and leverage their proven effectiveness at reducing health inequities.

Why It Matters

As frontline public health workers, CHWs are trusted members of or have trusted relationships with the communities they support. 60+ years of research has shown CHWs are effective at reducing health inequities, containing costs, and improving outcomes across a range of social determinants, health issues, and diseases. Despite this track record, the ability of CHWs to serve their communities is constrained by:

- Unreliable workforce data
- No infrastructure to respond to emergencies
- Limited access to professional development
- No visibility of workforce capacity & assets
- Difficulty accessing information to quickly assist clients

CHWs need national support infrastructure that strengthens their individual performance and optimizes their collective deployment in response to the needs of underserved communities.

Solution

Build a national virtual platform that builds the capacity of CHWs to address social and community health needs and improves emergency mobilization and communications. Platform functionality will enable CHWs and state/regional CHW networks to:

- Expand CHW communities to connect with each other
- Share resources and best practices
- Learn from each other and NACHW
- Support policy and advocacy movement building
- Access professional development opportunities
- Build CHW leadership capacity and skills
- Improve public health emergency communications to CHWs

In addition, the platform will help NACHW collect national data on the CHW workforce to support CHW integration, policy, and sustainability.

Feedback from diverse CHW constituents informed the planning phases of this project. Input from subject matter experts and CHW listening sessions helped define system requirements for desired platform functionality, accessibility, and security.



Impact

While the virtual platform is still in development, target outcomes and metrics that will be tracked include:



CHW engagement including user retention rate, churn rate, daily and monthly active users, activity by functionality, stickiness ratio, and more.



User reported outcomes such as feeling the platform is a safe, trusted source of information, regular use of platform to access opportunities and resources, sharing of successes.



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Key Learnings

- CHWs must be at the table when workforce interventions are being developed. Direct engagement of community members is essential for developing responsive public health projects.
- Equitable CHW-led program development 1) builds consensus; 2) identifies and addresses concerns early on; and 3) ensures project is led by those most impacted.
- Ensuring transparent and equitable inclusion and compensating community members for their participation and perspectives helps support equity in outreach efforts.

