



**Promotor(a) or Community Health Worker  
Training and Certification Advisory Committee  
Approved Meeting Minutes  
Monday, April 22, 2024  
10:00 a.m.**

**Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Introductions**

Ms. Otila Garcia, Chair, called the Promotor(a) or Community Health Worker Training and Certification Advisory Committee (CHWAC) meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed members and attendees. Ms. Garcia, Chair, reminded committee members to turn on video camera and unmute their mics and state their names each time before offering a comment or asking a question so members of the public know who is speaking. Ms. Garcia, Chair, introduced Ms. Jessica Arevalo to provide logistics and call roll.

Ms. Jessica Arevalo, Advisory Committee Coordination Office (ACCO), Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) read the logistical announcements and stated the meeting is conducted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act. Neither pre-registered requests for public comment nor written public comments were received. Ms. Arevalo conducted the member roll call and announced the presence of quorum.

***Table 1: The Community Health Worker (CHW) Advisory Committee member attendance at the CHW Advisory Committee Meeting on April 22, 2024.***

MEMBER NAME	IN ATTENDANCE
Ms. Jessica Arriola	Yes
Ms. Belinda Flores	Yes
Ms. Minerva Garcia	No
Ms. Otila Garcia, Chair	Yes
Ms. Jometra Hawkins	Yes
Ms. Monica Hughes, MSN, RN	No
Ms. Greg LaMay	Yes
Ms. Roxana Lopez	Yes
Mr. Jose L. Rucobo	No

Ms. Garcia, Chair, asked the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) staff attending in person to introduce themselves – Ms. Raiza Ruiz, Manager, Community Health Workers and School Health Branch, Health Promotion Unit; Mr. Brett Spencer, Director, Health Promotion Unit; Mr. Frank Luera, Program Coordinator, Community Health Worker Program; and Ms. Ursula Solorzano, CHW Training Center Liaison and Program Coordinator, Regional and Local Health Operations Division.

### **Agenda Item 2: Consideration of January 24, 2024, draft meeting minutes**

Ms. Garcia, Chair, introduced Ms. Arevalo who reminded members that the January 24, 2024, draft meeting minutes were provided and asked for any edits or comments to the minutes as presented. Ms. Arevalo requested a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

#### **MOTION:**

Mr. LaMay motioned to accept the draft minutes as presented, seconded by Ms. Flores. Ms. Arevalo conducted a roll call vote of the committee members. With a unanimous vote of the committee, five approvals, no disapprovals, and no abstentions, the motion has passed.

### **Agenda Item 3: Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention Section Update**

Ms. Garcia, Chair, introduced Ms. Raiza Ruiz, Manager, DSHS Community Health Worker and School Health Branch, to provide updates to the committee.

Highlights included:

- Welcome new members – Roxana Lopez, Belinda Flores, and Greg LaMay.
- 4-year rule review (Texas Administrative Code, Title 25, Chapter 146) for Training and Certification for Promotores, or Community Health Workers, was concluded on February 15, 2024. The notice of adopted review appeared in the Texas Register Issue of March 1, 2024.
  - Review identified changes necessary for the rules which the CHWAC Rules Subcommittee assisted with. The next step is the rule amendment – make recommended changes to rules.
- CHW Program Policy also in review. Updated version includes alternative certifications authorized for military service members, military spouses, or military veterans, and extensions to certifications for military service members and spouses authorized by Senate Bill 422 passed in the 88<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislative Session concluded in 2023.
- CHW Training and Certification Program Updates
  - 6,987 CHWs were certified as of March 31, 2024. Increase of 76.7% since 2019.
  - 931 CHW applications were approved from January 1, 2024, to March 31, 2024, which includes new applications and renewals. 604 were new applicants.
  - 626 CHW Instructors (CHWI) were certified as of March 31, 2024. Increase of 122% since 2019.
  - 102 CHWI applications were approved from January 1, 2024, to March 31, 2024, which includes new applications and renewals. 44 were new applicants.

- 14 curriculums under review, totaling 27 credit hours.
- 20 curriculums, totaling 58 credit hours were approved from January 1 to March 31, 2024.

**Agenda Item 4: 2024 CHW Newly Appointed Committee Members**

Ms. Garcia, Chair, welcomed newly appointed members to introduce themselves.

- Ms. Belinda Flores, Center Director, South Coastal Area Health Education Center (AHEC).
- Greg LaMay, University of Texas Tyler Health Science Center, Health Disparities Grant
- Roxana Lopez, CHW, Lead Specialist, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, School of Nursing, Larry Combest Community Health, and Wellness Center; and Texas Association of Promotores & Community Health Workers (TAPCHW) President

**Agenda Item 5: Strategies for Working with CHWs in Brownsville, TX.**

Ms. Garcia, Chair, welcomed Ms. Cristela Gonzalez, CHW, Clinical Operations Director, Brownsville Community Health Center (BCHC) to provide more information about BCHC and working with CHWs.

Ms. Arevalo announced that Ms. Jometra Hawkins has joined the meeting virtually.

Highlights included:

- Ms. Gonzalez provided background information about BCHC.
  - BCHC adopted the Promotora program in 2005 and is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC).
  - Mano A Mano Promotora CHW Program – has seven state-certified staff promotoras and 20 volunteer promotoras. Supports volunteer promotoras by providing monthly meetings, volunteer opportunities, and facilitate state certification and CEU opportunities.
    - Initiatives: ANA/Expanding Our Reach, Diabetes prevention program (CDC recognized), COVID-19/influenza vaccine outreach, home visits and community resource referrals. Ms. Gonzalez provides more information about each initiative and benefits of promotoras at BCHC.
- How are the CHWs funded? Two promotoras are permanent positions and rolled into main grant. The rest are grant-funded. There has not been a gap between employment of promotoras.

Comments:

Interest expressed in the type of presentations the promotoras do at schools. Ms. Gonzalez explained that promotoras only present topics they have been trained on. Examples of topics include controlling blood pressure, diabetes/pre-diabetes, how to talk to children about sensitive topics, and the importance of parent meetings.

Ms. Garcia, Chair, called on Ms. Hawkins to provide an introduction for herself.

**Agenda Item 6: CHW Training Needs Assessment – Results**

Ms. Garcia, Chair, welcomed Ms. Ursula Solorzano, MPH, CHWI, Regional and Local Health Operations Division to discuss the Texas CHW Training Needs Assessment.

Highlights included:

- Ms. Solorzano provided background information on the CHW Training Center.

- Trainings were developed by CHWIs in Regions 8, 9/10, and 11 and in central office (Austin). In the process of expanding statewide.
  - Since August 2017, 144 trainings were provided, over 5,000 CHWs and CHWI were trained, and awarded over 15,000 certified CEUs.
- 2109 - Public Health Region (PHR) 9/10 piloted and conducted a CHW Training Needs Assessment distributed in PHR 9/10. An infographic was developed and displayed using the results of the assessment.
- 2023 - DSHS CHW Training Center expanded this effort and conducted a statewide assessment. Developed, reviewed, and piloted by CHW and CHWIs from PHR 1, 8, 9/10, 11 and central office program staff. Reviewed and distributed by DSHS CHW or Promotor(a) Training and Certification Program email. Results gathered and organized by DSHS Analytics Team. Distributed on September 28, 2023, and closed on November 29, 2023. Results provided:
  - Demographics (language, CHW status, PHR served)
  - Job/Volunteering Functions (working status, top function of CHWs current role, employers require/do not require certification, employer support for CHW/CHWIs certification)
  - Training (skills training availability, entity providing training, resources for educating community)
  - Computer/Technology Skills (preferred virtual platform for training)
  - CHW Core Competencies (confidence based on core competency skills)
  - Results will be provided on final report once approved.

Comments:

- Length of the assessment and funding for compensation.
- More insight regarding majority of employers requiring CHW certification- most were hired first then certified. Method of payment such as out of pocket or through employer will be included in report.

**Agenda Item 7: Advisory subcommittee updates**

Ms. Garcia, Chair, reminded and encouraged members who are not yet part of a subcommittee to join at least one. Each subcommittee may have up to four members and three non-members. There are openings in the CHW Training and Certification subcommittee. The Rules subcommittee has completed the rules review and deactivated. Members from this subcommittee are encouraged to join other groups.

Highlights included:

**A. Workforce Solutions and Employment Opportunities Sub-Committee**

Ms. Jometra Hawkins, CHWAC Assistant Presiding Officer and sub-committee chair, provided the update.

- At last meeting, discussed opportunities to advance workforce solutions and opportunities:
  - How members' expertise can help the workgroup to advance the work of CHWs
  - Sharing ideas and acting
  - Goals and outcomes
  - Suggestion to join the National Association of Community Health Workers (NACHW).
  - Collect information where CHWs are being hired and push information.
  - Push out education opportunities.

- Create a job board where employers can add their information when searching CHWs.
- More advisory members encouraged to join.

## **B. Communication and Outreach Sub-Committee**

Ms. Jessica Arriola, sub-committee chair, provided the update.

- Focus on newsletter to be distributed statewide that highlights programs and CHWs.
- Survey created that will be sent out to CHWs statewide to gather more information.
- More members needed for sub-committee. Please contact Ms. Arriola.

### **Agenda Item 8: Committee member sharing**

Ms. Garcia, Chair, opened the floor for members to share information from their regions including best practices, exciting news, or projects.

Highlights included:

- Ms. Flores shared that there will be a meeting to discuss training CHWs to help with the gap in mental health issues. Examining a curriculum to see if it will help CHWs assess community members for depression and anxiety or as first line of support. A workshop was held on April 9, 2024, in Corpus Christi, TX which 75 CHWs attended. There was a discussion on the lack of mental health providers and what could be done as CHWs.
- Ms. Solorzano shared that CHW Training Center CHWs will visit border communities to provide education on Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) to community members. Today, CHWs are at Laredo, TX to provide eight classes to educate students on STIs.

### **Agenda Item 9: Public comment**

Ms. Garcia, Chair, opened the floor for public comment. Ms. Arevalo announced that there no pre-registered requests for comments and no written comments were received. None on-site for public comments.

### **Agenda Item 10: Agenda items for next meeting**

Ms. Garcia, Chair, announced the next CHWAC meeting is scheduled for July 22, 2024.

- Roxana Lopez offered a presentation from TAPCHW on House Bill 1575 and updates on current work in partnership with other CHW programs and meeting from March 2024.
- Ms. Garcia, Chair, invites more agencies to present to showcase the work of CHWs and can provide a list of such agencies to invite. She proposed inviting Familias Triunfadoras from El Paso.

### **Agenda Item 11: Adjourn**

Ms. Garcia, Chair, thanked all in attendance for joining the meeting and adjourned the meeting at 11:06 am.

Below is the link to the archived video of the April 22, 2024, Community Health Worker Advisory Committee meeting to view and listen for approximately, two years from date meeting is posted and in accordance with the DSHS records retention schedule. (To view and listen to the entirety of the meeting click on the link below)

[Promotor\(a\) or Community Health Worker \(CHW\) Training and Certification Advisory Committee.](#)