



Effective Health Care

Community Health Workers Nomination Summary Document

Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- Community health workers was found to be addressed by the 2009 AHRQ report, *Outcomes of Community Health Worker Interventions*, and an in-process Effective Health Care Program report, *Comparative Effectiveness of Case Management for Adults with Medical Illness and Complex Care Needs*. Given that the existing report covers this nomination, no further activity will be undertaken on this topic.
 - Viswanathan M, Kraschnewski J, Nishikawa B, Morgan LC, Thieda P, Honeycutt A, Lohr KN, Jonas D. Outcomes of Community Health Worker Interventions. Evidence Report/Technology Assessment No. 181 (Prepared by the RTI International–University of North Carolina Evidence-based Practice Center under Contract No. 290 2007 10056 I.) AHRQ Publication No. 09-E014. Rockville, MD: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. June 2009. Available at: <http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/tp/comhworktp.htm>
- To sign up for notification when this and other EHC Program topics are posted, please go to <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/join-the-email-list1>
- Community health workers could potentially be considered for new research projects within the Effective Health Care (EHC) Program.

Topic Description

Nominator: Organization

Nomination Summary: The nominator is interested in research to generate evidence on the use and comparative effectiveness of community health workers (CHW) in improving health outcomes. The nominator submitted two nominations relevant to this subject. The first nomination addressed a CHW-based diabetes case management approach. The second nomination relates to more broadly comparing effectiveness and costs of CHW interventions in different settings and using different CHW models.

Staff-Generated PICOs

Nomination 1: CHW for diabetes care

Population(s): Adults with diabetes and obesity

Intervention(s): Clinically-based CHW

Comparator(s): Community-based CHW or no CHW

Outcome(s): Improved hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c), blood pressure, LDL, and weight,

increased exercise, level of attainment of nutrition self-management goals and self blood sugar monitoring, improved provider productivity in diabetes and obesity care visits, tracking of savings to health care system, acceptance and intake of information by patients, patient's engagement in their own care and sense of personal control over improved health, reduced "no-show" appointments, attainment of routine preventive services such as foot exams, retina exams, HbA1c every 6 months, smoking cessation counseling, and so on, reduced ER visits and hospitalizations

Setting(s): Migrant health center/federally qualified health center-based vs. non-safety net primary care clinic

Nomination 2: Comparison of different CHW interventions across health care settings

Population(s): Patients in a variety of healthcare settings

Intervention(s): CHW

Comparator(s): Health professional care manager, no CHW

Outcome(s): Improved health outcomes for patients, reduced overall costs to the delivery system, cost savings with more appropriate use of primary care health professionals, cost savings from improved health outcomes, better patient adherence to treatment recommendations, improved patient self-management and understanding of the disease process and the medical system

Setting(s): Migrant health center/federally qualified health center-based, community-based, mainstream primary care health clinic, emergency departments

**Key Questions
from Nominator:**

Nomination 1: CHW for diabetes care

1. For disease management of adults with diabetes and obesity, what is the comparative effectiveness of clinically-based community health workers (CHW) vs. community-based CHW vs. patients with no CHW intervention? Migrant health centers/federally qualified health center-based vs. other non-safety net primary care clinics?
2. What is the evidence for the cost effectiveness of a CHW model in primary care settings including migrant health clinic/FQHC and other non-safety net primary care clinics?
3. What is the comparative effectiveness of CHWs vs. traditional case managers in increasing patient knowledge and understanding of their disease process? What format of information improves the understanding by the patient and ties to improved health indicators and outcomes? What evidence exists to support how CHWs providing more culturally competent information increases patients' understanding of health issues and needed behavior changes to improve their health outcomes?

Nomination 2: Comparison of different CHW interventions across health care settings

1. What is the effectiveness of the use of Community Health Workers in a range of distinct settings—FQHC/migrant health centers; other primary care settings; specialty care; social service agencies and other community settings; and emergency departments.
2. Are there CHW models that show greater levels of evidence for improving health outcomes for particular diseases and particular populations? And when compared with other health professional care manager models?
3. What is the cost effectiveness of using CHWs to enhance the productivity of

- primary care health professionals, to reduce the longer term health care costs of the patient, and to improve their ultimate health outcomes?
4. Does the intensity of the intervention with a CHW affect the patient's increased satisfaction, increased understanding of health information and ultimately show improved health outcomes?

Considerations

- The topic meets EHC Program appropriateness and importance criteria. (For more information, see <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/submit-a-suggestion-for-research/how-are-research-topics-chosen/>.)
- The topic was found to be addressed by a 2009 AHRQ report, *Outcomes of Community Health Worker Interventions*. Key questions from this report include:
 1. How do CHWs interact with participants? Specifically, what is the place of service, type of service, type of educational materials used, duration of interaction with participants, and length of followup?
 2. What is the impact of CHWs on outcomes, particularly knowledge, behavior, satisfaction, health outcomes, and health care utilization?
 3. What is known about the cost-effectiveness of CHWs for improving health outcomes?
 4.
 - A. What are characteristics of training for CHWs in the outpatient setting?
 - B. Are particular training characteristics associated with improved outcomes for patients?
- The topic was also found to have some overlap with an in-process EHC Program report, *Comparative Effectiveness of Case Management for Adults with Medical Illness and Complex Care Needs*. This report will include all types of individuals who are considered case managers and therefore would address any relevant literature on case management by community health workers.
- The nominator included questions related to new research based on some of the research gaps identified in the 2009 *Outcomes of Community Health Worker Interventions* report. These questions could potentially be considered for new research projects within the EHC Program.