

# Frequently Asked Questions for Community Health Workers/Promotores/Representatives (CHW/P/R)

## Certification and Training Programs

### March 9, 2023

#### Certification

- **What is the purpose of the CHW/P/R certification?**
  - The California Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) is developing a CHW/P/R certification process to enable billing for the CHW Medi-Cal Benefit, as of January 1, 2024. A CHW/P/R certificate issued by HCAI will be required after this date to bill for Medi-Cal benefits.
  - Certification indicates that an individual has received training and education approved by the state for a CHW/P/R or the individual has the experience demonstrating they possess the core competencies to be a certified CHW/P/R.
- **Who is the entity authorized to establish a process for CHW/P/R Certification?**
  - HCAI will be the certifying entity.
- **How will individuals be certified as a CHW/P/R by HCAI?**
  - HCAI will create two pathways to certify individuals as CHW/P/Rs, a Training Pathway and a Legacy Pathway. HCAI will approve CHW/P/R training programs based on requirements developed through the stakeholder engagement process.
  - The Legacy Pathway will provide current CHW/P/Rs with an opportunity to become certified if they demonstrate they meet the core competencies, outlined in the state requirements under development.
- **Do all CHW/P/Rs need to be certified by HCAI to continue working?**
  - A certification is not needed to continue working. However, to bill Medi-Cal for the CHW Medi-Cal Benefit, as of January 1, 2024, CHW/P/Rs will need to be certified.
- **What is the start date for certification?**
  - HCAI expects to begin issuing CHW/P/R certificates in late summer 2023.
- **How much will certification cost?**
  - HCAI has clearly heard from stakeholders that certification needs to be affordable. HCAI is committed to implementing this stakeholder feedback as we plan for sustainability of the certification process.

#### Legacy Pathway

- **What is certification going to look like for existing CHW/P/Rs - the Legacy Pathway?**
  - The Legacy Pathway will be one of two ways people can receive CHW/P/R certification. HCAI will seek to ensure the Legacy Pathway is not an unreasonable barrier for currently practicing CHW/P/Rs, but this pathway MUST demonstrate that a legacy CHW/P/R has the core competencies to be a certified CHW/P/R.
  - HCAI is using stakeholder feedback and information from other states to inform the Legacy Pathway requirements.

## Specialty Certification

- **What areas will the Specialty Certification cover?**
  - There will be a certificate for specializations of specific groups (e.g., justice-involved, domestic violence survivors, LGBTQ+) that are being determined through stakeholder engagement. We expect to work with training programs that focus on specialization (e.g., Alzheimer's, climate change). The stakeholder engagement process will assist us in identifying priorities for specialized training and developing statewide requirements.
- **Is Specialty Certification required for billing for the CHW Medi-Cal Benefit?**
  - No, Specialty Certification is an optional add-on to support CHW/P/Rs in working with specific communities and/or to work with individuals with particular health conditions.
- **What does the Specialty Certification indicate?**
  - The Specialty Certification indicates that a CHW/P/R has completed additional training that concentrates on specific program focus areas, with learning objectives and topics tailored to the skills required for distinct program and population needs.

## Training

- **When will HCAI release the requirements for certification of CHW/P/Rs and approving training programs that will train individuals to become certified CHW/P/Rs?**
  - HCAI will release the requirements for certifying CHW/P/Rs and the requirements for approving training programs in July 2023.
- **How does this certification process affect training programs?**
  - Any CHW/P/R wishing to become certified, unless utilizing the Legacy pathway to certification, will need to complete an HCAI-approved training program.
  - If a CHW/P/R is not interested in becoming certified to provide the Medi-Cal CHW benefit, they may attend any training program, not just those that are HCAI-approved.
- **Will all training materials be presented in multiple languages?**
  - HCAI recognizes the importance of ensuring training materials are in multiple languages. HCAI will approve training programs that provide state-approved CHW/P/R training in multiple languages.
- **What will the requirements for continuing education look like?**
  - HCAI will set a requirement for a minimum of 6 hours of additional relevant training annually. Additional requirements for continuing education will be developed through the stakeholder engagement process.

## Stakeholder Input

- **How are CHW/P/Rs involved in the development of the certification process?**
  - HCAI's stakeholder engagement process is meant to bring in the collective experience and voice to the process. HCAI has been delighted to see the high turnout of our stakeholders, including current CHW/P/Rs, who are helping inform the certification process.