



New Mexico Department of Health  
**COMMUNITY HEALTH  
WORKERS INITIATIVE**

RETTA WARD  
CABINET SECRETARY

LHHS COMMITTEE  
DECEMBER 20, 2013



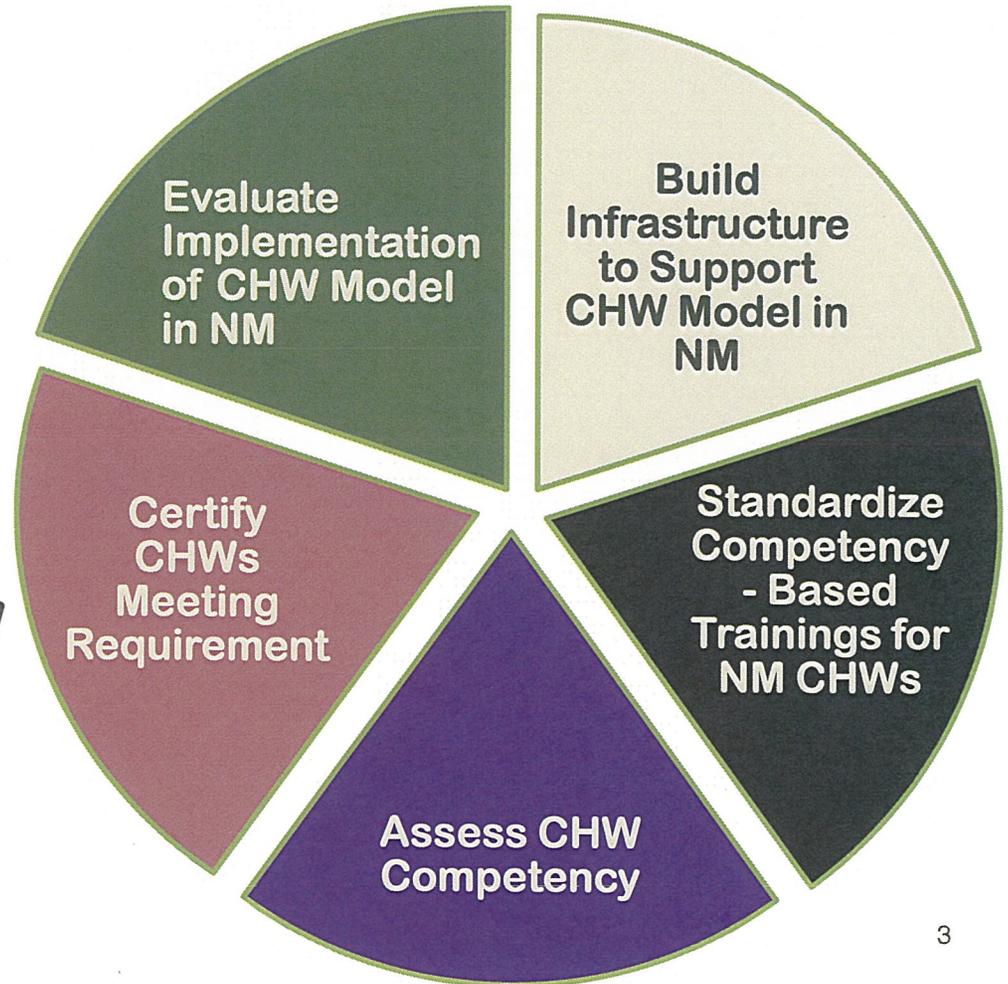
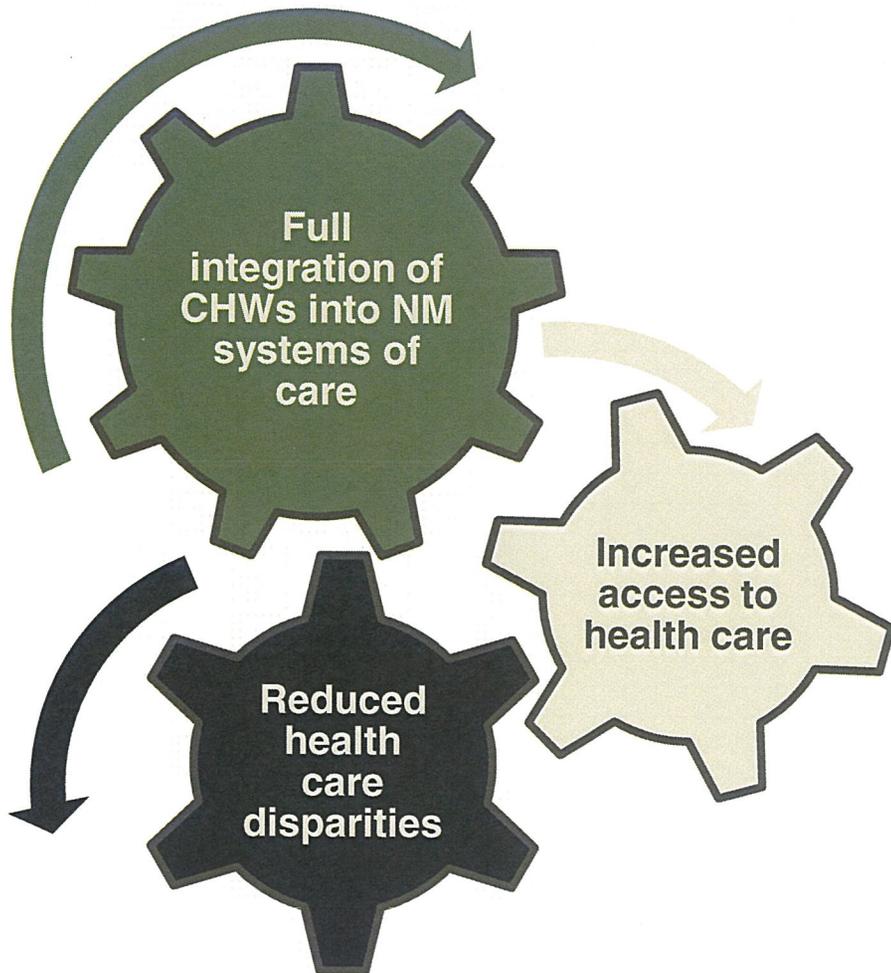
# Proposed Legislation



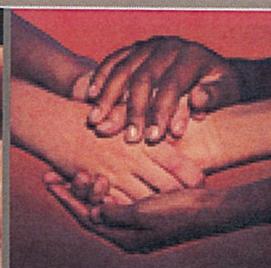
**The Governor's healthcare workforce initiative includes a request for \$500,000 recurring SGF to create/implement a training program and certification process for Community Health Workers**

- Develop / create:
  - Certification board
  - Statewide CHW Registry to include IT support
  - Public domain curriculum
  - Certification application process
  - Grandfathering and renewal of certification status
  - Public awareness campaign
- Evaluate
  - Implementation of certification program
  - Long-term impact of NM CHW model
- Offer incentives to CHWs to defray costs
- Hire 2 DOH FTEs

# Promote Positive System Changes



# CHWs: A long standing, yet emerging workforce



Tribal CHRs



Promotores



Patient Navigators

Community Educators

Community Connectors

Peer Health Promoters

Lay Health Advisors

Community Health Advocates

Outreach Workers

Health Educators

Slide adapted from: Erdman, K and Hargrove, L. Approaches for successful implementation of successful CHW Apprenticeship program 2011. <https://hrsa.connectsolutions.com/archivechwrap/>

# Why are CHWs Important for New Mexico?



## New Mexico characteristics:

- Ranks at or near bottom of many national health statistics
- Population is one of the most diverse in the nation
- Critical shortage of primary, oral, mental health care providers, particularly in rural and inner-city areas
- More than 1/3 of population lives in frontier areas
- Poverty level above the national average
- Health disparities among racial and ethnic groups

# CHWs Are Uniquely Equipped



## A matter of trust

- ❑ Reside in community they serve
  - Share same language, ethnic, cultural, educational background
- ❑ Link individuals and families to care systems
- ❑ Advocate for services to meet community needs
- ❑ Provide culturally-responsive, cost effective health information
- ❑ Teach & support families to learn knowledge/skills needed to manage treatment & prevent disease
- ❑ Empower individuals and communities to advocate for their own health



# NM CHWs



- Currently 800-900 CHWs in NM
- Majority are female
- Serve all racial and ethnic groups
- Wide age range
- Located in urban, rural, frontier settings
- About 1/3 have at least some college experience
- Not as numerous in SE quadrant of the state where most chronic disease rates are highest
- Wage generally ranges between \$8.00-\$12.50 / hr
- Historic focal areas include:
  - Maternal & child health
  - Diabetes & chronic disease prevention

# CHWs help improve health status



## □ Critical role in:

- Increasing access to care
- Reducing health disparities
- Coordinating comprehensive care

## □ Research demonstrates:

- Reduce health care costs
- Extend reach and quality of health care
- Improve individual health status
  - UNM study (2012) Medicaid managed care consumers receiving CHW interventions demonstrated cost savings of \$2,044,465
  - U.S. study found 2.3:1 benefit:cost ratio



## Expected Health Care Reform Opportunities



- ❑ HHS Action Plan to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Disparities, using CHWs
- ❑ NM Centennial Care identifies provider classification codes for CHWs
- ❑ Federal Patient Protection and Affordable Act (PPACA) emphasizes need for CHWs as member of care teams
- ❑ PPACA CHW considerations:
  - Education/enrolling families in appropriate programs
  - Coordinating access to care/services for hard-to-reach & vulnerable
  - Education to prevent/control chronic diseases
  - Expansion of health care workforce

## History of NM CHW Advisory Council and the DOH OCHW



- ❑ 2003 - SJM 076 tasked the DOH to study feasibility of developing a community health advocate program
- ❑ 2006 – established NM CHW Advisory Council
  - Serves as an advisory body to DOH to ensure that future action represents community needs
- ❑ 2008 – DOH Office of Community Health Workers (OCHW) established by Executive Order with no funding
  - Establish standardized, competency-based CHW curriculum and associated voluntary CHW certification
  - Works closely with NM CHW Advisory Council



## Benefits for a competency based training program and certification process



- Community college based CHW training provides academic credit and career advancement
- Community-based training allows CHWs to be trained where they live and work
- On-the-job training improves capacities and enhanced standards of practice
- Legitimizes work and increases recognition of CHW work
- Promotes long-term funding sources and reimbursement for services
- Develops common knowledge base among CHWs

# Proposed CHW Program Features



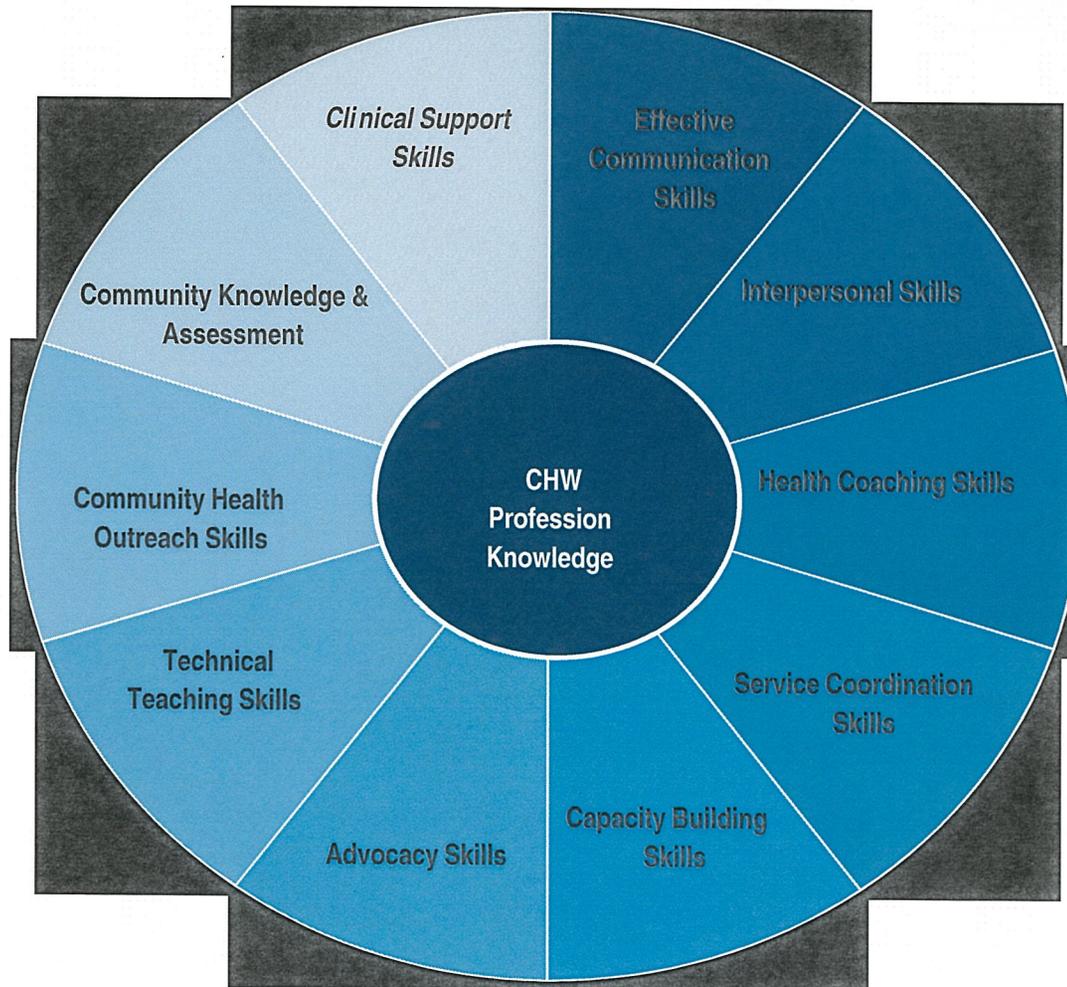
- Voluntary
- Provided on ability to demonstrate competency
  - Knowledge & skills
- Offered in multiple formats:
  - Community settings
  - College courses
- Supports career advancement
- Offered for minimal cost
- Mandatory background check
- Inclusive eligibility:
  - 18 years of age
  - High school diploma or equivalent
  - Provisional certification available for youth ages 12-17

# What do we mean by certification?

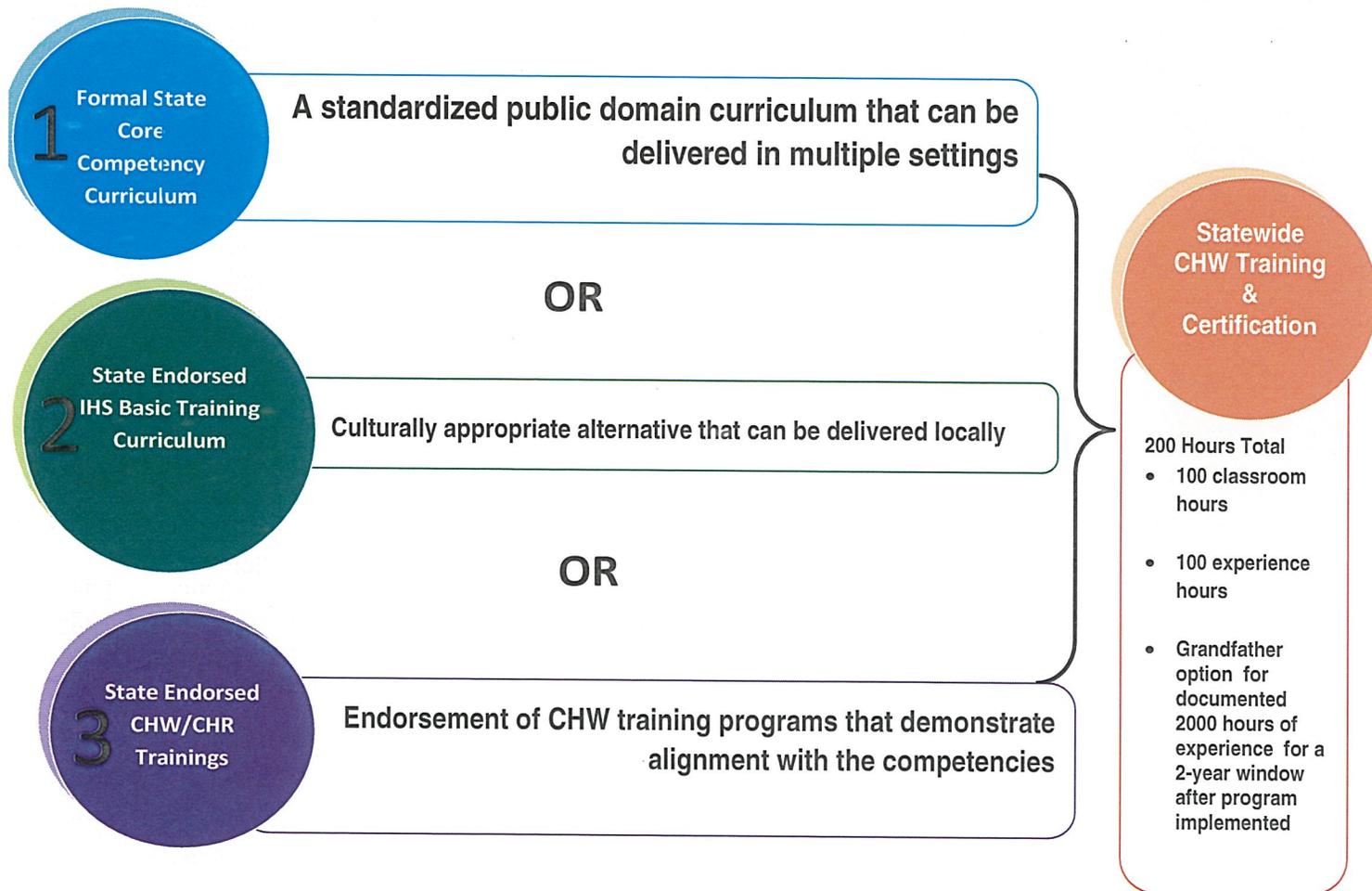


- ❑ Registration: NMDOH CHW Registry
  - List of individuals serving NM communities
  - Recognition to CHW workforce
- ❑ Accreditation: Endorse current and future training programs that meet core competencies
- ❑ Certification: credential received after successful completion of an accredited training program
  - Grandfathering clause option for individuals currently working as CHWs
  - Renewal required every 2 years
- ❑ NOT licensure

# Standardizing CHW Training: Eleven Core Competencies



# Proposed Pathways for CHW Training and Certification



# NM CHW partnerships and collaborations

