

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO LEAD A STUDY TO DEVELOP A
COMMUNITY HEALTH ADVOCACY PROGRAM IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, New Mexico ranks at the bottom or near the bottom of many
national health statistics; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico is experiencing a continuing and critical shortage of
health care providers, particularly in rural and inner-city areas; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico has a tradition of strong communities, volunteerism
and community services and places
a high value on the depth and richness of its multicultural heritage; and

WHEREAS, community health advocates, such as community health workers,
promotoras, community health promoters, community advocates, outreach educators,
doulas, peer health promoters and community health representatives, both nationally
and in New Mexico, serve as a successful and effective means of addressing the
health and social needs of people and communities; and

WHEREAS, community health advocates serve as an extension of professional
health care providers and bridge cultural differences by offering culturally and
linguistically appropriate care to underserved communities; and

WHEREAS, federal medicaid regulation requires appropriate outreach,
enrollment and translation services, which means additional federal funding is
available for the use of increased community health advocate services; and

WHEREAS, the current state and national medicaid and health care crises will,
without new resources, result in reduced availability of services, and utilization of
culturally and linguistically appropriate care management through community health
advocates can serve as a best-practice quality measure in contract compliance; and

WHEREAS, the hundreds of community health advocates, many currently
serving with little or no pay, are a ripe opportunity for economic and community
development through the provision of recognition and steady fiscal support of their

1 valuable services; and

2 WHEREAS, New Mexico has an opportunity to create an innovative model to
3 address the state's pressing health needs, increase access to care, promote
4 economic development and ensure healthier communities;

5 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
6 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department of health be requested to lead a study
7 on the development of a community health advocacy program in New Mexico, including
8 the program's methods, structure, financing and implementation, that utilizes various
9 categories of community health advocates; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that legislative recommendations be developed
11 to address economic opportunities for communities, reimbursement by the department
12 of health for community health advocate services, the potential of tax incentives as
13 encouragement for employment of community health advocates by private health care
14 providers and the identification of matching grant opportunities for outreach and
15 training; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study examine the potential for use of
17 community health promoters as part of a best-practice quality measure for medicaid
18 and other contracted providers; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health be requested to
20 develop an innovative curriculum based on existing models that include service
21 delivery, economic development and other aspects of a community health advocacy
22 program in New Mexico; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the human services department, the
24 department of economic development, the department of labor, the state department
25 of public education, the children, youth and families department, the state agency on
aging and appropriate organizations representing the interests of community health
advocates or utilizing the services of community health advocates participate in the
study; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health report its legislative

1 recommendations to the interim legislative health and human services committee at its
2 October 2003 meeting; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the
4 department of health, the human services department, the economic development
5 department, the labor department, the state department of public education, the
6 children, youth and families department, the state agency on aging and appropriate
7 organizations representing the interests of community health advocates as community
8 health workers, promotoras and others.

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

S
J
M

7
6
P
a
g
e

3