

Community Health Workers (CHWs) in Rural Maryland

Results from CHW and CHW employer surveys - 2022



Who are CHWs?

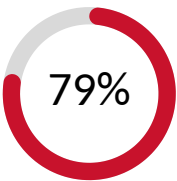
A Community Health Worker (CHW) is a frontline public health worker who is a trusted member of, or has an unusually close understanding of the community served. This trusting relationship enables a CHW to serve as a liaison to, link to, or intermediary between health and social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery.



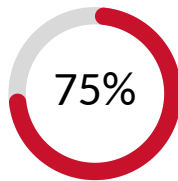
CHW skills can support communities in rural settings.

Of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions, 18 are recognized by the state as "rural". These jurisdictions have notable assets, but also experience challenges that have traditionally set them apart from their suburban and urban counterparts, including: (1) persistent unemployment and poverty, (2) an aging population, and (3) inadequate access to quality housing and health care services.

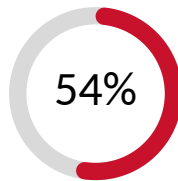
Percent CHWs providing services to vulnerable populations in rural Maryland.



Racial/Ethnic Minorities



People With SUDs



Individuals in Poverty

Percent CHWs providing services to their clients in rural Maryland.



Education (85%)



Connections to Services (73%)



Promote Healthy Behaviors (63%)

Rural Maryland has unique needs.



- Compared to CHW employers providing services in urban jurisdictions, those providing services in rural jurisdictions are less likely to report that their CHW positions are funded through more stable and reliable sources such as federal (urban 25%, rural 9%) or state (urban 50%, rural 18%) funds.

- Compared to CHWs providing services in urban jurisdictions, those providing services in rural jurisdictions report providing less substance use disorder support through help with preventative screenings (urban 63%, rural 47%) or post-diagnosis/disease-management (urban 54%, rural 47%).