



## CHW Program Proves Vital for an Elderly Community Member

### ICAP CHW helps client access important resources to regain health and independence.

Inter-Lakes Community Action Partnership (ICAP) is a community-based non-profit organization that serves primarily low-income families and senior citizens in a 14-county area of East Central South Dakota. The Community Health Worker (CHW) Program at ICAP works to provide Social Determinants of Health resource coordination for patients who experience barriers to their healthcare.

### CLIENT BACKGROUND

A new client with significant health issues and social detriments came to ICAP for help. He had high blood pressure, was diabetic, and in the past, had two strokes and two heart attacks which affected his memory and balance. The CHW, Mendy, saw he was struggling with his balance so she explained the assistance and resources of the CHW program. The client was receptive and started.

### SERVICES PROVIDED

The client did not have insurance coverage, had been out of work for at least a year, and had no income. He accumulated several medical debts so Mendy helped him complete applications for Avera, Sanford, and Madison Regional Health. Several bills have since been forgiven. Mendy also helped him complete a Medicaid application, which he is now on.

Before being on Medicaid, the client had stopped taking his blood pressure medication and insulin for his diabetes. Mendy educated the client on the importance of his medication and healthy food options. She referred him to a CSW at ICAP and we were able to get him Salvation Army vouchers for his medications and gas money. Mendy also helped him get a Lewis prescription card for lower cost medication.



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- ICAP CLIENT



Due to the client's food insecurities, he had lost 70 pounds. Mendy assisted him in applying for SNAP, which he is now on. Mendy also referred him to the Lake County Food Pantry and signed him up for a food basket at Thanksgiving. Mendy got vouchers for clothes at Encore, an ICAP thrift store, since he had no clothes that fit him. She also referred him to St. John's church for clothes.

The client had multiple safety needs in his apartment. Mendy referred him to Independent Living Choices who installed a safety rail in his bathroom and got a railing elongated so it was safer. Because he has had several falls, Mendy referred him to the CSW at ICAP for a voucher for a walker and cane from Encore. Mendy also referred him to Dakota at Home and he now has a cleaning person come in once a week.

The client is unable to work due to short-term memory loss and balance. Mendy assisted the client in completing an application for Social Security Disability; his case is currently being decided on. He was able to use South Dakota Cares to cover his rent.

The client was having a hard time seeing and had not had an eye exam in a couple of years. Mendy educated him on the importance of eye exams with his diabetes and referred him to the local Lions Club (this was before he had coverage). They gave him a voucher for an exam and a pair of glasses. He needed the funds to pay a \$25.00 copay, so Mendy referred him back to the CSW at ICAP to get a voucher.

At the client's exam, he was diagnosed with severe cataracts. They wanted him to have an A1C to see if it was high, which worsens vision. Mendy used the Madison Regional Hospital liaison to convey the need for an A1C and sent the results to the eye doctor. Mendy assisted the client in setting up an appointment and surgical dates with an ophthalmologist in Sioux Falls and drove him to these appointments. Once the surgeries were completed and his cataracts gone, he was able to get an accurate eye exam and new glasses. Mendy sends emails to the Madison Regional Hospital liaison to keep the doctor up to date on progress. Mendy also referred the client to South Dakota Blind and Visually Impaired who are helping him get visual equipment in his home.

The client needs to move into town to be able to have easier access to resources and transportation. His paid rent will be completed soon, so Mendy assisted him in completing a low-income housing application and now is assisting him in completing applications for low-income apartments.

## CLIENT SUCCESSES

Mendy recently asked the client what the CHW program means to him and his response was: "It has meant everything to me. I do not think I would be here without being in the program. I did not have any medical coverage and no food. I could not have gotten the medical care and treatment, and I know my health has been improved by being in the program. I understand more about my health."

The greatest turning point came when the client got on Medicaid, which has helped get the health care he needs. Also, one of the biggest assets for him is being with ICAP, as we have access to many resources. Among those resources, our partnership with Madison Regional Health and our liaison has proven beneficial in being able to get information and updates to the medical providers.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Inter-Lakes Community Action Partnership is a community-based non-profit organization that serves primarily low-income families and senior citizens in a 14-county area of East Central South Dakota. ICAP administers a variety of programs supported through grants, donations, and other community resources to assist participants and their communities. Their vision is to have sustainable communities where children, families, and individuals reach their full potential through compassion, dedication, innovation, and integrity to empower people to embrace their strengths and opportunities. To learn more about the Inter-Lakes Community Action Partnership, visit: <https://www.interlakescap.com/>

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