



National Indian Health Service Community Health Representative

Community Health Representative Program

The Community Health Representatives (CHR) Program was established in 1968, under the 1921 Snyder Act (25 U.S.C. 13). CHRs are frontline public health workers who are trusted members of the community with a close understanding of the community, language, and traditions. CHRs serve as a link between the clinical setting and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery. They assist by increasing health knowledge of patients and communities through a broad range of activities such as transportation to health visits, outreach, community education, informal counseling, social support, and advocacy.

The National Indian Health Service (IHS) CHR Program provides funding, training, and technical assistance to tribal CHR programs to address healthcare needs through the provision of community-oriented health services.

Leadership

Michelle Archuleta
IHS CHR Program Consultant
Headquarters, Indian Health Service

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Public Health Nurse and CHR Consultant
Great Plains Area, Indian Health Service

IHS Service Area

Today, the CHR program serves as the largest tribally contracted and compacted program with more than 95% of CHR programs being directly operated by Tribes under P.L. 93-638 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, as amended. There are more than 1,600 CHRs representing over 250 tribes in all 12 IHS Areas. Each area has a unique group of Tribes that they work with on a day-to-day basis.



- Alaska Area
- Albuquerque Area
- Bemidji Area
- Billings Area
- California Area
- Great Plains Area
- Nashville Area
- Navajo Area
- Oklahoma City Area
- Phoenix Area
- Portland Area
- Tuscan Area

CHRs address the needs of their community through health improvement and outreach. They are effective agents of change working across health and social systems. CHRs play an essential role in Native Communities and the healthcare delivery system.



Social Determinants of Health

As frontline health workers in Native communities, CHRs help to decrease health inequities through activities that impact the social determinants of health such as:

- Access to Care
- Social & Cultural Cohesion
- Social Justice
- Environmental Quality/Housing
- Food Access
- Parks and Recreation

CHR Activities that Build Individual & Community Capacity:

- Outreach
- Community Education
- Informal Counseling
- Social Support
- Advocacy

CHRs Increase Access to Healthcare and Increase Coverage through:

- Health Screening
- Case Management
- Care Coordination with Service Providers
- Transportation Coordination
- Coordination of Durable Medical Supplies
- Direct Health Care Services
- Outreach



CHWSD is serving on the 2023 National CHR Strategic Plan Core Team to identify strategic plan priority areas and related goals, objectives, and strategies. Priority areas identified include:

- Awareness and Advocacy
- Sustainability and Innovation
- Partnerships
- Workforce Strengthening
- Data Systems

Michelle Archuleta, IHS CHR Program Consultant, was presented with a star quilt from the Oglala Sioux Tribe at the 2022 SD CHW Conference



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