

Strengthen and Sustain America's Community-Based Workforce

Across the United States, community-based workforces (CBWs)—local, trusted professionals—are improving health and strengthening families with compassion and respect. They are the people others turn to first, not because of a title, but because of trust, shared life experience, and a proven record of delivering better health.

The **community-based workforce** includes trained community-based professionals such as community health workers; promotores de salud; community-based social workers; community-based, nongovernmental nonprofit staff and human services providers; and other trusted community-based professionals (e.g. doulas, peer specialists, recovery coaches.)

The Problem

Housing is less affordable. Youth mental health needs are increasing. Preventable chronic disease continues to burden communities. As families need more support, the demand for CBW prevention, outreach, and care coordination services rises. At the same time, CBWs and the organizations that employ them are experiencing a dramatic decline in federal, state, and private funding.

We are at a critical crossroads. With the current bipartisan support for this crucial workforce, as demonstrated in the CMS Rural Health Transformation Program State Applications, **America can reduce healthcare costs, build trust, prevent disease, and alleviate social burdens by partnering with CBWs—but only if we act now.**

We Call on Policymakers to:



1. Direct Community-Level Investment

Ensure that funding allocations are specifically designated and sustained for local community-based organizations, tribes, and tribal health organizations



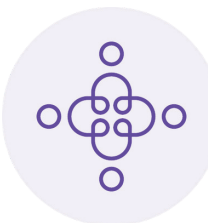
2. Partner with CBW Associations and Networks in Decision-Making

CBW associations and networks must be included as partners in shaping programs and policies to ensure they reflect real community needs



3. Create Sustainable Professional Career Pathways

Establish reliable funding and standards that support career growth and family sustaining jobs rooted in their communities



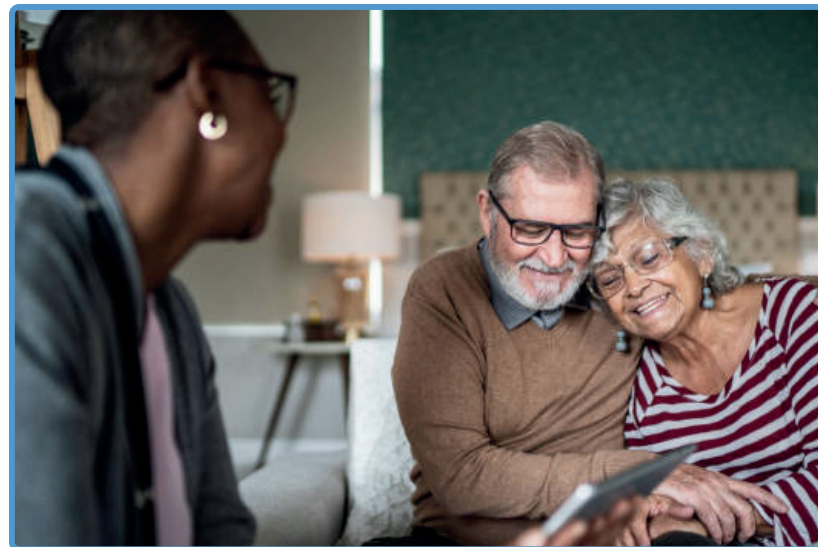
4. Enact Quality-Based Measures and Data-Driven Accountability

Ensure that quality frameworks are co-designed with CBW associations and networks, and that data reporting is transparent, disaggregated, and community-centered to track disparities, evaluate investments, and hold systems accountable for equitable outcomes

The Bottom Line

At a time when communities are searching for practical, effective solutions, CBWs who do this work every day are still not being fully supported or integrated. Without sustained investment in CBWs, preventable illness, healthcare costs, and inequities will continue to rise.

Strengthening CBWs is one of the most cost-effective, community-driven strategies we have—and now is the moment to act.



The Community-Based Workforce Alliance: A Trusted National Partner

The Community-Based Workforce Alliance (CBWA), a national coalition under the Health Equity Community Collaborative, works to strengthen, sustain, and protect community-based professionals across the country. CBWA brings together community leaders, advocates, and organizations to:

- Elevate community-based professionals in national policy conversations
- Build leadership and capacity within the workforce
- Advocate for equitable funding and sustainable career pathways
- Advance policies that improve health and racial equity

We urge policymakers to turn to the CBWA as a trusted national partner - one that brings together leaders from across the country who know this work firsthand. **CBWA is uniquely positioned to help shape practical, real-world solutions and provide input by bringing community voice into federal policy, workforce development, and long-term funding approaches.**

