COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER PROGRAM

Everything you need to know.

Prepared for: Counseling and Testing Programs
May 10, 2018
Gabrielle Ferrigno
What is a Community Health Worker (CHW)?

■ A peer who is representative of the HIV community
■ Shared life experience
■ The “feet-on-the-ground” for the Linkage to Care Coordinators
What does a CHW do?

- Help newly diagnosed clients navigate the healthcare system
- Locate out-of-care clients in the community and re-engage them in care
- Accompany clients wherever necessary (doctors appt, support services, etc.)
- Explain things to clients in a language they understand
- Provide Emotional, Informational, Instrumental and Affiliational Support
What does a CHW do? (Cont.)

■ Emotional Support (#1!)
  o *Sharing personal stories, calling to check-in just for the sake of checking in, listening attentively, being there to “hold their hand” through an experience*

■ Informational Support (Knowledge)
  o *Teaching clients how to read their lab values, share information on how to manage side effects, guide patients on what questions to ask providers*

■ Instrumental Support (Skill)
  o *Making appointment reminders, following up with the client in person when an appointment has been missed, participating in care team meetings*

■ Affiliational Support (Network)
  o *Connect clients to support groups, connect clients to other PLWHA through activities like outings, conferences, game nights, movie nights, etc.*
How do CHWs differ from other roles?

- Travel outside of the clinic
- Meet the client in the community
- Relatability
- Flexibility that most positions do not allow
Why are CHWs so important?

- Can physically find those lost to care
- Can provide real life experience to encourage/comfort clients
- Role emphasis on value over volume
- Function as silo-busters across the care continuum
- This program is creating a communication bridge between clinic and community
How can I help integrate a CHW into my agency?

- Encourage them
- Answer their questions
- Respect their experiences
- Treat them like they are a valuable member of the team
- Include them in the conversation
GABRIELLE FERRIGNO
PROGRAM SPECIALIST

Gabrielle.ferrigno@doh.nj.gov
(0) 609-633-2942
(C) 609-915-4344