



**Promotor(a) or Community Health Worker
Training and Certification Advisory Committee
Approved Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 15, 2025
10:00 a.m.**

Teams Live Events Virtual and Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS),
Robert Bernstein Building, Room K-100, 1100 West 49th Street, Austin, Texas 78756

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Otila Garcia, Chair, called the Promotor(a) or Community Health Worker Training and Certification Advisory Committee (CHWAC) meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. and welcomed members and attendees. Ms. Garcia, Chair, reminded committee members to turn on video camera and unmute their mics and state their names each time before offering a comment or asking a question so members of the public know who is speaking.

Ms. Garcia, Chair, introduced three new advisory members, Dr. Ninfa Pena-Purcell, Ms. Belinda Hampton, and Dr. Marlen Trujillo, who will introduce themselves during roll call.

Ms. Jessica Arevalo, Advisory Committee Coordination Office (ACCO), Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) read the logistical announcements and stated the meeting is conducted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act. Neither pre-registered requests for public comment nor written public comments were received. Ms. Arevalo conducted the member roll call and announced that a quorum was established.

Table 1: The Community Health Worker (CHW) Advisory Committee member attendance at the CHW Advisory Committee Meeting on April 15, 2025.

MEMBER NAME	IN ATTENDANCE
Ms. Minerva Garcia	No
Ms. Otila Garcia, Chair	Yes
Ms. Greg LaMay	Yes
Ms. Jometra Hawkins, Vice Chair	Yes
Ms. Belinda Flores	Yes

Ms. Roxana Lopez	Yes
Ms. Belinda Hampton	No
Dr. Ninfa Pena-Purcell	Yes
Dr. Marlen Trujillo	Yes

Ms. Garcia, Chair, asked the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) staff attending in person to introduce themselves – Ms. Raiza Ruiz, Manager, Community Health Workers and School Health Branch, Health Promotion Unit; Mr. Brett Spencer, Director, Health Promotion Unit; and Mr. Frank Luera, Program Coordinator, Community Health Worker Program.

Agenda Item 2: Consideration of January 16, 2025, draft meeting minutes

Ms. Garcia, Chair, reminded members that the January 16, 2025, draft meeting minutes were provided and asked for any edits or comments to the minutes. Ms. Garcia, Chair, requested a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

MOTION:

Ms. Arevalo conducted a roll call vote of the committee members. With a unanimous vote of the committee, seven approvals, no disapprovals, and no abstentions, the motion has passed.

Agenda Item 3: DSHS CHW Program Updates

Ms. Garcia, Chair, welcomed Ms. Ruiz to provide the updates.

Highlights included:

- Welcome new members
- CHW Core Competencies Enhancements fully effective by February 1, 2026, and implementation is currently in progress.
- Report of findings during interviews and focus groups expected mid-May. Learn more by visiting the [Core Competencies Update webpages](#) or reach out to Ms. Ruiz.
- Updates to CHW website includes Spanish translation. English and Spanish not available on all pages currently.
- Program activities:
 - Certified CHWs continue to grow. 9,250 certified CHWs in 2025 (YTD).
 - Increase in received CHW applications impact processing timelines. Recommendation to submit renewal applications 120 days prior to license expiration. Increase attributed to high school applications from 64 school districts.
 - Certified CHW Instructors (CHWIs) also continue to grow. 719 certified CHWs in 2025 (YTD).
 - 3 new curriculums (4.5 credit hours) approved from January 1 to March 31, 2025.

Discussion

- More information requested on the types of trainings recently approved. Ms. Ruiz will provide the information to the requester after the meeting.

- Stats on the age of high school applications. Age range is 16–18-year-old. Is it more promoted once the student turns 16 or when the student is exiting high school for job opportunities? Next year, the CHW program will be able to see how many of the high school students will renew and can report on the numbers later.
- Interest in how high school aged certified CHWs make a career out of the CHW certification. At least one more high school would like to offer the CHW certification course as part of their high school program for students who may not be college-bound. Discussion requested. Suggestion for ad hoc workgroup to explore high school aged CHWs will be discussed with leadership.
- How do school districts pay for the CHW certification course? Is it part of the curriculum? Is the cost absorbed by the school district? Are the school districts located throughout the state or just a certain region? The school districts cover the costs, unsure if it is covered by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Proposal for TEA representative to attend next meeting to provide more information.

Agenda Item 4: Overview of Project VIDA in El Paso, Texas

Ms. Garcia, Chair, welcomed Ms. Miriam Vazquez, Innovation Manager, Project Vida Health Center (PVHC), to share their approach to public health issues within their region.

Highlights included:

- Background information presented. PVHC mostly serves El Paso County, but extends into Hudspeth County, specifically in Fort Hancock.
- Two sister organizations that provide after school and daycare assistance.
- Four main lines of work:
 - Youth services – federal grants to provide health education and services to students and parents.
 - Prevention strategies – CDC recognized diabetes prevention program and ADA certified diabetes management program. Beginning reimbursement under Texas Children and Pregnant Women initiative; case management for pregnant women.
 - Navigation – CHW trained to provide outreach and navigate community members on how to register for clinics and affordable care act.
 - Sustainability and Innovation – sustain programs and grow new programs. Explore grant funds, fee for service, and other initiatives. Current focus on CHW reimbursements.
- Details provided on CHW Workforce – recruitment, integration, onboarding, training, Transferability of CHW roles, and future growth.

Discussion

- Apprenticeship – support from Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) through HRSA CHW Training Program Grant. It has allowed PVHC to grow certification and training program and allowed to be an apprenticeship site.
- Apprenticeship vs Practicum/Internship – Internships vary in length of employment and is not as rigid as the apprenticeship. The apprenticeship is registered under the Department of Labor and is set for one year. This includes a salary that grows with experience and will be paid at entry level amount by the end of the apprenticeship.
- Sustainability of apprenticeship – apprenticeships are taken as they come. Some apprentices are registered under other organizations outside Project Vida. PVHC

provides technical support while apprentices learn on the job training with other organizations.

Agenda Item 5: Texas Association of Community Health Workers Updates on CHW Day Activities

Ms. Garcia, Chair, introduced Ms. Zenaida Martinez, Chair, Texas Association of Community Health Workers (TAPCHW), to provide updates.

- Background information presented.
- Upcoming conference in September 2025.
- Board of Directors contact information shared if others would like to participate as a member or volunteer within their committees, and for any questions regarding the association.
- 2025 Work Plan/Goals – promote and offer annual CHW conference, projects, and opportunities statewide. Promote and empower CHW and CHWI continuing education.
- CHW Action Day 2025 with Dia de la Mujer Latina in Austin, TX on April 4, 2025.
 - Over 200 CHWs in attendance advocating for access to healthcare.
 - More employers encouraged and supported their CHWs to take part in efforts with speaking with legislators.
 - Next CHW Action Day will be in April 2026.

Agenda Item 6: CHW and UT Rio Grande Valley Collaboration on Maternal Health Research in South Texas

Ms. Garcia, Chair, introduced Mr. Cliff Clark, to share a maternal health project that has been implemented at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV).

Highlights included:

- Headed by Candace Robledo, PhD, MPH, Principal Investigator, UTRGV Maternal Health Research Center
- Background information presented. UTRGV Maternal Health Research Center established in 2023 and is funded by a grant from HRSA.
 - UTRGV is one of 16 research centers funded in the United States and one of four centers in Texas.
- Statistics on maternal health in the Rio Grande Valley area presented and serves as reasons why the research center was needed in the area.
- Partnered with South Texas Promotores Association (STPA) as CHWs can access rural communities and engage with the members.
 - UTRGV included CHWs in multiple projects as participants and to help with planning.
 - Trainings Completed or Planned to have CHWs provide peer-to-peer intervention on psychological flexibility:
 1. Advancing Research Best Practices – provide CHWs with best research practices for research teams.
 2. The Mindful Mother Intervention – how the intervention will be delivered to mothers.
 3. Study Structure/Data Collection – overview of encounters and data to be collected.
 - More details provided about trainings and intervention.
- Visit UTRGV website for more information.

Discussion

- Any stipend or incentives for mothers, a Community Health Center that participates as research support system, or individuals? Personal incentive for mothers at each of the four intervention visits and orientation visit in the form of an electronic gift card, about \$120.00 total throughout the visits. Participants who provide a biospecimen will receive an additional gift card or incentive. Community partners will receive a stipend to help cover setup costs at events.

Agenda Item 7: Advisory Subcommittee Updates

Ms. Garcia, Chair, invited Ms. Belinda Flores, Chair, Workforce Solutions and Employment Opportunities Subcommittee to provide updates.

- No updates reported. More members needed for the subcommittee.

Agenda Item 8: Committee member sharing of national and local CHW events

Ms. Hawkins, Vice Chair, opened the floor for members to share information from their region.

Highlights included:

- July 10, 2025, and July 11, 2025 – Northeast Texas Coalition CHW Conference in Tyler, TX. Mr. LaMay will share the flyer with the committee as it becomes available.
- Ms. Hawkins has been working with the African American Male Wellness Agency and Yale University to research study blood pressure. 18-month study that consists of three arms:
 - Participants checking their blood pressure twice daily for 18 months,
 - Remote blood pressure monitoring – physician attends to participants, and
 - CHW-incorporated to help find best practices to obtain accurate blood pressure and maintain a healthy blood pressure.

This is an open study in the Houston region that includes incentives such as a free blood pressure cuff and stipend. After 6 months, another stipend will be given to continue participating until 18 months is reached.

- A two-day CHW conference was held from April 11, 2025, to April 12, 2025, with over 150 CHWs in attendance from around Corpus Christi, TX. Member count is increasing in the CHW association that was recently formed.
- The STPA will be hosting two conferences:
 - June 29, 2025 – will address diabetes prevention and management.
 - July 12, 2025, McAllen, TX – will address women's health.

Agenda Item 9: Public comment

Ms. Garcia, Chair, opened the floor for public comment. Ms. Arevalo announced that there no pre-registered requests for comments and no written comments were received. None on-site for public comments.

Agenda Item 10: Agenda items for next meeting

Ms. Garcia, Chair, asked for suggestions for the next agenda items.

- Core Competencies Enhancement Project.
- High-level leadership feedback on high school CHW applications.
- Yvonne Pacheco from Methodist Healthcare Ministries to share their initiatives and strategies to integrate CHWs.
- Gateway Community Health Center to share different projects and ways they include CHWs.
- Laura Savas, PhD, and Emily Adlparbar, University of Texas Health Houston - Salud de Mis Manos program uses CHWs to promote cancer prevention.

Agenda Item 11: Adjourn

Ms. Otila Garcia, Chair, thanked all in attendance for joining the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.

Below is the link to the archived video of the April 15, 2025, Community Health Worker Advisory Committee meeting to view and listen for approximately, two years from date meeting is posted and in accordance with the DSHS records retention schedule. (To view and listen to the entirety of the meeting click on the link below)

[Promotor\(a\) or Community Health Worker \(CHW\) Training and Certification Advisory Committee](#)