



Supporting the workforce of Indiana's CHWs as part of the health care delivery system.

# INCHWA History and Milestones Report

## Building, Sustaining, and Advancing Indiana's Community Health Worker Workforce

### Overview

Since 2013, the Indiana Community Health Workers Association (INCHWA) has served as the professional association, certifying body, workforce advocate, and workforce steward for Community Health Workers (CHWs) throughout Indiana. Over the past decade, INCHWA has played a significant role in establishing certification standards, advancing workforce development, supporting reimbursement efforts, strengthening leadership pathways, promoting health equity, and helping employers successfully integrate Community Health Workers into healthcare, public health, and community-based systems.

### INCHWA Timeline of Milestones

Year	Milestone	Significance
2013	CHW Coalition becomes the Indiana Community Health Worker Association (INCHWA).	Established a statewide organization dedicated to advancing and supporting Community Health Workers in Indiana.
2015	Indiana State Department of Health provides seed funding and INCHWA incorporates. Board of Directors established.	Formalized the organization and began development of a strategy to become Indiana's CHW certifying body.
2016	Regional leadership structure established with Regional Directors and County Chairs. Education Committee formed.	Expanded workforce representation and laid the foundation for statewide certification standards.
2017	INCHWA designated as Indiana's certifying body for Community Health Workers.	Established a standardized certification process and helped define the CHW role statewide.
2018	Medicaid reimbursement announced for CHW services. Certification process expanded and training pilots launched.	Advanced workforce sustainability and increased access to CHW training opportunities.



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2020	INCHWA transitions training and certification online. Mind-Body Medicine groups introduced.	Increased accessibility to training and supported workforce wellness during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2021	National investments in CHW workforce development expand. INCHWA partners with the Office of Minority Health.	Strengthened statewide workforce development and contributed to building a statewide CHW model.
2022	Indiana Health Equity Council (INHEC) launches in partnership with the Office of Minority Health and Purdue University.	Expanded statewide collaboration focused on health equity, community engagement, and workforce development.
2023	INCHWA collaborates with FSSA on reimbursement efforts and expands leadership development initiatives.	Advanced workforce sustainability, disability inclusion, emergency preparedness, and leadership development for CHWs.
2024	INCHWA supports implementation and advancement of the Indiana Health Equity Council (INHEC) Community Health Worker Model.	Working alongside the Indiana Department of Health Office of Minority Health, Purdue University, CHWDI, and statewide partners, INCHWA helped strengthen a CHW-led infrastructure focused on health equity, emergency preparedness, community resilience, leadership development, and public health systems improvement.
2024	INCHWA collaborates with URAC on Community Health Worker Program Accreditation.	INCHWA leaders contributed to national accreditation efforts designed to strengthen CHW programs through workforce development, quality standards, leadership pathways, health equity, workforce support, and organizational accountability.
2025	INCHWA responds to statewide workforce reductions and program defunding.	Following the loss of employment for many CHWs across Indiana, INCHWA provided stress management, resilience-building, wellness, and coping sessions to support affected workers and their families.
2025	INCHWA sustains operations despite loss of organizational funding.	After losing all operational funding, INCHWA continued serving the workforce through organizational reserves, volunteer leadership, partnerships, and strategic resource management.



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Year	Milestone	Significance
2025	INCHWA develops innovative support strategies for employers and CHWs.	Expanded technical assistance, workforce sustainability planning, employer consultation, leadership development, networking opportunities, workforce retention strategies, and resource-sharing initiatives to help employers and CHWs navigate statewide funding challenges.
2026	INCHWA expands curriculum development and workforce advocacy efforts.	Continued development of training curricula, leadership development resources, employer education tools, and workforce advancement opportunities designed to strengthen the CHW profession.
2026	INCHWA increases participation in research and workforce innovation projects.	Began collaborating on research, implementation, and workforce innovation initiatives that help demonstrate CHW impact, generate evidence, and create new employment and funding opportunities for the workforce.
2026	INCHWA engages partners around GROW Grant opportunities and workforce funding strategies.	Worked with healthcare organizations, public health agencies, community-based organizations, and academic institutions to explore innovative funding mechanisms, grant opportunities, reimbursement pathways, and sustainability models for CHW programs.
2026	INCHWA advances its role as a workforce steward and systems partner.	Continued convening employers, policymakers, researchers, educators, and Community Health Workers to strengthen workforce infrastructure, improve sustainability, advance health equity, and create future growth opportunities.

## Evolution of INCHWA's Work

### Phase 1: Building the Foundation (2013–2018)

During its early years, INCHWA focused on establishing the profession, organizing the workforce, creating statewide representation, developing certification standards, and securing recognition for Community Health Workers as an essential component of Indiana's health and human service systems.

### Phase 2: Expanding Workforce Infrastructure (2020–2023)



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As demand for Community Health Workers increased nationally and statewide, INCHWA expanded training opportunities, workforce development initiatives, leadership pathways, reimbursement advocacy efforts, and partnerships focused on health equity and public health improvement.

### **Phase 3: Systems Leadership and Sustainability (2024–2026)**

INCHWA's role evolved beyond workforce development into broader systems leadership. This included participation in statewide health equity initiatives, national accreditation efforts, workforce sustainability planning, research partnerships, employer engagement, funding strategy development, and stewardship of the workforce during periods of significant change and uncertainty.

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## **Lasting Impact**

Today, INCHWA serves as more than a professional association. It functions as a workforce steward, employer resource, leadership development partner, convener, advocate, and strategic collaborator. Through certification, education, workforce development, accreditation leadership, health equity initiatives, employer support, research partnerships, and sustainability planning, INCHWA continues to strengthen the Community Health Worker profession and improve the health of Indiana communities.

INCHWA also recognizes and supports training vendors through a rigorous review process designed to ensure alignment with the association's mission, vision, CHW core competencies, and commitment to advancing a high-quality, ethical, and sustainable Community Health Worker workforce. Recognized training vendors demonstrate support for professional standards and ethical practice within the CHW profession, helping to ensure that training programs reflect the values, lived experience, integrity, and workforce needs of Indiana's CHWs while preparing participants to serve communities with professionalism, cultural humility, and adherence to the CHW Code of Ethics.

### **Current Strategic Focus Areas**

- Workforce Sustainability and Stewardship
- Community Health Worker Certification and Education
- Leadership Development
- Employer Engagement and Technical Assistance
- Research and Evaluation Partnerships
- Workforce Funding and Reimbursement Strategies
- Health Equity and Community Impact



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- Emergency Preparedness and Community Resilience
- Accreditation and Quality Standards
- Cross-Sector Collaboration and Systems Integration

## **Guiding Theme**

**Building the Future of Community Health Workers Through Leadership, Sustainability, Innovation, and Partnership.**