



# New York Community Health Worker Reimbursement and Sustainability Learning Collaborative

## REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

<b>Issue Date</b>	May 15, 2025
<b>Office Hours</b>	May 21, 2025, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm ET
<b>Application Deadline</b>	June 5, 2025, by 5:00 pm ET
<b>Project Period</b>	June 2025 – May 2026

KEY INFORMATION	
<b>Purpose</b>	The <i>New York Community Health Worker Reimbursement and Sustainability Learning Collaborative</i> will support New York State-based organizational teams providing community health worker (CHW) services who are seeking to optimize Medicaid and/or Medicare financing for these services. The 12-month initiative is led by the Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS) and made possible by the New York Health Foundation (NYHealth).
<b>RFA Released</b>	May 15, 2025
<b>Optional Office Hours for Potential Applicants</b>	May 21, 2025, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm ET Link to register for Office Hours event: <a href="https://chcs.zoom.us/meeting/register/92ryFKbsRK-OCKIaN_01FQ">https://chcs.zoom.us/meeting/register/92ryFKbsRK-OCKIaN_01FQ</a> <i>Please email Vanessa Finisse, <a href="mailto:vfinisse@chcs.org">vfinisse@chcs.org</a>, to request the webinar recording if you would like to listen and are unable to attend.</i>
<b>Applications Due</b>	June 5, 2025, by 5:00 pm ET
<b>Notification of Team Selections</b>	Mid-June 2025
<b>Welcome Calls with Teams</b>	Late June 2025
<b>Project Period for Selected Teams</b>	June 2025 – May 2026
<b>CHCS Contacts</b>	Logan Kelly, Senior Program Officer, <a href="mailto:lkelly@chcs.org">lkelly@chcs.org</a> and Vanessa Finisse, Program Officer, <a href="mailto:vfinisse@chcs.org">vfinisse@chcs.org</a> .

## Background

Community health worker (CHW) programs have historically been funded through contracts or as pilot programs, and many CHW programs are experiencing funding gaps as COVID-19-related funds end and broader federal policy priorities shift. New payment mechanisms in Medicaid and Medicare create opportunities to sustain this workforce and expand access to CHW services. These financing pathways for CHW services in New York State include:

- **Medicaid CHW Benefit** — Launched in 2023 through a state plan amendment and expanded in 2024. Eligible Medicaid providers can deliver CHW services and receive reimbursement from New York Medicaid.
- **Social Care Network Contracts** — CHWs deliver screening and referral services under contracts with [Social Care Networks](#), established under New York’s Medicaid 1115 waiver. Community-based organizations (CBOs) can deliver these services by contracting with a Social Care Network.
- **Medicare Community Health Integration (CHI) Services** — Launched in January 2024 to address unmet health-related social needs. CHWs can deliver CHI services if employed by a Medicare-billing provider or if their employer (such as a CBO) contracts with a Medicare-billing provider.

These expanded opportunities for CHW reimbursement were established in response to the [strong evidence](#) that CHW services lead to improved health outcomes. Medicaid and Medicare reimbursement pathways create opportunities for providers and CBOs to expand access to CHW services and, potentially, to develop new contractual partnerships between health care entities and CBOs. However, uptake of these reimbursement opportunities has been challenging for many organizations providing CHW services, due to barriers such as infrastructure requirements, coding and documentation challenges, and issues with integrating CHWs into cross-sector teams.

Growing and sustaining the CHW workforce will require providers of CHW services to access and [braid](#) a range of funding sources. Further, they will need to appropriately track these funding sources to meet the associated requirements in Medicaid and Medicare, while also navigating a lack of alignment between how these services are structured in different funding streams. In response, the New York Health Foundation (NYHealth) is pursuing a portfolio of projects around the CHW workforce through their [Primary Care priority area](#). The Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS), with NYHealth support, is launching the *New York Community Health Worker Reimbursement and Sustainability Learning Collaborative*.

## Purpose and Objectives

The *New York Community Health Worker Reimbursement and Sustainability Learning Collaborative* is a 12-month initiative that will support up to six competitively selected New York-based organizations currently providing CHW services. Eligible organizations include federally qualified health centers, CBOs, health/ hospital systems, and Social Care Network lead entities. The goal of the collaborative is to strengthen participants’ knowledge and capacity to access and braid Medicaid and/or Medicare funding to sustain and expand CHW service delivery.

The objectives of the learning collaborative are to help participants:

- Identify the implementation barriers of Medicaid and/or Medicare financing CHW services.
- Address these barriers and advance the sustainability and scalability of CHW services through subject matter expert presentations, peer-to-peer learning, and individualized technical assistance.

- Document challenges and best practices related to braiding Medicaid and/or Medicare funding for CHW services across different provider settings and communicate these lessons to policymakers and other organizations.

## Project Activities

The six competitively selected teams will participate in the following learning collaborative activities:

- **Introductory call:** Each team will attend an introductory call with CHCS after selection to discuss team priorities and key challenges that they would like to address.
- **Group learning sessions:** Participants will join six (bi-monthly) 90-minute group sessions designed to address participants' needs and interests. Sessions will include a combination of presentations, including participants and/or guest presenters, as well as peer-to-peer sharing. The New York State Department of Health will join for part of each group learning session to foster bi-directional dialogue on questions and issues related to Medicaid financing of CHW services.
- **Individual technical assistance:** CHCS staff and other subject matter experts will provide tailored technical assistance based on the project goals identified by each team. Individual teams will participate in four 60-minute technical assistance calls on topics prioritized by each team.
- **Affinity groups:** Depending on the composition of selected teams, CHCS may explore an affinity group component to support distinct provider types (e.g., federally qualified health centers, CBOs, health/hospital systems, and Social Care Network lead entities) in learning from their closely aligned peers.

Topics for the group sessions and technical assistance will be identified based on participants' needs and interests. These topics may include, for example:

- **Issues related to coding and billing** for CHW services, including billing approaches that align with program structures and services, and billing tools to support implementation.
- **Information technology infrastructure** to support billing approaches, including data collection and systems integration from CHW encounters and services.
- **Designing revenue/salary projections** based on Medicaid- and Medicare-covered services.
- **Aligning CHW training requirements and programs** with roles in Medicaid and Medicare financing pathways.
- **Refining CHW programs to align with reimbursement pathways** under Medicaid and Medicare, which may include delineating CHW roles and services; population identification; screening, referrals, and/or initiating visits; workforce capacity; and integration of CHWs onto clinical teams.
- **Contracting** between health care entities and CBOs.

## Eligibility Criteria

This learning collaborative is designed to provide tailored learning and technical assistance to up to six competitively selected teams in New York State. Key eligibility criteria include:

- Teams should consist of a **core group of three individuals** who are able to join all sessions, including:
  - Individual with significant experience supervising CHW staff and/or administering CHW programs;
  - Individual with responsibility for organizational financing of CHW services, specifically as related to Medicaid and/or Medicare; and
  - Individual who would supplement the above two team members, as determined by the participating organization's discretion. (For example, the third team member may be selected to enhance the adoption of learnings into the organization; have claims, billing experience; contracting expertise; or have specific Medicaid, Medicare, or other knowledge to contribute to the learning collaborative.)

Participant organizations may invite other individuals outside the core team to join specific learning collaborative activities based on the topic.

- **New York-based organizations that are eligible to apply** for participation in the initiative include:
  - Health systems and hospitals (entire system, individual hospital, or specific clinic/service line);
  - CBOs;
  - Federally qualified health centers or other health centers/clinics; and
  - Social Care Network lead entities.
- Finally, since the learning collaborative will focus on three sources of financing (Medicare community health integration; Medicaid CHW benefit; Social Care Network screening and referral services), **all participating organizations should be working toward pursuing at least two of these funding sources** to ensure that the learning collaborative is relevant and valuable. Organizations may be actively receiving reimbursement through these funding mechanisms or may be in the planning stages for future implementation of these services. Selected organizations will be identified to create a cohort that can foster peer-to-peer learning to address implementation challenges related to CHW financing.

## Expectations and Time Commitment for Applicants

By agreeing to participate, selected teams and their individual members commit to the following:

- Having representative staff attend and actively participate in individual technical assistance calls and group learning sessions.
- Sharing experiences and insights with fellow learning collaborative members.
- Participating in or being featured in CHCS and NYHealth communications products (e.g., being interviewed for a blog post, reviewing tools developed for the learning collaborative) as applicable.
- Submitting periodic short written deliverables, including a project goals worksheet detailing key activities, technical assistance needs, and measures of success.

CHCS anticipates that each individual participant will spend, on average, two to three hours each month engaged in learning collaborative activities. This includes preparation for and participation in technical assistance calls, group learning sessions, and possible affinity group calls.

In the [application](#), organizations must confirm **leadership support** of the learning collaborative and staff time for the initiative through the submission of a letter from organizational senior leadership. The letter should indicate the commitment of the leadership to implement organizational changes related to CHW billing and to incorporate learnings from the learning collaborative into the organization's work, as feasible.

## How to Apply

**Applications are due June 5, 2025, by 5:00 pm ET.**

[Submit the application](#) via email to Vanessa Finisse ([vfinisse@chcs.org](mailto:vfinisse@chcs.org)). Include the completed application form and letter of support from leadership. Documents should be clearly labeled and submitted as individual PDFs (see [application](#) for more details).

### ABOUT THE CENTER FOR HEALTH CARE STRATEGIES

The Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS) is a policy design and implementation partner devoted to improving outcomes for people enrolled in Medicaid. CHCS supports partners across sectors and disciplines to make more effective, efficient, and equitable care possible for millions of people across the nation. For more information, visit [www.chcs.org](http://www.chcs.org).

### ABOUT THE NEW YORK HEALTH FOUNDATION

The New York Health Foundation (NYHealth) is a private, statewide foundation dedicated to improving the health of all New Yorkers, especially people of color and others who have been historically marginalized. Today, the Foundation concentrates its initiatives in three priority areas: Healthy Food, Healthy Lives; Primary Care; and Veterans' Health. NYHealth also engages in responsive grantmaking through a Special Projects Fund. The Foundation is committed to making grants, but also to making a difference beyond grant dollars: informing health care policy and practice; spreading effective programs that work to improve the health system and make it more equitable; serving as a convener of health leaders across the State; and providing technical assistance to grantees and partners. For more information, visit [nyhealthfoundation.org](http://nyhealthfoundation.org).