

**VIRGINIA CHW WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**  
**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JANUARY 27, 2021**  
**CONFERENCE CALL**

*Attendees were asked to place their name and affiliation in the chat function to generate a roster of attendants. Any person who attended and is not listed below is requested to indicate your attendance at [cnye@institutephi.org](mailto:cnye@institutephi.org).*

**Abby Charles**, IPHI; **Christopher Nye**, IPHI; **Pam Blankenship**, VDH Dental Health Program; **Patricia Purcell**, Family Lifeline; **Art Spivy**, KinergyCare; **Cindy Warriner**, Virginia Pharmacist Association and Health Quality Innovators; **Davis Gammon**, VHHA; **De'naja Blanchard**, CHW in Training; **Dayana Camacho**, Promotora de Salud, La Casa de La Salud; **Tanya Simms**; **Maria Figueroa**, Promotora de Salud; Michelle White, HQI; **Stephanie Toney**, Richmond City Health District (RCHD); **Consuelo Staton**, VDH Resource Mothers; **Rick Shinn**, Virginia Community Healthcare Association; **Thelma Torres**; **Tanya Simms**, C-CHW, RCHD; **Thelma Torres**; **Roslyn Brown**, CHW in training; **Ilesha Evans**, CHW in training; **Abby Milham**, CHW, Augusta Health; **Dayana Liz Camacho-Escobar**, CHW in training; **Glenda Campuzano**, CHW in training; **Ester Núñez**, CHW in training; **Maria Figueroa**; **PerCilla Zeno**, (Zeno Wellness Group & ThatZenLife.Org); **Patrice Shelton**, C-CHW Sr., RCHD; **Allie Verlander**, Ballad Health; **Kerry Redican**, Virginia Tech; **Valerie McAllister**, VDH; **Teneysa Goodwin**, CHW, IPHI; **Richard Zucker**, Aetna; **Shanteny Jackson**, C-CHW, (RCHD) and President, VCHWA; **Stephanie Carrington**, C-CHW RCHD and VCHWA; **Adyam Redae**, VDH; **Michelle Taylor**, Virginia Association of Free and Charitable Clinics

### Welcome

Patrice Shelton, Council Vice-Chair, asked participants to type their name and affiliation into CHAT to have attendees presence recorded.

### Network Building

To increase awareness and networking.

- Richmond City Health District offering CHW training

Stephanie Toney with RCHD mentioned that RCHD is currently offering its third CHW class of eight CHW trainees. RCHD will also be offering a course this coming April. Upcoming in the summer, RCHD will offer a CHW class that focuses on youth ages 17 to 19. Stipends will be available for the summer class. Persons interested in the classes should contact Stephanie Toney at [stephanie.toney@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:stephanie.toney@vdh.virginia.gov). The classroom is virtual, so enrollees are not restricted to the Richmond area.

- VCU to offer Sickle Cell Care Coordination Virtual Conference in March 2021

Joan Corder-Mabe noted that VCU offers virtual training on sickle cell disease and its impact on persons who have sickle cell disease and their families. The conference is on March 16, 17, 23, and 24. The programs are available to CHWs. Joan will share a link to enroll in the March programs.

- Family Lifeline hires CHW for asthma case management.

Pat Purcell from Family Lifeline noted that the agency is expanding its service model due to funding for a CHW to provide asthma case management services to children in the Richmond area. The grant is for three years. Teneysa Goodwin will serve as the CHW case manager. Abby Charles encouraged Pat to connect with IPHI's asthma project in Richmond (RVA breathes).

- Health Quality Innovators (HQI) adding immunization outreach to its services

Michelle White, with HQI, noted that the organization is now focusing on immunizations in addition to its chronic disease work. Immunizations will focus on flu and COVID-19. HQI will be developing educational materials around this initiative over the next four years. One of HQI's first activities will be a statewide needs assessment regarding immunization activity, focusing on underserved populations. Ms. White also requested information from meeting participants on non-traditional delivery sites for providing health education information and materials such as barbershops, salons, etc.

- CHW Survey and CHW Standards Committee

VDH is distributing a CHW survey statewide. Ms. McAllister requested that CHWs complete the survey and share the survey link with others. The survey will capture position titles other than 'CHW,' where the position performs roles traditional to community health workers' title. PerCilla Zeno of Zeno Wellness Group & ThatZenLife.Org mentioned she took the survey. It was brief and encouraged others to complete the survey. Valerie also said that the CHW Standards Committee is looking for dates to finalize the CHW standards. Once finalized, the Council will have the opportunity to review the standards.

- Ballad Health (SW Virginia) using CHWs in UPENN IMPACT Model; plans expanded use of CHWs

Allie Verlander of Ballad Health, a health system with hospitals in SW Virginia and East Tennessee, noted that Ballad Health had implemented the UPENN Impact Model using CHWs. The CHWs work in a multidisciplinary team of four at Bristol Regional Medical Center. The team has successfully reduced the number of Emergency Department visits among Medicaid clients working with the CHWs. Because of the program's success, Ballad Health will be expanding its CHW program to operate in 21 counties in SW Virginia and East Tennessee. The program will expand beyond Medicaid clients and address the uninsured and complex medical patients and perinatal patients.

#### Approval of Minutes of the October 28, 2020 Meeting

The minutes of the Virginia CHW Workforce Development Council meeting of October 28, 2020, was adopted by consensus.

## Reports

### ▪ Membership Workgroup

#### Membership Application Form

Christopher Nye spoke about the work of the Membership Workgroup. The workgroup was formed during the October 2020 Council meeting. The workgroup's charge is to define better what membership on the committee means and capture more information from members. Membership on the Council has traditionally been granted to persons who attend Council meetings or a Council's committee. The current emphasis on membership is that there be significant participation by CHWs in any decisions made by the Council. The Virginia CHW Association, as a result of board and member discussions, has determined that "significant participation" includes 51% or a majority of CHW participation in any meeting where decisions are reached.

The committee developed a draft membership application. Christopher walked participants through the form. The form included basic information such as name, contact information, employer, etc. Significantly, the workgroup developed five membership categories. These categories included the following:

1. **CHW** – where the member is a CHW regardless of certification status and employment or volunteer status
2. **CHW Supervisor** – where the supervisor provides day-to-day contact or oversight of CHWs
3. **CHW Employer** – where the member's agency or organization employs or has volunteer CHWs and the member is not a direct CHW supervisor, as indicated in item 2.
4. **Government Employee** – where the member is a local or state employee. The exception is if the government employee is a CHW (then they check CHW) or a CHW supervisor (then the member checks the CHW Supervisor category)
5. **Advocate** – where the member assists the Council in support of the CHW workforce in Virginia

After discussing the membership categories, participants were asked for comments. Comments included that employment status should include whether the CHW was not currently employed or working as a volunteer. Additional comments included emphasizing that persons filling out the application select only one membership category.

The application form also includes a section where members can provide information regarding their interests in serving on the Council and supporting the Council's work.

Persons completing the application are asked to indicate their interest in serving on one or more of the three Council committees. The application contains a link to the Council website, where the three committees' missions are listed. Comments regarding committee selection included adding a selection where the member indicates that they cannot serve on a committee at the current time. Joan Corder-Mabe asked whether a person could serve on a committee but not be a Council member. Historically, persons who have participated in either a Council meeting or a committee meeting have been considered members of the Council. Because the form is an application, it connotes that there would be some restrictions or considerations whereby someone would not be granted membership. The form is an application designed, in part, to prevent the Council from being a majority of non-CHWs that would provide an obstacle to achieving a majority of CHWs

voices in Council or committee meetings. At present, this is not an issue. There was agreement that this could become an issue in the future. If that were to occur, it would warrant restrictions to maintain a majority of CHW voices.

The form will include the revisions discussed and placed on the Council website for members to complete if adopted.

**CONSENSUS** – The application form, with recommended edits, was adopted.

#### Consent-based decision-making process

Abby Charles provided a brief overview of the consent-based decision-making process that the Membership Workgroup considered. Abby began a description of the process by noting that participants had remained silent when calling for consensus. As a result, it can be difficult to ascertain and track how decisions are made and who has participated in them. The consent-based process emphasizes equity. In the context of the consent-based process, equity means that everyone who is participating provides their perspective. Before the Council is asked to consider adopting the consent-based decision-making process, the group [Circle Forward](#) will be scheduled to make a presentation. Council members would be invited to participate in that presentation.

- Virginia Department of Health

Additional information regarding the VDH CHW Survey was discussed. Christopher Nye shared a table indicating that over 1,000 had sent over 1,000 emails with links to the survey and what groups helped to comprise the list. Mary Jo Mather with the Virginia Certification Board sent links to certified CHWs and certified Peer Recovery Specialists. Chris asked that persons should send the link to CHWs or CHW employers that should receive the survey. Stephanie Toney placed a link to the survey in CHAT for participants. Abby Charles noted that a second survey targeting CHW employers would be sent at a later date. Valerie McAllister pointed out the importance of collecting data on CHWs across Virginia despite the challenges that COVID-19 has created for organizations. Valerie stressed the need to include more community-based organizations (CBOs) in the VDH and the Council's ongoing work. The survey will hopefully help identify CBOs serving vulnerable population groups.

- Committee on Policy and Communication

The committee's goal is to focus on what policies are needed to expand the CHW workforce in Virginia and the communication strategies that need to be developed and implemented that support the employment and sustainability of CHW programs.

Christopher Nye noted that the Council's Committee on Policy and Communication had met on January 7, 2021. The committee is developing an information sheet on CHWs that can be shared with CHW stakeholders. The document will have links to CHW return-on-investment and outcome information. The creation of the document is an action item from the Council's Strategic Plan. Amanda Young, Director for the Dan River Region CHW Project, shared with the committee that the project is working with paramedics from the Danville Life Saving and First Aid Crew (DLSFAC) to get several paramedics certified as CHWs. The DLSFAC is implementing a community paramedic program. The two groups work toward a new level of collaboration through cross-training. The collaboration includes developing an acuity scale for clients to make appropriate referrals between

and among the projects. As a result of networking during the committee meeting, Kerry Redican of Virginia Tech and Amanda will see if a research project can spring from the initiative that could serve as a model for other Virginia communities.

Abby Charles emphasized the importance of advocacy opportunities and efforts that address policies and initiatives that positively impact the CHW workforce. Advocacy does not have to be tied to any legislation and should be ongoing. Advocacy can include pilot programs, meeting with legislators (virtually for this year). Valerie McAllister reiterated the need for advocacy in preparing items that could positively impact CHWs that may be brought before the 2022 session of the Virginia General Assembly.

- CDC Grant Opportunity: Community Health Workers for COVID Response and Resilient Communities

Valerie added that CDC had placed a grant opportunity forecast titled CHWs for COVID Response and Resilient Communities. Governmental entities have to be the applicant. Valerie mentioned that Council members or partner organizations interested in applying for the grant are encouraged because VDH does not currently have the staff capacity to respond, but through a collaborative effort, an application could be made. Davis Gammon with the Virginia Healthcare and Hospital Association mentioned that the VHHA is interested in the opportunity as a catalyst for demonstrating the need for CHWs, not only in response to the COVID-19 pandemic but also as it may support policy and advocacy strategies. The grant package is scheduled to be released on February 23, 2021, with an estimated application due date of April 24, 2021. Davis indicated that VHHA is interested in leading interested parties. Persons interested in collaborating on this effort were encouraged to indicate their interest through CHAT.

- Legislation and Certification for CHWs

Christopher Nye updated participants on certification language for CHWs. Brenden Rivenbark has mentioned to the Policy and Communication Committee that the Notice for Regulatory Action for certification of CHWs was submitted in October to the Governor's Office and is still in the review process. There is no timeline for approval. Once approval is gained or additional information is requested, the draft regulations will be sent to the Board of Health. A public comment period will precede the draft regulations going before the Board of Health.

Stephanie Toney asked about the Virginia Community College System's involvement in CHW training and development from a statewide perspective. Valerie McAllister remarked that interest from community colleges has been sporadic. Valerie has had conversations with Keisha Smith of the Virginia Health Workforce Authority and their interest in providing CHW education. The discussion is ongoing. Valerie is hoping to engage organizations in a "readiness" campaign to help them submit the CHW training curriculum for review. In meetings that he has had in the past with community college representatives, Christopher Nye commented that demand for occupations had been a driver for community colleges initiating new curricula. Chris also mentioned that he has experienced that interest in some community colleges is often tied to a single individual and if that person leaves, interest wanes. Joan Corder-Mabe, in her experiences, echoed that demand drives interest among community colleges.

- Virginia CHW Association

Shanteny Jackson, President of the Association, and Stephanie Carrington, Vice-President of the Association, highlighted the progress of the VCHWA in developing partnerships. The VCHWA attained IRS 501 (c) (3) not for profit status in 2020. Two programs were launched in 2020—the CHW Toolkit Program and the CHW Ambassador Program. Twenty-seven new members joined the VCHWA in 2020. Thanks to the efforts of the VCHWA, on average, the number of CHWs participating in Council meetings increased by 10. The increase in CHW participation is significant to ensure that CHW is involved in Council decision-making. The VCHWA strategic plan has four priority areas. These areas are outreach, visibility, funding, and capacity building. The Association added 75 new "friends" to its social media presence. In terms of capacity building, the VCHWA achieved not-for-profit status. The VCHWA was awarded \$61,000 in grant funding during 2020.

The CHW toolkit is sponsored by a Virginia Department of Health Innovate grant. The toolkit comes in a travel bag containing a pill dispenser, a pedometer, a magnifying glass, a glucose monitor, and a blood pressure monitor.

The VCHWA has embedded an interactive map on its website that identifies CHWs, partners, and donors who wish to be identified on a Virginia map. The map can be accessed at the VCHWA website at <https://chwofva.com/resources-map/>. The Association is looking forward to adding more information from the VDH CHW Survey to the map.

The VCHWA launched the CHW Ambassador Program in 2020. The Ambassador Program creates, elevates, and secures leadership opportunities for CHWs to expand their knowledge of specialty areas. Currently, there are CHWs, or ambassadors, representing 10 to 15 specialties or work areas. The ambassadors reside in various regions of Virginia and act as resource CHWs to other CHWs across Virginia.

Shanteny mentioned that CHWs could access infant "onesies" for expectant mothers. Interested CHWs should go to the VCHWA website at [www.chwofva.com](http://www.chwofva.com). The onesies are imprinted with educational information regarding the health of newborns.

### Other

With the addition of networking time to future Council agendas, Council meetings will be extended from 90 minutes to two hours.

Valerie McAllister reminded participants that there would be a meeting to review the CHW Standards Committee final draft. Abby Charles encouraged participants to provide content about their programs and activities that can be highlighted in the Council's monthly newsletter.

The next meeting of the Virginia CHW Workforce Development Council will be on Wednesday, April 28, 2021, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:33 p.m.