Indiana Community Health Worker Scope of Practice

A scope of practice (SoP) defines the parameters within which a professional practices. A SoP describes the who, what, where, and when of a profession, which provides assurances for both those practicing within the profession and for those they serve.

Indiana chose to adopt the American Public Health Association’s definition of a community health worker (CHW), which is:

The CHW is a frontline public health worker who is a trusted member of and/or has an unusually close understanding of the community served. This trusting relationship enables the CHW to serve as a liaison/link/intermediary between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery.

Common titles used by a CHW include:

- Abuse Counselor
- Access Worker
- Adult Case Manager
- Case Coordinator
- Care Coordinator
- Certified Recovery Specialist
- Community Coordinator
- Community Counselor
- Community Health Educator
- Community Health Representative
- Community Liaison
- Community Organizer
- Community Outreach Manager
- Community Outreach Worker
- Community Social Worker
- Discharge Planner
- Enrollment Specialist
- Family Advocate
- Family Education Coordinator
- Family Support Worker
- Financial Counselor
- Health Advisor
- Health Advocate
- Health Agent
- Health Assistant
- Health Coach
- Health Educator
- Health Insurance Counselor
- HIV Peer Advocate
- HIV Prevention Coordinator
- Home Care Worker
- Home Visitor
- Intake Specialist
- Lay Health Worker/Advisor
- Maternal & Child Health Case Manager
- Medical Representative
- Mental Health Worker
- Outreach Advocate
- Outreach Case Manager
- Outreach Coordinator
- Outreach Educator
- Outreach Worker
- Parent Aide
- Parent Liaison/Advocate
- Promotor/Promotor(a) de Salud
- Roving Listener
- Street Outreach Worker
- Youth Development Specialist
- Youth Worker
Roles and Core Competencies

Nationally, a successful CHW is proficient in 10 specific roles. These roles include:

- Cultural mediation among individuals, communities, and health and social service systems
- Providing coaching and social support
- Providing culturally-appropriate health education and information
- Care coordination, case management, and system navigation
- Providing direct service
- Building individual and community capacity
- Advocating for individuals and communities
- Implementing individual and community assessments
- Conducting outreach
- Participating in evaluation and research

Additionally in the state of Indiana, a successful CHW is proficient in the following core competencies:

- Communication skills
- Interpersonal and relationship-building skills
- Service coordination and navigation skills
- Capacity building skills
- Advocacy skills
- Education and facilitation skills
- Individual and community assessment skills
- Outreach skills
- Professional skills and conduct
- Evaluation and research skills
- Knowledge base