

2018 OPHA Annual Conference & Meeting

Presenters: Catherine Potter and Debra Catlin

Presentation Title: Integrating Traditional Health Workers in Primary Care

Abstract proposal:

The Affordable Care Act and Oregon's health system transformation, including CCO 2.0 have emphasized the need to expand our definition of the health care team and, look beyond clinic walls to improve health. Traditional Health Workers promote health and connect people with health services in both new and traditional ways. Traditional Health Workers (THWs) is the Oregon umbrella term for five categories of workers: Community Health Workers (CHWs), Peer Support Specialists (PSS), Peer Wellness Specialists (PWS), Personal Health Navigators (PHN), and Doulas.

Oregon has a long history of actively pursuing strategies to integrate Traditional Health Workers in health care settings, mostly in primary health care. THW's expertise and involvement in primary care settings has helped address complex health issues that extend beyond the provider and even beyond patient centered primary care homes, to address the social determinants of health, health behaviors and persistent barriers to care for the most underserved in our communities.

THWs in Oregon are integrated and utilized in various organizational settings which includes: behavioral health agencies, county health departments, federally qualified health centers, tribal health centers, government agencies, primary care clinics, hospitals, rural health clinics and community-based organizations.

However, the integration and utilization of Traditional Health Workers (THWs) in Oregon is not yet fully realized. THWs provide critical services that include outreach and case finding, mobilizing patients, making community and cultural connections, coordinating care, assisting in system navigation, and providing health promotion and informal coaching and support. But THWs are not yet available in all communities and many existing community-based THW programs are not as integrated into health care settings as they could be. To assure Oregon's healthcare system continues to move towards the Triple Aim of better health, better care and lower cost, THWs could be the answer.

Presenters will:

- Provide an overview of the existing infrastructure for Traditional Health Workers in Oregon, including the Traditional Health Worker Commission (part of Oregon Health Authority), training and certification requirements;
- Provide an overview of current models for utilizing Traditional Health Workers in primary care settings, challenges and ideas for addressing challenges.

Bios of presenters:



Debra Catlin has been in the field of perinatal education for 31 years as an ICEA Certified Childbirth and Postnatal Educator, and a DONA International Certified Birth Doula and Approved Trainer. Debra co-founded a non-profit organization in Lane County that offered expansive education and support services to expectant and new parents for 10 years. She provided pre and postpartum depression support services there for over 12 years. Debra instructed expectant parents at Sacred Heart Medical Center at Riverbend in Springfield, volunteered for a perinatal support program there, and was involved in teen parent programs as well. She has educated many professionals throughout her career, including nurses, midwives, physicians, community organizations, and social workers. She is currently serving on Oregon State's Traditional Health Worker Systems Integration Subcommittee, helping to implement the new law utilizing doula services for Medicaid clients. She is also the Education and Resource Committee Chair for the newly formed Oregon Doula Association.

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Catherine Potter is the Safety Net Partnerships Manager at Kaiser Permanente Northwest. In her role, she builds, fosters and manages partnerships between Kaiser Permanente and non-profit Community Clinics and Community-Based Organizations providing health services. Catherine has 16 years of experience developing and managing Community Health Worker programs in Oregon, primarily in the Latino immigrant community. Her CHW program experience includes managing the Opening Doors program in Washington County for 5 years and leading the Providence Parish Health Promoter Program for 11 years. She has worked at Kaiser Permanente for the last 6 years. Catherine holds a Master's degree in medical anthropology and is passionate about health equity, eliminating health disparities and bringing a social justice perspective to her work in health care. Catherine is also a member of the Systems Integration Subcommittee of Oregon's Traditional Health Worker Commission.

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