Traditional Health Workers: Oregon’s Model

Community Health Workers
Peer Support Specialists
Peer Wellness Specialists
Personal Health Navigators
Birth Doulas

Individuals and Communities

Health and social service systems
Traditional Health Worker Types

• **Community Health Worker**: a trusted, trained community member who promotes, advocates and organizes for improved health in their communities.

• **Peer Wellness Specialist**: an individual who has lived experience with a psychiatric condition(s) plus intensive training, who works as part of a person-driven, health home team, integrating behavioral health and primary care to assist and advocate for individuals in achieving well-being.

• **Peer Support Specialist**: an individual who provide supportive services to a current or former consumer of mental health or addiction treatment.

• **Doula**: a birth companion who provides personal, nonmedical support to women and families throughout a woman's pregnancy, childbirth, and post-partum experience.

• **Personal Health Navigator**: an individual who provides information, assistance, tools and support to enable a patient to make the best health care decisions.
Oregon’s Traditional Health Workers

- Community Health Workers
- Peer Wellness and Peer Support Specialists
- Personal Health Navigators
- Doulas

- Outreach & Mobilization
- Community & Cultural Bridging
- Direct Services, Care Coordination & System Navigation
- Health Promotion & Coaching

- Individuals & Communities
- CCOS & other health systems
Traditional Health Workers ...

- Reduce costs associated with health care
- Understand and address the social determinants of health
- Address health disparities in culturally-appropriate ways
- Support integration and whole person care

An **effective THW workforce** consists of individuals

- from the community served
- who have shared “lived experiences”
- who are representative of the population served
Oregon Traditional Health Worker Training & Certification

Training
- OHA-approved training provider offers core curriculum
- Assessment

Certification
- Certification application
- Registry Enrollment

Employment
- Clinics
- Hospitals
- CBOs
- Public Health

Continued Learning
- On-site training
- Continuing education
Examples for Integrating THWs

Setting: Primary Care

- Identifies diabetes disparity and related high utilization rates in specific community
- Designs program to integrate CHWs into clinic
- Provides training and supervision for optimal integration

FQHC

Community Health Worker

- CHWs receive specific training related to clinic needs (Diabetes self-management, motivational interviewing, etc.)
- CHWs work with patients in clinic, homes and community settings
- CHWs educate and support patients and providers to increase equity and improve health

Community Member

- Connects with CHW in clinic
- Attends Diabetes Self Management class
- Improves understanding and engagement in health care
- Better knowledge of health and services available to meet needs
Examples for Integrating THWs

Setting: Primary Care

- Funds grant proposal from community-based organization that pays for all training needed for a diverse community of doulas to become state certified as THW Doulas.
- Coordinates with CBO to refer state prioritized populations for THW Doula Services
- Referral for THW Doula services documented by licensed provider

THW Doula

- CBO assigns culturally matched THW Doula
- THW Doula provides 2 prenatal support visits, labor and birth care, and 2 postpartum visits
- Educates woman on healthy birth practices and helps her create a birth plan
- Also refers woman for prenatal education, mental health evaluation, and lactation consultant

- Becomes better informed and the support reduces her stress
- Improved birth outcomes and lower costs
- Receives culturally appropriate care which increases her satisfaction
- Receives treatment for depression
- Breastfeeding is successful and of longer duration

Community Member

Examples for Integrating THWs
Examples for Integrating THWs

- Partners with CBOs to conduct Community Assessment
- Identifies peer support disparity and related high utilization rates in demographic-specific community
- Subcontracts with CBO serving specific community
- Finances outreach, support activities, utilization within other systems (jail, child welfare, hospital, etc.)

Peer Support Specialists

- CBO trains Peers to provide support and navigation of systems
- Deploys Peers in this community
- Peer meets individuals where they’re at and supports them in exploring new wellness and recovery goals
- Peer provides ongoing support and system navigation

Community Member

- Connects to other services if the person requests this type of support
- Receives culturally and linguistically appropriate services
- Receives regular check-ins by the peer
- Engages in more appropriate utilization

Setting: Mental Health &/or Addictions
Some ways THWs can be paid through Medicaid
Resources

Office of Equity and Inclusion

http://www.oregon.gov/oha/oei/Pages/index.aspx

Tip Sheets for Working with THWs

Additional Resources for Oregon Expertise re: Traditional Health Workers

Community Health Workers
ORCHWA: www.orchwa.org

Birth Doulas
Oregon Doula Association, www.oregondoulas.org, Debra Catlin: debcatlin@aol.com

Addiction Peers
Addiction Counselor Certification Board of Oregon: http://www.accbo.com/

Mental Health Peers
FolkTime: www.Folktime.org