**Promotor(a)/Community Health Worker Training and Certification Program**

**History**

February 2011

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mch/chw.shtm>

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| **Date** |  |
| Mid-1990s | **Early Development*** Series of meetings held that brought together promotores or CHWs, a CHW alliance, community leaders, health professionals, and others interested in this public health work force from several southwestern border states
* Development of promotor(a) organizations to provide communication and sharing networks among promotora programs. (ex. South Texas Promotora Association, a loose federation of promotores from 11 programs in the Lower Rio Grande Valley – one role of these organizations was to advocate locally, regionally, and statewide for recognition of their work
* Group of state legislators, all representing districts that form the border with Mexico, became catalysts for creating a formal means through which to recognize and legitimize promotores’ work[[1]](#endnote-1)
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| May 1999 | **House Bill 1864** - enacted by the 76th Texas Legislature, 1999, directed the Texas Department of Health (TDH) to establish a temporary committee to make recommendations on issues involved in the voluntary training and certification of promotoresor CHWs |
| 1999 | **Promotor(a) Program Development Committee established**15-member* 2 promotores
* 2 members of the general public
* 2 employees of TDH
* 7 representatives of TX colleges and universities
* 1 representative of the Texas Workforce Commission
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* 1 representative of the Texas–Mexico Border Health

2-year term |
| 1999-2001 | **Promotor(a) Program Development Committee Charge** – study issues involved in developing a statewide training and certification program. * **Review and assess promotora programs currently in operation around the state**;
* *Promotor(a)* or CHW Workforce and Training Questionnaire - found approximately 30 existing programs using some 300 *promotores* or CHWs as paid or unpaid, full-time or part-time staff - in neighborhood clinics, local health departments, community-based organizations, faith-based agencies, and university-sponsored activities.
* **Study the feasibility of establishing a standardized curriculum for promotores**;
* Identified eight core competencies – advocacy, interpersonal relations, capacity building, communication, knowledge, organization, teaching, service coordination
* Created minimum standard learner-centered objectives for each objective
* Sought stakeholder feedback through public hearings
* Minimum 160 hour course requirements
* Grandfathering - not fewer than 1000 cumulative hours from July 1997 to January 2004
* Certification process was based loosely on the professional certification process for health educators known as the Certified Health Education Specialist and administered by The National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Inc.
* **Study the options for certification of promotores and the settings in which certification may be appropriate;**
* Chose to certify CHWs, their instructors, and sponsoring institutions or training programs
* **Assess available methods to evaluate the success of promotora programs;**
* Initially recommended the use of a comprehensive, thoroughly field-tested evaluation package known as the *Community Health Worker Evaluation Tool Kit*, developed by the University of Arizona Rural Health Office and the College of Public Health
* **Create, oversee, and advise local pilot projects subject to the availability of appropriations**
* 5 pilot sites selected but not funded due to lack of available funds
* Harris County pilot 2003 (Harris County Hospital District/Gateway to Care) Rockwell Fund and Houston Endowment- test the effectiveness of CHWs in increasing access to primary and preventive health care and reducing overall health care costs to the state
* **Evaluate the feasibility of seeking a federal waiver so that promotora services may be included as a reimbursable service provided under the state Medicaid program.**

Committee recommendations* Apply best practice models to eliminate barriers to care. These included employing or empowering *promotores* or CHWs to assist recipients in accessing Medicaid services, simplifying Medicaid eligibility policies and procedures, reducing documentation required by the application process, and requiring customer service and cultural competency standards;
* Enable community residents to collaborate with health and human services systems to build or tailor the Medicaid infrastructure to the unique conditions of their environment;
* Promote independence and local control among community residents and sustain commitment among health and human services agencies to improve quality of life and eliminate health disparities.
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| July 2000 | **Rules for certification adopted by Texas Department of Health** |
| September 2001- enacted by 77th Texas Legislature, 2001 | **SB751** - required that state health and human services agencies use certified promotores to the extent possible for recipients of medical assistance**SB105**1 - mandated that all promotores or CHWs who receive compensation for their services be certified - previously, the certification process was voluntary for all promotores or CHWs. |
| 2002 | **First CHW certifications issued****Promotor(a)/Community Health Worker Training and Certification Advisory Committee** * Established under the Texas Health and Safety Code, §11.016, which allows the Executive Commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to establish advisory committees
* 9-member
* 4 certified promotores or community health workers
* 2 public members
* 2 professionals working with promotores or community health workers in a community setting
* 1 member from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, or a higher education faculty member who has teaching experience in community health, public health or adult education and has trained promotores or community health workers
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| September 2004 | **HB2292, 78th Texas Legislature, consolidated four legacy agencies including the Texas Department of Health into a single department – Texas Department of State Health Services** |
| December 2004 | 337 certified CHWs |
| December 2005 | 537 certified CHWs68/254 counties3 sponsoring organizations provided certification training 80 graduates |
| 2006 | **Revised rules for certification adopted*** extended certification based on experience – at least 1000 hours of community health work service between July 1997 and January 2005
* Updated agency name to Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)
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| March 2007 | **Community Health Worker National Workforce Study published**Texas members of the Technical Advisory Group* **Zeida L. Estrada** - Community Health Worker, President, Community Health Workers National Network Association, Inc., Houston, Texas.
* **Antonio Furino**, Ph.D. - Professor of Economics, Associate Director, Regional Center for Health Workforce Studies, Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.
* **Teresa Hines**, M.P.H. - Program Director, Health Education Training Centers Alliance of Texas (HETCAT), El Paso, Texas.
* **Steve H. Murdock**, Ph.D. - Professor and Director, Regional Center for Health Workforce Studies, Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio; The Lutcher Brown Distinguished Chair in Management Science and Statistics and Director, Institute for Demographic and Socioeconomic Research and the Texas State Data Center at The University of Texas at San Antonio; State Demographer of Texas.
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| 2007 | Promotor(a) or Community Health Worker Training and Certification Program moved from Regional and Local Health Services Division to the Texas Primary Care Office |
| December 2007 | 599 certified CHWs 52/254 counties 4 sponsoring organizations provided certification training89 graduates |
| December 2008 | 573 certified CHWs 48/254 counties4 sponsoring organizations provided certification training 94 graduates |
| 2009 | Promotor(a) or Community Health Worker Training and Certification Program moved to Office of Title V and Family Health |
| September 2009 | **Planning session** with Promotor(a)/CHW Training and Certification Advisory Committee and other stakeholders to explore and promote opportunities in Texas |
| December 2009 | 625 certified CHWs 49/254 counties7 sponsoring organizations provided certification training123 graduates |
| January 2010 | **Community Health Worker added to 2010 Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) Definitions** |
| July 2010 | **Community Health Worker added as a Department of Labor Apprenticeable Occupation** |
| October 2010 | **Revised rules for certification adopted*** amended certification based on experience – at least 1000 hours of community health work within the last six years
* amended instructor certification based on experience – at least 1000 hours of experience in
 |
| December 2010 | 1,153 certified CHWs 82/254 counties9 sponsoring organizations provided certification training 387 graduates |

Additional information:

Texas Health Steps – Promotores/Community Health Workers Outreach and Informing Activities Pilot Program (Emergency Rooms). Intervention phase – May – August 2011.

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1. Nichols DC, Berrios C,Samar H. Texas’ community health workforce: from state health promotion policy to community-level practice. Prev Chronic Dis [serial online] 2005 Nov [*date cited*]. Available from: URL: <http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2005/nov/05_0059.htm>. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)