CHERP Certification Levels

(**C**ommunity **H**ealth **E**ducation **R**esource **P**erson)

4/12/2012

1. **Level 1: Wellness Specialist** – be a knowledgeable resource to help community members understand the concepts of personal health, and to be able answer questions about basic nutrition and physical activity behaviors. The CHERP level 1 will practice good communication skills, professional ethics, and maintain confidentiality. This level CHERP can help guide the community member on the right track to accessing health care and also help dispel common myths about nutrition and exercise.
2. **Level 2: Health Promotion Specialist** – to help community members take responsibility for their own health. The approach is to: 1) help community members establish their medical home and know the importance of preventive medicine, 2) teach community members about mental health issues and the relationships among mental health, physical health and behavior, 3) help community members assess their nutritional behaviors, 4) help community members asses their activity levels, and 5) Teach community members about personal, home, and community safety and emergency preparedness.
3. **Level 3: Disease Prevention Specialist** – to help community members take a more active role in getting the screenings, evaluations, and immunizations they need. At this level, the CHERP will get more personal with each community member, by being knowledgeable about the chronic diseases that affect WV and the country. CHERPs will be knowledgeable about the risks and causes of chronic diseases and primary prevention for these diseases.
4. **Level 4: Disease Management Specialist** – this is a transition stage in credentialing, where the CHERP begins to move into secondary prevention and work with community members who have high risk for disease, have diagnosed diseases or conditions. The CHERP at this level is also a key resource in alleviating the burden on other health care professionals, or lack of services in the community, because the CHERP can now provide important prevention services to the unhealthy members of the community. The CHERP will understand disease treatment modalities and medications. CHERPs will know how to give support to the chronically ill and give palliative care.
5. **Level 5: Mental Health Specialist** – to help those with mental health issues, and to help family members of those with mental health issues. This CHERP will help deliver support services to community members, help them navigate the mental health care system, and alleviate the burden of support services usually placed on health care providers in the health care system. CHERPs will have an understanding of substance abuse and treatment.
6. **Level 6: Personal Health Counselor** – this level gets the CHERP into the professional or career development level. At this point, the CHERP will be able to do a tremendous work in communities that are underserved. This CHERP will be able to work with community members of all types and at all levels of health and disease. The CHERP will not be giving primary care, but be a great support to the primary care delivery services and allied health professionals in the community.