



CHW Certification Considerations :

Discussion with New Hampshire DHHS

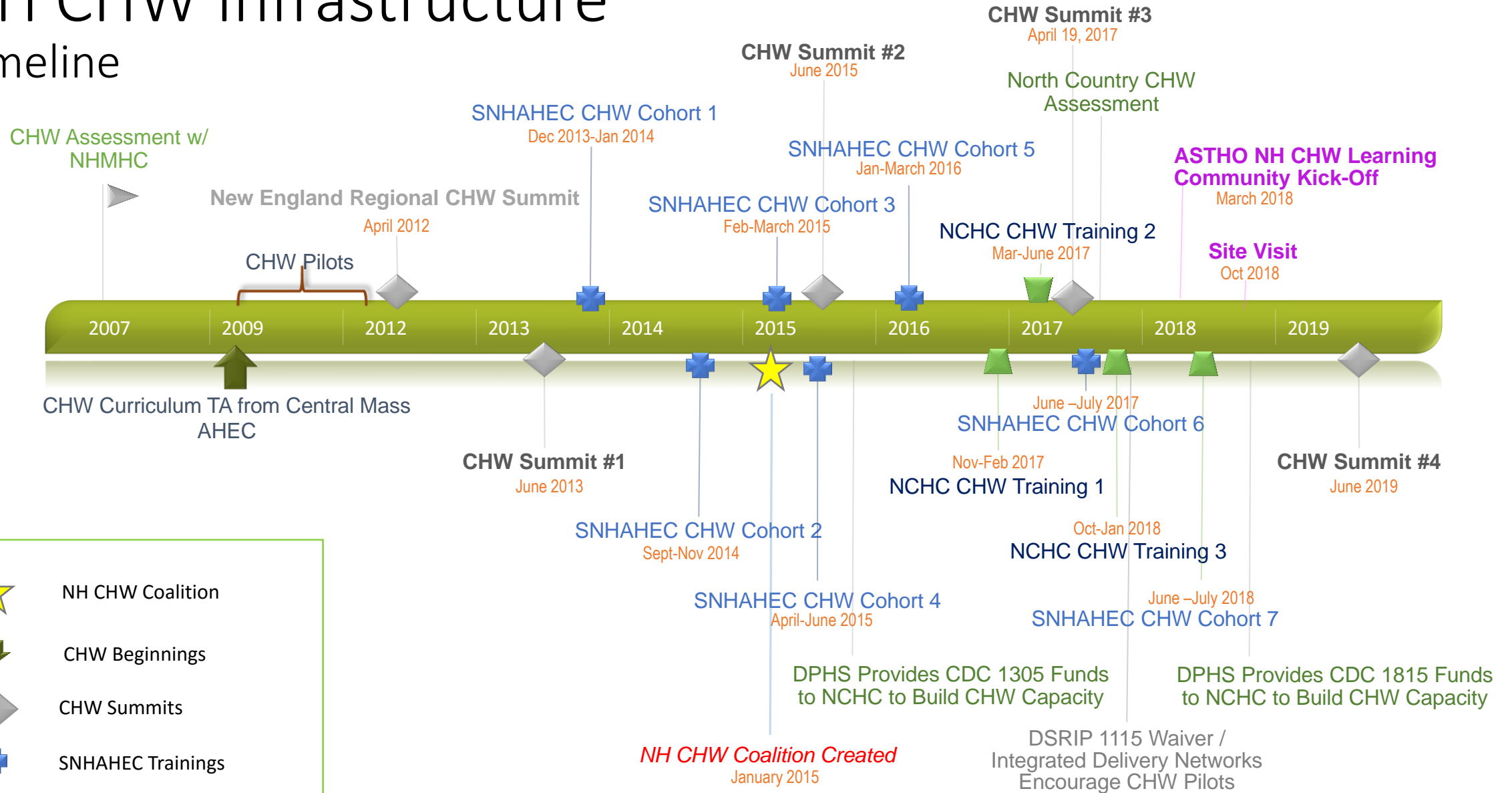
February 13, 2019






Objectives

- Provide an overview of options/processes for CHW certification/credentialing.
- Discuss administrative structures to “house” a certification program.
- Discuss whether certification is a desirable path forward for NH DHHS.



NH CHW Infrastructure Timeline



	NH CHW Coalition
	CHW Beginnings
	CHW Summits
	SNHAHEC Trainings
	NCHC Trainings

What Certification Is (and Is Not):

- IS a declaration by issuing authority that an individual has certain qualifications (e.g., training, skills)

- Is NOT necessarily regulation of practice
- Is NOT the same as an educational “certificate of completion” unless you deliberately choose to make it so as a matter of policy
- Is NOT automatically a state government function: Issuing authority MAY be government, educational, association or employer-based

Developing Certification Policy: Process

- Ongoing **CHW leadership and inclusion!**
- Stakeholder agreement on **rationale and objectives**
- Stakeholder agreement on meaning/definition of certification (**includes airing preconceptions**)
- Commitment to create **responsive** certification policies and procedures that respect the nature of the practice

	CHWs	Payers & employers
Anticipated benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher wages • Improved working conditions • Increased respect from other professions • Wider career opportunities • Stable employment • Strengthened professional identify • Consistent standards for the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear scope of practice boundaries • Consistent, reliable qualifications among CHWs • Simplified recruitment • Reduced on-the-job training costs • A clearer rationale for integrating CHWs into care teams
Assumed negative impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New barriers to entry • Creation of a “class” system among CHWs and/or marginalization of volunteer CHWs • Making CHW practice more clinical and less connected to the community • Regulations or restrictions on what CHWs are allowed to do • Employing people who attend a training but do not have strong community connections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure to increase wages • New regulations or restrictions on their organizations • Increased overall training costs • CHWs losing touch with the community, thereby becoming less effective overall

Major Certification Options

- Certify **individuals** who work as CHWs?
 - Voluntary v. Mandatory (Title v. Practice):
 - Will certification be required in order to use a title such as “Certified CHW?”
(*best/most common practice*)
 - Will certification be required for anyone doing the work of a CHW?
- Accredite or certify CHW **training programs/curricula**?
- Certify **instructors** in CHW training programs?
- Certify **employers**?
 - No state to date has taken this approach; would not provide CHWs with a “portable” proof of qualifications.

Basic Components of an Individual CHW Certification Program

- Authority and administrative home
- Certifying board or entity (composition, powers, operations)
- Definition of CHW
- Core competencies
- Scope of practice and practice standards
- Eligibility requirements
- Standards and protocols for assessing eligibility
- Continuing education requirements
- Procedures to apply, renew, revoke/expire, appeal, etc.

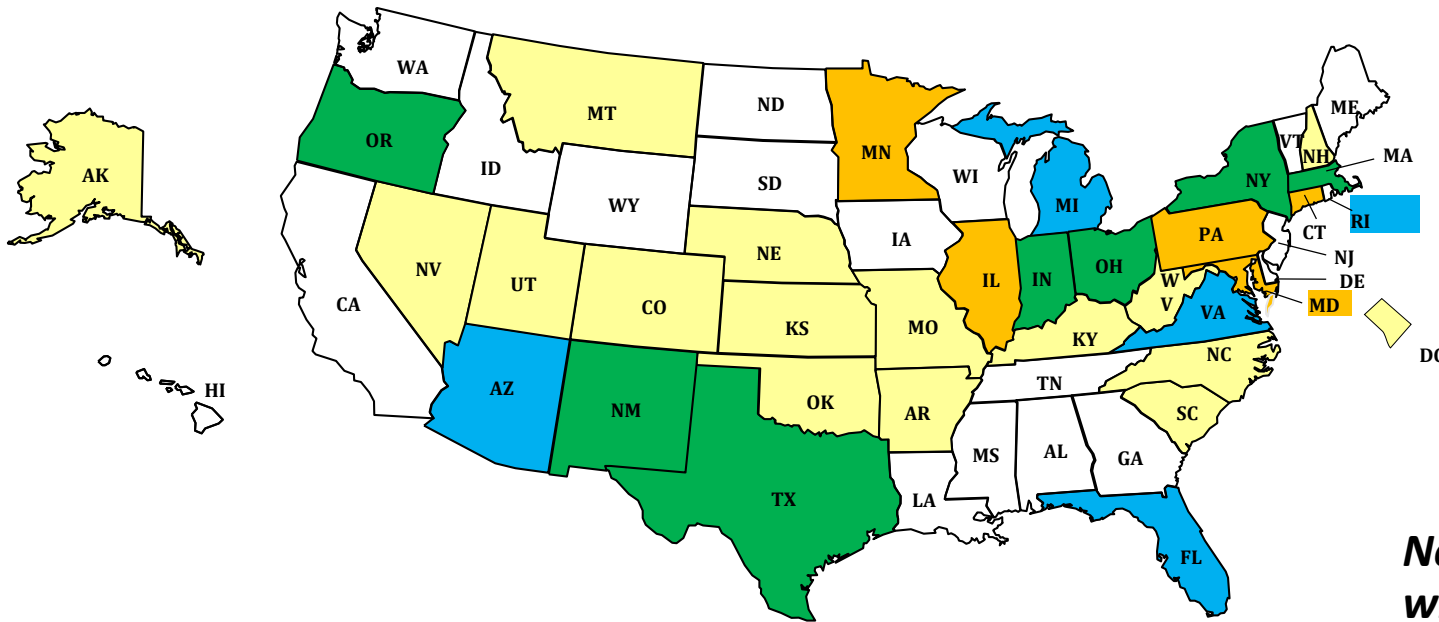
Can be the same
or distinct entities



A Responsive Certification System Has:

- **Multiple paths to entry**, including path based on experience (“grand-parenting”)
- **User friendly application process** without unnecessary barriers of education, language, citizenship status
- Any required training available in **familiar, accessible settings**
- **Skills taught using appropriate methods** (e.g., adult/popular education; CHWs as trainers)
- **Easy access to CEUs**, distance learning
- **Respect for volunteer CHWs!**

Ever-changing picture: Wide variety of state approaches to CHW certification...



State-operated program

(NY for MCH navigators only)

Privately-operated program

Program under development

Program under consideration

Updated February 2019

No evidence-based best practice for determining where to house the program.

Will vary based on state context, resources, politics, etc.

...BUT one consistent element: CHW leadership on certification boards

Arizona	Maryland	Massachusetts	New Mexico
<p>AZ CHW Association (AzCHOW) first piloted a certification process. Department of Health Services (DHS) managed a registry (passive function).</p> <p>HB 2324 passed in 2018 and directed DHS to implement a certification program and establish a CHW Advisory Council</p>	<p>SB 163 passed in 2018 and directed the Department of Health (DOH) to adopt initial regulations for CHW certification, with additional regulations based on recommendations of a CHW Advisory Committee.</p>	<p>Department of Public Health (DPH) Division of Health Professions and Licensure has administrative responsibility.</p> <p>DPH Board of Certification of CHWs has certifying authority.</p>	<p>Department of Health has administrative responsibility.</p> <p>Board of Certification of CHWs has certifying authority.</p>
<p>Majority of 9-member CHW Advisory Council must be CHWs.</p>	<p>At least nine of the 19 members of the CHW Advisory Committee must be CHWs.</p>	<p>Board includes Department of Public Health Commissioner plus ten governor appointees; at least four must be CHWs.</p>	<p>Board includes the secretary of health and eight additional members, a minimum of three of which must be CHWs.</p>

APHA Policy Statement: Support for Community Health Worker Leadership in Determining Workforce Standards for Training and Credentialing

...Encourages state governments and any other entities drafting new policies regarding CHW training standards and credentialing to **include in the policies the creation of a governing board in which at least half of the members are CHWs.** This board should, to the extent possible, minimize barriers to participation and ensure a representation of CHWs that is diverse in terms of language preference, disability status, volunteer versus paid status, source of training, and CHW roles.

Available at: <https://bit.ly/2uv9RBY>

Discussion: Considerations for choosing an administrative home for a CHW certification program

- **Resources/ designated staff members:**
 - **Initial assessment and vetting of new applications:** Could be individuals, trainer, or training program applications. Should ensure timely review and follow-up.
 - **Ongoing certification renewals:** Also includes alerting certified CHWs of expiring certification and managing continuing education programs.
 - **Ongoing quality assurance:** Assess individual and training program qualifications.
- **Involvement of CHWs in ongoing operation or monitoring:**
 - CHWs should be appointed as board members
 - Engagement of CHW coalition leadership
- **Which other stakeholders could be involved?**
 - Employers, payers, trainers, DHHS units employing CHWs, Medicaid

Thank you!

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CHW Resources Online: www.astho.org/community-health-workers