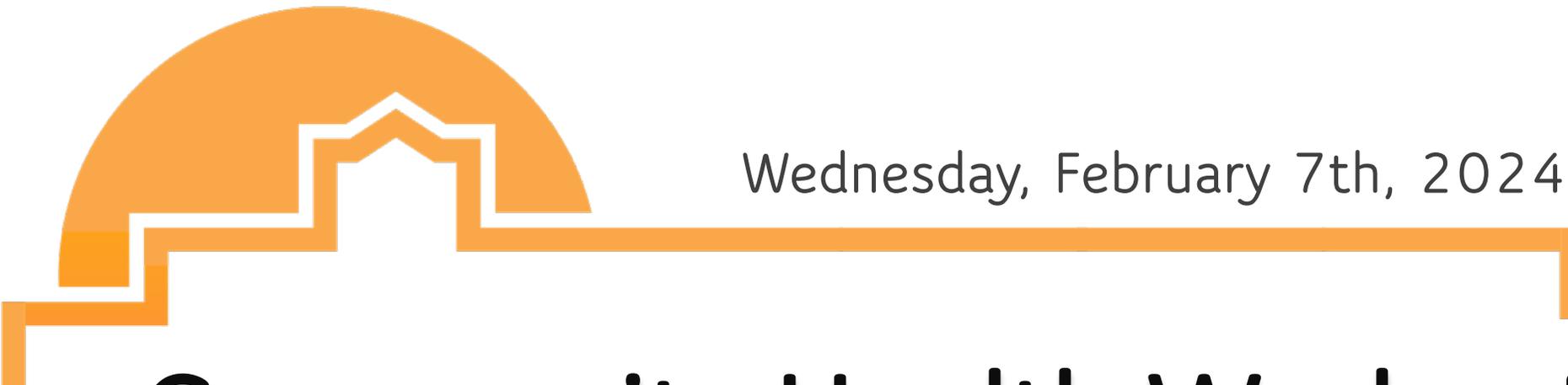
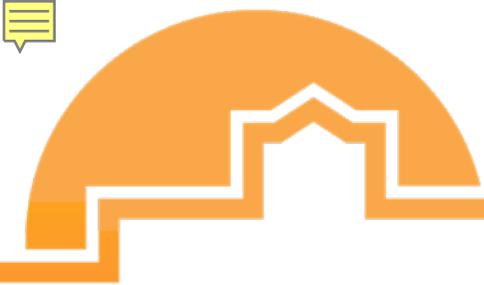


Wednesday, February 7th, 2024



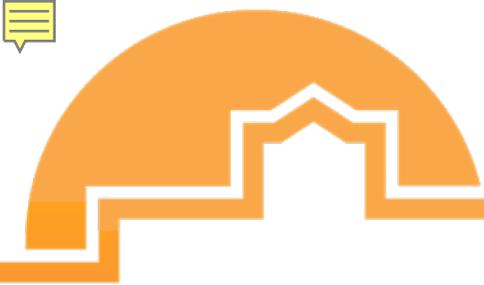
# Community Health Worker Reform in King County

Claire Rater, 2023 Health Equity Scholar



# King County

- Community Health Workers (CHWs)
- Community Health Representatives (CHRs)
- Promotores de Salud
- Peer Navigators

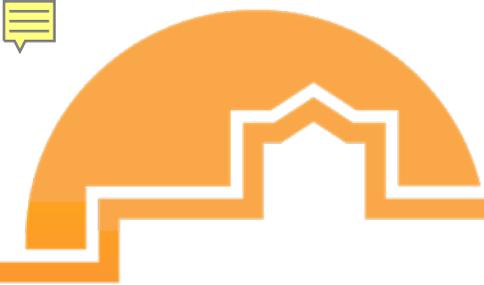


# King County

- 27 health systems
- 2 Rural CAHs
  - Critical Access Hospitals



<https://www.vmfh.org/our-hospitals/st-elizabeth-hospital>

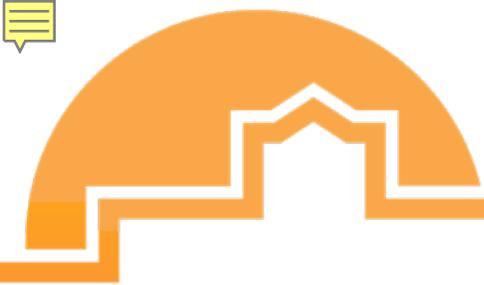


# CHWs

- Health liaisons
- EMS services
- Cultural ambassadors
- Translators
- Social Workers
- Pediatric personnel

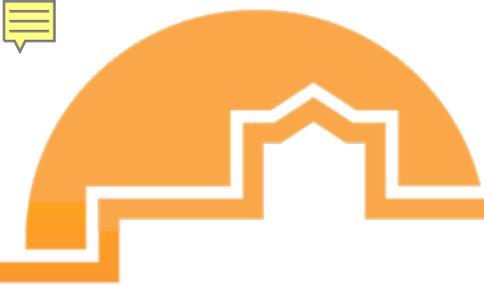


[Assoc, W. S. H. \(Director\). \(2013, June 25\). Prosser Community Paramedics. https://vimeo.com/69093353](https://vimeo.com/69093353)



# Funding

- Medicare/Medicaid reimbursements
- Grants
- Salary allocation dependent on perceived ROI from CHWs
- Local, state or national governments
- Mandates or incentives targeting providers
- Policy and advocacy
- Funding through CBOs



# Major Sustainability Challenges

- Lower patient load in rural communities
- Short-term contracts
- Siloed CHW capacity

# Washington State Hospital Association Rural Strategic Plan

- Includes challenges and solutions for improving the health of rural communities
- Details challenge in health care workforce retention
- Does not mention CHWs

## Rural Health Care



A Strategic Plan for  
Washington State

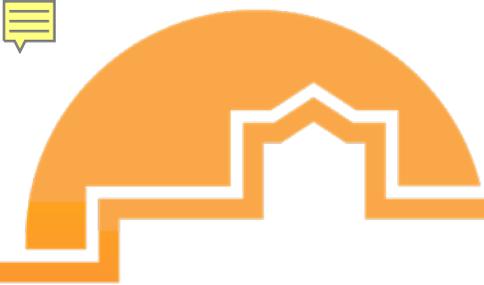
# CHW Financial Incentive

- Prevention focused care
- Diversion from Emergency Services
- Diversion from expensive health care intervention

## Return on Investment (ROI)

|                      |   |           |
|----------------------|---|-----------|
|                      | ROI = Ratio of net return to added cost     |           |
| Example              |   |           |
| Net return with CHWs |   | \$200,000 |
| Cost of hiring CHWs  |   | \$100,000 |
|                      | $(200,000 \div 100,000 = 2:1)$              |           |
|                      | Return on investment is 2:1                 |           |
|                      | For every dollar spent, 2 dollars are saved |           |

Image: CDC. (n.d.). *Promoting Policy and Systems Change to Expand Employment of Community Workers (CHWs)*. [https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/chw\\_elearning/pdf/session-5.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/chw_elearning/pdf/session-5.pdf)

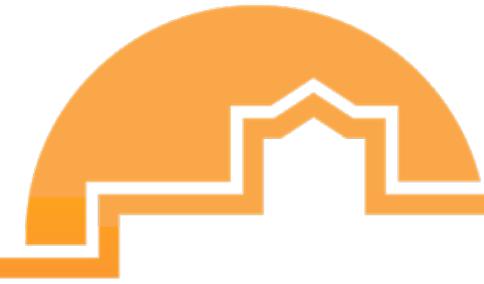


# Other CHW Incentives

- Emergency Preparedness
- Improve provider-patient communication
  - Reduces and prevents unnecessary health expenses
- Increases community trust of health care professionals
- Can reduce burden for other health care providers



# What Now?



- Provide evidence for why and how CHWs should have more funding that is long-term or permanent
- Advocate for restructured CHW roles and policies which strengthen CHWs in health systems
  - Family leave, childcare, food subsidies, housing stipends, free mental healthcare!



# The Pseudo-Grant



- Wanted to engage communities
- Wanted to create an intervention or policy which was developed alongside the experts – CHWs in King County
- Learned about capacity and project scope!
- Community interviews and surveys



# The Pseudo-Grant



1. Produce a literature review on CHW value and CHW pay structures across the United States
2. Engage in 3 in-person meetings with community stakeholders
3. Develop 3 surveys with community members asking about job satisfaction, quality of care, budget flexibility, and thoughts for additional CHW staff support which will be administered to three groups:
  - CHWs
  - CHW managers
  - CHW care recipients

# The Pseudo-Grant

4. Build strong community relationships with health care providers and recipients in rural King County, Washington.
5. Produce a report coalescing the information gained and analyzed throughout the research process.
6. Use this report to advocate for policy to increase pay, benefits and sustainability of CHWs



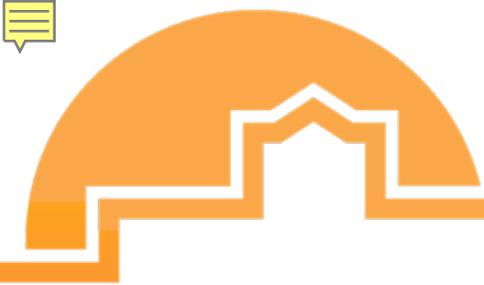
# The Process: Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR)



- Research conducted with community members as partners
- Research designed by community members for community members
- Building relationships with communities that are long-lasting
- Gathering testimony from community members about the problems they face

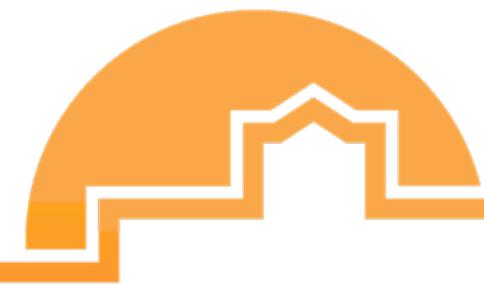
# The Literature Review





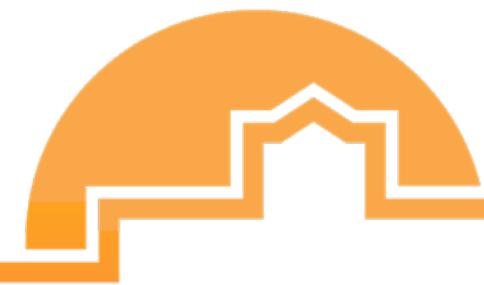
# Community Stakeholder Engagement

- Meeting 1 → community needs assessment, survey development
- Meeting 2 → progress check-in, go over interviewing goals, make adjustments as needed
- Meeting 3 → Discuss results of interviews and dissemination of report



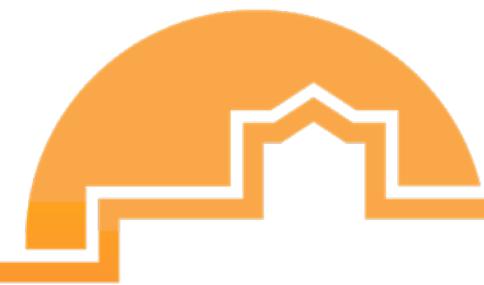
# Surveys

- Three key points to address:
  1. How can we best retain CHWs
  2. How can we best support the livelihoods of CHWs
  3. How can we best keep CHWs satisfied in their working environments



# The Relationships

- Long-lasting relationships
- Community trust
- Emboldened advocates



# The Report

- Literature review
- Interview results
- Policy suggestions



Community Health Workers are not  
to be overlooked





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*Thank you for your attention!*

# **Community Health Worker Reform in King County**