

The Community Capacitation Center

Mission

The mission of the Community Capacitation Center (CCC) is to build capacity in communities to identify and solve their own most pressing health issues, by addressing the root causes of those issues. We seek to achieve our mission via five primary strategies:

1. Conducting credit bearing capacitation (training using popular education) for Community Health Workers (CHWs) and other community leaders

To design capacitation courses, we draw from our 80-hour basic curriculum, which has been approved by the Oregon Health Authority's Non-Traditional Health Worker Steering Committee. Through an agreement with Portland State University, we are able to confer academic credit. See the reverse for more information.

2. Teaching a variety of groups to use popular education for health promotion and other purposes

Popular education (also known as Freirian or empowerment education) is a philosophy and methodology that seeks to bring about more equitable social conditions by creating settings in which people can identify and solve their own problems. In a health promotion context, popular education helps people identify and address the social conditions that make whole communities well or ill.

3. Conducting community-based participatory research (CBPR)

For many years, CCC staff has been involved in creating community-campus partnerships and conducting community-based research. The CCC initiated and managed *Poder es Salud/Power for Health*, a CBPR project funded by the CDC from 2002-2005. From 2007-2009, the CCC Director served as the Principal Investigator for *La Palabra es Salud* (The Word is Health), a quasi-experimental comparison of popular education vs. conventional education for training parish-based CHWs.

4. Conducting culturally-specific health promotion in a variety of communities

Currently, the focus of our health promotion work is prevention of violence affecting young people. Projects include the Youth Violence Prevention Partnership (YVPP), which brings together youth and law enforcement officers to build positive relationships, learn more about laws affecting youth, and empower youth and officers to identify and address issues that create inequities in youth violence. The CCC also conducts Striving to Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere (STRIVE). MCHD is one of 4 local health departments in the county funded by the CDC to conduct this 5-year project, which aims to bring a public health, prevention focus to efforts to reduce violence affecting youth.

5. Implementing the MCHD Health Promotion Change Management Process

In 2007, MCHD adopted a theoretical framework for health promotion that is based on peer-reviewed research and our own experience conducting health promotion. The Framework integrates empowerment theory and the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion and emphasizes community participation and addressing the social determinants of health. The CCC is responsible for leading the implementation of the Framework throughout the Health Department.



A program of the Multnomah County Health Department (MCHD)



We Are Health

A Capacity-Building Curriculum for Community Health Workers

A project of the
**community
capacitation
center**

Who are Community Health Workers?

Community Health Workers (CHWs) are carefully chosen community members who participate in training so that they can promote health in their own communities (Farquhar, Michael & Wiggins, 2005). In the context of health care reform, CHWs have received recognition for their actual and potential contributions to achieving the triple aim of reduced cost of care, enhanced quality of care, and improved population health.

CHW Training at the CCC

In 2000, the Multnomah County Health Department established the Community Capacitation Center (CCC). One of the primary strategies the CCC uses to achieve its mission is providing training for CHWs and technical assistance for organizations that desire to establish or strengthen CHW programs. Collectively, the staff of the CCC has over 50 years of experience designing, conducting, and evaluating CHW programs; recruiting, hiring, training and supervising CHWs; formulating and advocating for policies supportive of the CHW model; and providing leadership in the CHW field.

The We Are Health Curriculum

The "We Are Health" curriculum was designed by staff at the CCC. It has been created over the course of more than 25 years of work with CHWs, both in the US and internationally. The curriculum is based on the core roles and competencies identified in the National Community Health Advisor Study (Wiggins and Borbón, 1998). The original version of the curriculum was approved for academic credit by the Oregon State Board of Education in 2004. The current version of the curriculum has been updated to include all the competencies identified in OAR 333-002-0300 – 333-002-0380: "Process for Non-Traditional Health Worker Training, Certification, Registry Enrollment and Training Program Criteria." It has been approved by the Non-Traditional Health Worker Steering Committee of the Oregon Health Authority. Currently, the CCC is licensing its curriculum to other partners around the State of Oregon that wish to develop CHW training programs.

Goals of the We Are Health Curriculum:

- 1** To draw out and build on the life experience, cultural traditions and worldviews that CHWs bring to training;
- 2** To promote the empowerment of CHWs and the communities they serve, through the use of popular education philosophy and methodology;
- 3** To prepare CHWs to play a full range of roles, from connecting people to existing services and managing medical utilization to organizing communities to identify and address their own most pressing health issues; and
- 4** To promote the full integration of CHWs as integral members of the medical, public health, and social service systems.

For further information about the **We Are Health Curriculum**, please contact:
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