

Advancing California’s Community Health Worker & Promotor Workforce in Medi-Cal

Glossary of Terms



This glossary defines key terms used throughout the [Advancing California’s Community Health Worker & Promotor Workforce in Medi-Cal Resource Guide](#).

| TERM | DEFINITION |
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| California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) Initiative ¹ | CalAIM is a multi-year initiative by the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to improve the quality of life and health outcomes of the state’s population by implementing broad delivery system, program, and payment reform across the Medi-Cal program. |
| Community-based care management entities (CB-CMEs) ² | CB-CMEs are a network of health care and social service providers responsible for ensuring that participants in California’s Medi-Cal Health Homes Program receive all services from this program, as well as conducting outreach and engagement. |
| Community-based organization (CBO) ³ | CBOs include a range of organizations — such as social service agencies, nonprofit organizations, and formal and informal community groups — that often work in partnership with health care entities by providing nonclinical services that address health-related social needs. |
| Community-connected health workforce ⁴ | “Community-connected health workforce” is an umbrella term coined in this project to describe all unlicensed health professionals who either have lived experience in or are trusted members of the communities served — including those with the formal title of community health worker or <i>promotor</i> , as well as those working as recovery specialists, navigators, health coaches, and many other roles. The term is used to emphasize the shared characteristics and broad importance of this workforce across medical, behavioral, and public health settings. |
| Community health representative ⁵ | Community health representatives provide meaningful outreach, health care services, and health promotion/disease prevention services that are tailored to the distinct cultures and practices of American Indian and Alaskan Native communities. |
| Community health workers (CHWs) ⁶ | CHWs are frontline public health workers who are trusted members of and/or have an unusually close understanding of the community served. This trusting relationship enables the CHW to serve as a liaison, link, or intermediary between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery. A CHW also builds individual and community capacity by increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency through a range of activities such as outreach, community education, informal counseling, social support, and advocacy. |
| Electronic Health Record (EHR) ⁷ | An EHR is a digital version of a patient’s paper chart. EHRs are real-time, patient-centered records that make information available instantly and securely to authorized users. While an EHR does contain the medical and treatment histories of patients, an EHR system is built to go beyond standard clinical data collected in a provider office and can be inclusive of a broader view of a patient’s care. |

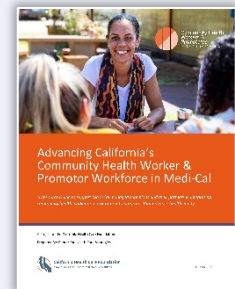
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| TERM | DEFINITION |
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| Enhanced Care Management (ECM) ⁸ | ECM is a proposed benefit requirement in the CalAIM initiative to provide intensive and comprehensive care management to address the clinical and nonclinical needs of Medi-Cal beneficiaries enrolled in managed care plans who have a high need for services. |
| Health equity ⁹ | Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health, such as racism, poverty, and discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care. |
| Health Homes Program (HHP) ¹⁰ | The Health Homes Program is a pilot that provides comprehensive care management and care coordination for Medi-Cal beneficiaries with complex medical needs and chronic conditions. The program first launched in 2019 and will be replaced by the proposed ECM benefit beginning in 2022. |
| Health Information Technology (HIT) ¹¹ | HIT involves the processing, storage, and exchange of health information in an electronic environment. Widespread use of HIT within the health care industry will improve the quality of health care, prevent medical errors, reduce health care costs, increase administrative efficiencies, decrease paperwork, and expand access to affordable health care. |
| In Lieu of Services (ILOS) ¹² | ILOS are an optional managed care plan benefit proposed in the CalAIM initiative. ILOS are flexible wrap-around services that are designed to serve as a substitute for, or to avoid, other Medi-Cal covered services such as emergency room visits, hospital or skilled nursing facility admissions, or discharge delays. Examples of ILOS include housing transition navigation services, sobering centers, and respite services. |
| Interdisciplinary team ¹³ | An interdisciplinary team includes CHW/Ps and other team members with whom the CHW/P coordinates regularly. The types of positions included on the interdisciplinary team will vary based on the setting in which the CHW/P works and the focus of the respective program. |
| Medi-Cal ¹⁴ | Medi-Cal is California’s Medicaid program. |
| Peer support workers ¹⁵ | Peer support workers bring personal lived experience with substance use disorder, a mental health diagnosis, or both. Peer support workers draw upon this lived experience to “assist people with finding and following their own recovery path” and perform similar job responsibilities to community health workers in a wide range of settings. |
| Promotores de salud or promotores ¹⁶ | <i>Promotores</i> share many similarities with community health workers. They are characterized as lay health workers with the ability to provide linguistically and culturally appropriate services informed by their lived experiences in the community, and they often serve Spanish-speaking communities. |
| Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) ¹⁷ | SDOH are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. |
| Whole Person Care (WPC) ¹⁸ | The Whole Person Care pilots provide coordinated and integrated medical care, behavioral health care, and social services to the Medi-Cal beneficiaries who repeatedly use multiple and often acute services and have poor health outcomes. These pilots first launched in 2017 and will be replaced by the proposed ECM benefit beginning in 2022. |

Learn More

This resource is part of the *Advancing California's Community Health Worker & Promotor Workforce in Medi-Cal* Resource Center. The Resource Center and accompanying Resource Guide are a compilation of resources and information gathered by the California Health Care Foundation as part of a project to better integrate community health workers and *promotores* (CHW/Ps) into California's health system. To learn more, visit www.chcf.org/chwps-medi-cal.



ENDNOTES

- ¹ [California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal \(Cal-AIM\) Proposal](#) (PDF), Department of Health Care Services.
- ² [DHCS Care Coordination Project: Coordination at the Point of Care and In the Community](#) (PDF), Department of Health Care Services.
- ³ [Considerations for Community Based Organizations](#), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed August 6, 2021.
- ⁴ This term was coined by the project as an umbrella term for this workforce.
- ⁵ [Community Health Representative: About Us](#), Indian Health Service, accessed August 6, 2021.
- ⁶ [Community Health Workers](#), American Public Health Association, accessed January 18, 2021.
- ⁷ [What is an Electronic Health Record?](#) The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, accessed August 6, 2021.
- ¹⁴ [Enhanced Care Management and In Lieu of Services](#), Department of Health Care Services, accessed August 6, 2021.
- ⁹ Paula Braverman et al., [What is Health Equity?](#), Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, accessed August 6, 2021.
- ¹⁰ [Health Homes Program](#), Department of Health Care Services, accessed August 6, 2021.
- ¹¹ [Health Information Technology](#), United States Department of Health and Human Services, accessed August 6, 2021.
- ¹² [Enhanced Care Management and In Lieu of Services](#), Department of Health Care Services.
- ¹³ Susan A. Nancarrow et al., [Ten Principles of Good Interdisciplinary Team Work](#), *Human Resources for Health* 11, no. 18 (May 2013): 11-19.
- ¹⁴ [Medi-Cal](#), Department of Health Care Services, accessed August 6, 2021.
- ¹⁵ [Who are Peer Workers?](#) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, accessed August 6, 2021.
- ¹⁶ [Promotoras and Promotoras de Salud](#), MHP Salud, accessed August 6, 2021.
- ¹⁷ [Social Determinants of Health](#), United States Department of Health and Human Services, accessed August 6, 2021.
- ¹⁸ [Whole Person Care Pilots](#), Department of Health Care Services, accessed August 6, 2021.