

Community Health Workers in Yellowstone County – Building Connections and Addressing Health Needs

February 21, 2025



Objectives



Who are CHWs?



Program share out from Resilient Yellowstone CHWs



Networking

Resilient Yellowstone Overview

- In 2021, the Healthy By Design Coalition (HBD) received funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to partner with local organizations to hire, train, and deploy **community health workers (CHWs)** at healthcare and community-based organizations to reach communities most affected by COVID-19 and build resilience in Yellowstone County.
- HBD named this initiative Resilient Yellowstone.



Who are Community Health Workers?

- A CHW is a **frontline public health worker** who is a **trusted member of the community** and/or has an unusually close understanding of the community served
- CHWs usually share race, ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status, or life experiences with the community members they serve.
- CHWs **bridge the gap** between **health services and the community** by providing culturally sensitive and accessible care

Distinctions Between CHWs and Other Occupations

- CHW expertise usually based on **shared lived experience** and/or **deep understanding of population served**
- CHWs' unique role does not fit in only clinical or administrative when it comes to health care/services
- Relate to community members as **peers** rather than just patients or clients
- CHWs are usually able to **go out into the community**
- **Organizations** rely on **CHWs' knowledge of the community**
- **Communities** value **CHWs' understanding of health systems**

CHWs by Other Names

Other names commonly associated with CHWs in the workforce can include but are not limited to:



Peer/patient navigator

Lay health worker

Peer mentor

Promotores/as de salud

Community health representative

Care or service coordinator

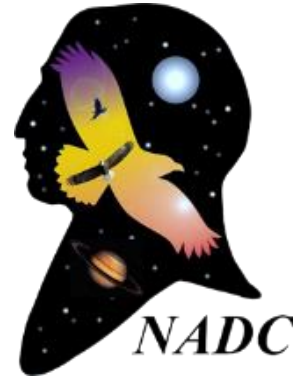
Community health
educator/promoter/advocate/outreach worker

Where do CHWs work?

- Hospitals
- Community health centers
- Clinics
- Social service agencies
- Public health departments
- Community-based organizations
- Non-profits
- Schools or early childhood education programs

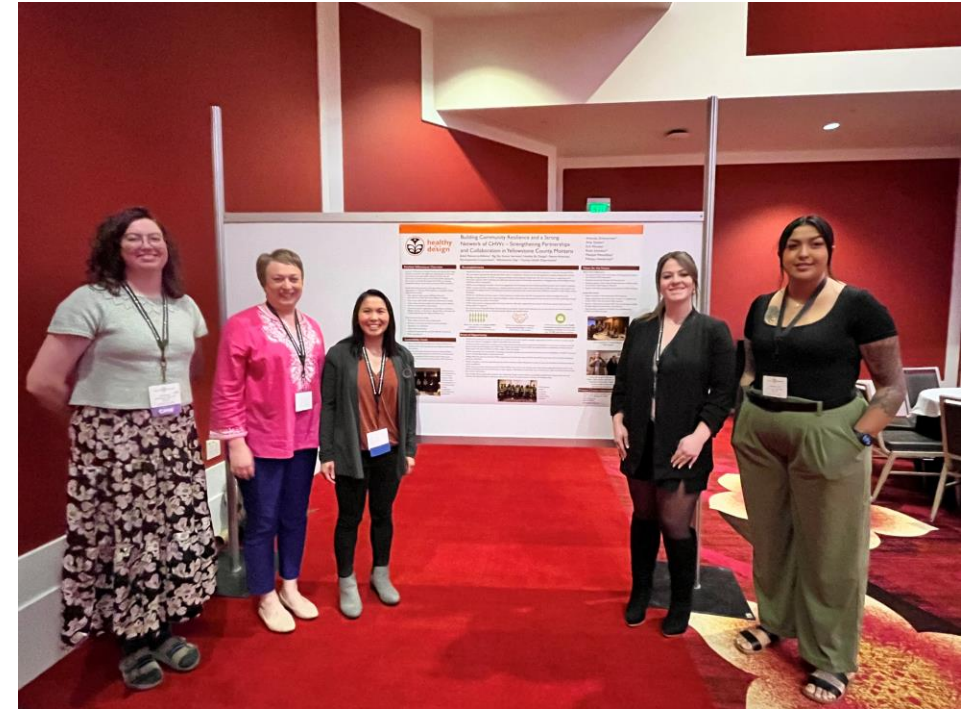


Where do Resilient Yellowstone CHWs Work?



How are CHW Programs Financed in Montana?

- Federal Grants
- State Grants
- Community-Benefit/Foundation Funds
- Medicare: Community Health Integration Codes
- County funds



Resilient Yellowstone and CHW Success in Yellowstone County

- Improved ability to identify and address community health needs by bridging the gap between health services and the community
- Increase in organizational capacity
- Strengthened partnerships
- Strong network for resource sharing amongst local CHWs





Our Mission...

Is to provide effective services and lead collaborative efforts to ensure seniors remain independent with the highest possible quality of life.

Our Vision...

Is to respectfully assist seniors and their families to navigate the aging process with dignity.

Sarah Woomer
Community Health Worker
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- ▶ ARA receives referrals via phone, email, online form, or in-person from friends, family, hospitals, neighbors, anyone!
- ▶ CHW visits seniors ages 60+, or those with a physical disability, in their homes to complete an in-home needs assessment to identify resources needed to stay independent at home
- ▶ CHW evaluates their safety in their home while assisting with the connection to resources, both volunteer and professional services.
 - ▶ Professional referrals include
 - ▶ House cleaning
 - ▶ In-home care
 - ▶ Housing assistance
 - ▶ Utility Assistance
 - ▶ Food assistance
 - ▶ Mental Health Resources
 - ▶ Occupational Therapy and more!





Volunteer Services Offered

- **Friend Companion**
 - Weekly face-to-face visits with a new friend
- **Social Buddies**
 - Making new friendships through telephone reassurance calls
- **Chore Corps**
 - Skilled volunteers helping to reduce home hazards
- **Pantry Pal**
 - Personal grocery shopping and delivery
- **Bookkeeping Assistance**
 - Basic bookkeeping functions and kitchen table declutter
- **Rides Transportation**
 - Provides transportation to non-medical outings
 - Medical rides through MET Transit
- **Meals On Wheels**
 - Home-delivered meals Monday through Friday for qualified individuals
- **Resource Center**
 - Helps with enrollment in Medicare Part D, Medicaid applications, application assistance, and notary services.

Community Health Worker

**Serving Low-Income Older Adults and
Adults with Disabilities**



BigSkySeniorServices.org

406-259-3111

CHW Program Duties

Roles

To connect older adults and adults with disabilities to resources that address specific social needs such as housing, food security, mental health services, and more

To facilitate communication with medical and social service providers

To document and report barriers clientele face in the healthcare system

Responsibilities

Intensive case management for clients experiencing crisis situations

Delivery of Commodity Supplemental Food Boxes to homebound clients

Coordination of the connection between seniors experiencing mental health crises and licensed providers

Referrals

Clients are referred to our CHW through the BSSS programs when a need is identified by a client or staff member

Community partners also refer shared clients to our CHW for access to services they cannot provide

Our CHW only works with clients enrolled in a BSSS program

CHW Program Partners

Adult Protective Services

Work alongside APS to support clients through abuse, exploitation, and neglect



Adult Resource Alliance

Combine efforts on events and presentations for the community and partner organizations

Billings Clinic

Collaborate with CHW to link clients to resources that address aging-related needs



Living Independently for Today and Tomorrow

Share resources to address disability-related needs

St. John's United

Continue case management services after clients complete program goals



Riverstone Home Health

Align case management efforts to support shared client health and wellbeing goals

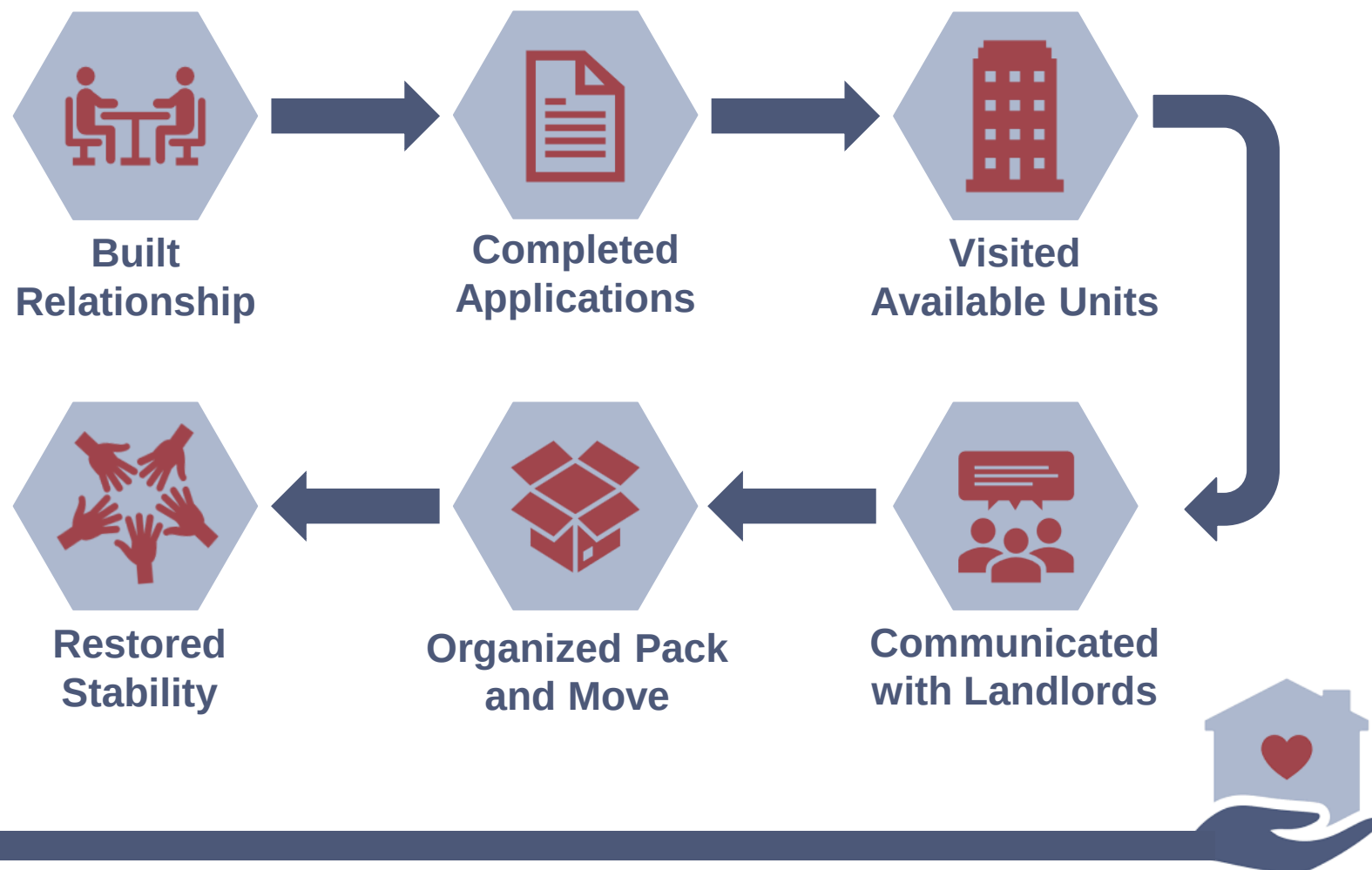
Success Story- Maggie (66 years old)

Before CHW Involvement:

- Struggled with expensive, inaccessible housing
- Barely managed medical bills and rent
- Burdened by severe food insecurity
- Faced social isolation

After CHW Involvement:

- Moved to affordable, senior-friendly housing
- Gained financial freedom
- Volunteering to support others facing isolation



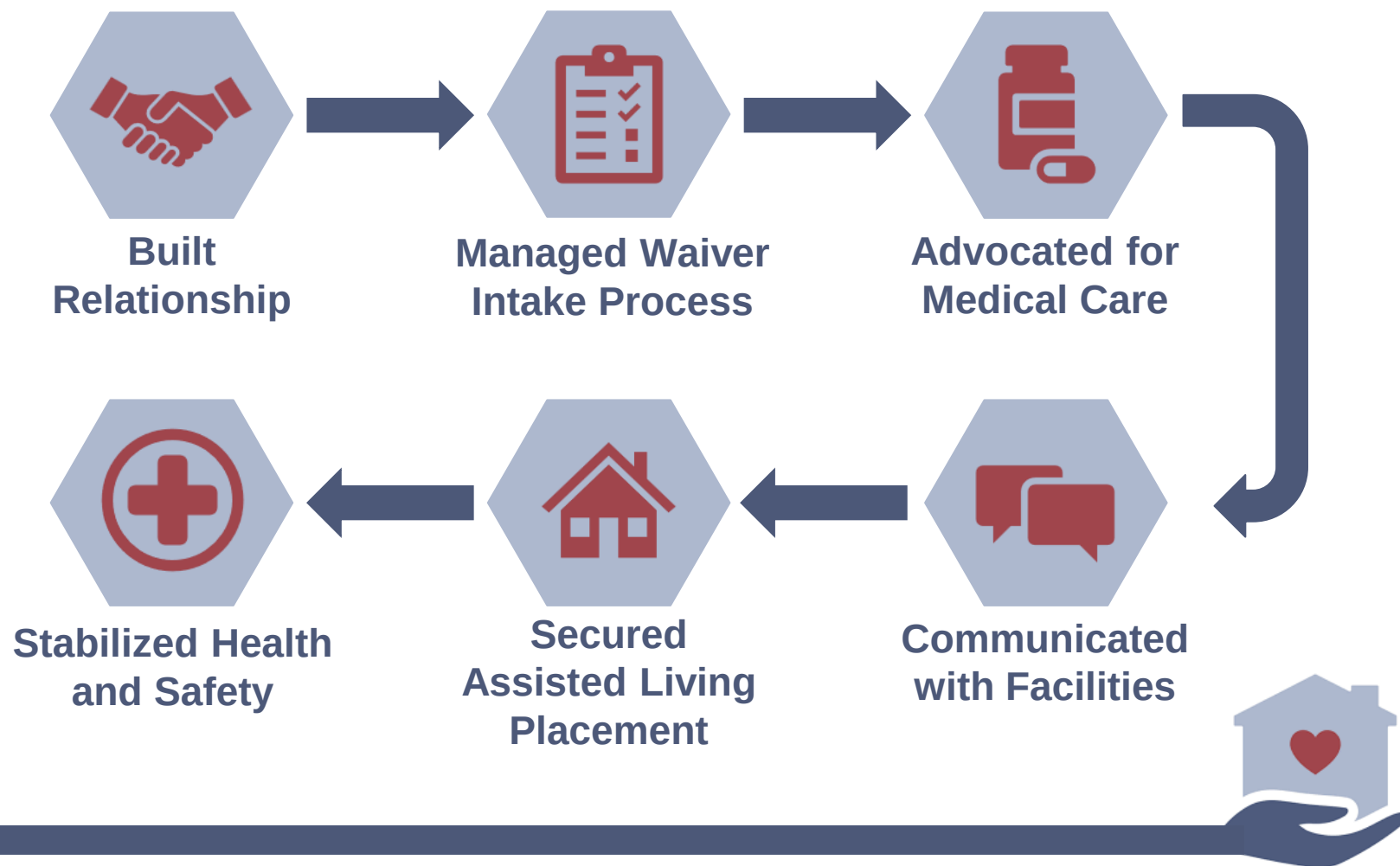
Success Story- Henry (58 years old)

Before CHW Involvement:

- Vulnerable to scams and exploitation
- Living conditions severely affected health and safety
- Estranged from family

After CHW Involvement:

- Representative payees manage finances
- Moved into Assisted Living on Medicaid Waiver
- Reconnected with brother





CHAMPIONS and CONVENERS
the **CATALYST**
for growth

CATALYST *for* **BUSINESS GROWTH**
CONVENER *of* **LEADERS & INFLUENCERS**
CHAMPION *for a* **STRONGER COMMUNITY**



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Community
Connectors and Resources

it's
BiLiNGS

Chamber of Commerce

PROGRAMS AND NETWORKS

- WOMEN'S NETWORK
- BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT NETWORK
- COLLABORATE
- Industry Roundtables
- LEADERSHIP BILLINGS
- MAJOR INVESTOR NETWORK
- NEXTGEN

LIFTT Living Independently For Today & Tomorrow



- Living Independently for Today & Tomorrow (LIFTT) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation and is funded in part through grants and contracts with the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services and the Administration for Community Living, the United States Department of Health and Human Services. The statements herein do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Montana DPHHS, ACL, or HHS.
- At LIFTT some assistance you can request: applying for Grants, SNAP, Medicaid, Social Security, PCA programs, pre-employment programs, affordable housing, and so much more.
- Our grant assistance has helped people obtain wheelchairs, home modifications, car modifications, ramps, and more.

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LIFTT Partnerships & Collaborations!

LIFTT has partnered with:

- MSU Billings has taught free cooking and nutrition classes with LIFTT.
 - Riverstone Clinic has partnered with LIFTT for vaccine clinics at our office.
 - Disability Employment and Transitions has partnered with us for our pre-employment program Pre-ETS.
 - ADVC has collaborated with LIFTT for access to vaccines helping consumers find vaccines funded by USAging.
 - LIFTT has partnered with SPIRIT Club to bring supportive and inclusive virtual exercise and healthy lifestyle classes to people with disabilities free of charge across our 18-county service area.
- 
- A series of four blue curved dashes in the bottom right corner, arranged in a diagonal line from bottom-left to top-right.

LIFTT Programs!

DPP the Diabetic Prevention Program

- CDC-approved curriculum
- Year-long class that empowers participants to reduce their risk of developing type 2 diabetes.
- Classes offered online and/or in-person

Exercise Programs

Strength training: Mondays at 9:00 am

Tai Chi: Tuesdays at 9:00 am

Brain-Health Classes

- Learn to implement foundational strategies crucial to protect your brain from cognitive decline.
- Topics include nutrition, exercise, stress management, sleep.

LIFTT Programs!

PCA Person Care Attendant Program

A self-directed option is available to individuals who elect to direct their own care. personal care in a home setting to Medicaid-eligible individuals in Montana. The PCA will help with activities of daily living such as dressing, grooming, eating meals, preparation of medication assistance, ambulation, and more.

The Peer Program

The Peer program was created to empower people with all sorts of disabilities to make positive life choices that enable them to thrive and maximize their potential through support and self-advocacy. Meet new friends, socialize, mentor, share experiences, grow relationships, have fun, and get involved.

Pre-employment program

LIFTT works with young adults in the Pre-ETS program. This program is contracted through Voc-Rehab and provides pre-employment training for youths ages 14-21 who are still in high school and want to gain work experience before they finish high school.



CHW RISE Program

Jace Dyckman
Program Coordinator



Populations We Serve

People Who
Inject Drugs
(PWID)

Unhoused

Substance
Use Disorder
(SUD)

Untreated
Mental Health
(MH)



Services Provided

Free Rapid HIV, Hep C and Syphilis testing.

Naloxone and Overdose education.

Fentanyl Test Strips.

Harm Reduction and Safe Injecting Supplies.

Used Syringe Disposal.

MAT, Hep C and HIV Treatment.

Primary Care, Dental and Drug Treatment Referrals and Appointments.

Medicaid and SNAP sign up.

Resource Referrals.



Community Partners

BUIHWC

Rimrock (HOT Team)

New Day

LIFTT

Adult Resource Alliance

Angela's Piazza

YWCA and Human
Trafficking Task Force

TumbleWeeds

1st Church

406 Resource Center

HRDC

Billings Clinic and St
Vincent's/InterMountain
Health

Riverstone Health
Programs: Primary Care,
WIC, Dental, Pharmacy
and Behavioral Health



BILLINGS URBAN INDIAN

HEALTH & WELLNESS CENTER



**Intermountain
Health**

A Time to Connect



Questions?

Comments?

Key Take Aways?





Making the healthy choice, the easy choice in Yellowstone County

Thank you!

For more information on
CHWs, Resilient Yellowstone, or the
Healthy By Design Coalition, please contact us:

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www.hbdyc.org



HBDYellowstone



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