



Health Care Access Now awarded two grants to support Community Health Workers

Health Care Access Now (HCAN) has received two grants that will further its mission to decrease health care inequities by identifying and patching gaps in the system and bolster its Community Health Worker (CHW) programs.

- The Women's Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation provided a grant of \$9,230 to be used as scholarships for three women who could not otherwise afford tuition for the CHW training certification program.
- Interact for Health approved a grant of \$5,000 for the support of CHWs in both HCAN's Adult health care coordination and Maternal & Child health care coordination programs.

HCAN trains and coordinates CHWs, as well as acting as the regional Pathways Community HUB (Hub). The Hub model is an evidence-based system that breaks down barriers to good health outcomes, such as education, safety, and transportation. Outside health care agencies partner with HCAN to become part of the Hub, benefitting from CHW training and certification, field support, and data.

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Health Care Access Now (HCAN) strives to reduce health care inequities by taking a two-pronged approach. It certifies and deploys Community Health Workers (CHWs), who work in the field in vulnerable communities to identify barriers to good health outcomes, provide resources, and advocate for clients.



Additionally, HCAN is the Pathways Community HUB (Hub) for the Cincinnati region, partnering with agencies to dispatch their own trained CHWs using the Hub framework.

To further its mission in the coming year, HCAN has been awarded two grants. The Women's Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation awarded HCAN \$9,230 to be used as scholarships for CHW certification. Additionally, Interact for Health granted HCAN \$5,000 to be used for the support of CHWs.

"Because CHWs come from the population they serve, they lay the foundation for relationships with clients through shared experiences and knowledge of the community," says [Sarah Mills, CEO of HCAN]. "The Women's Fund grant will allow us to provide scholarships to women who otherwise could not afford tuition for the CHW Certification Program."

Much – but not all – of the work performed by CHWs is compensated by managed care organizations, such as Medicaid insurance providers. The Interact for Health grant will go toward uncompensated CHW services.

"The work that CHWs do is so important," Mills says. "We need people to take the time to dig in and find out what's really needed by clients" – whether that's something easily related to good health outcomes (such as access to medications) or more tangential issues (such as lack of transportation) that can create obstacles that are just as high. "To have someone walk with you in an experience is invaluable. The time and attention [CHWs] give to clients helps them overcome the barriers."



HCAN is grateful to have been the recipient of these two grants to be used in the coming year. Its leadership is confident that these funds will help them to grow the organization and continue its work of eliminating health care disparities in the region.

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