



SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 9/9/2025

To: County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): Department of Health Services
Staff Name and Phone Number: Nolan Sullivan, 707-565-4774
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Recommended Action:

Adopt a Gold Resolution proclaiming the last week of August of each year, as Community Health Worker, Promotores de Salud, and Community Health Representatives Week in Sonoma County.

Executive Summary:

The Department of Health Services (hereinafter, the Department) recommends that the Board of Supervisors adopt a Gold Resolution proclaiming the last week of August of each year, as Community Health Worker (CHW), Promotores de Salud, and Community Health Representatives Week in Sonoma County. This recognition aligns with the National Association of Community Health Workers and honors the critical role Community Health Workers, Promotores de Salud, and Community Health Representatives play in advancing public health and equity across the county.

CHWs have been instrumental in bridging the gap between health and human services and the county's most underserved populations-including Latinx, Black, American Indian/Native American, and unhoused communities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, CHWs provided culturally responsive education, outreach, care navigation, and advocacy, helping to reduce health disparities and improve access to care.

Proclaiming this week of recognition will increase public awareness of CHW contributions, celebrate their dedication, and reinforce the County's commitment to health equity.

Discussion:

Community Health Workers (CHWs) is an umbrella term that refers to workers who may be employed under a variety of titles, including but not limited to: Community Health Worker, Community Health Educator, Patient Navigator, Peer Mentor/Counselor, Health Advisor, Lay Health Advocate, Outreach Worker and many others. CHWs work across a variety of sectors including within the community, non-profits, schools, hospitals, clinics, and government. Promotores or Promotoras de Salud is a Spanish term used to describe trusted individuals who empower their peers through education and connections to health and social resources in Spanish speaking communities. CHWs, Promotores de Salud, and Community Health Representatives have been vital to Sonoma County's public health response, especially throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. CHWs worked tirelessly to reduce the burden of COVID-19 and related health disparities through outreach, education, advocacy, and connection to care. They helped increase vaccine equity, improve access to critical services, and strengthen trust in public health systems.

These frontline workers provide culturally responsive, community-based outreach, education, and care coordination to the County's most impacted populations-including the Latinx, Black, American Indian/Native

American populations, and low-income communities. These communities face longstanding historical disparities in health access, social determinants of health, and comorbidities that increase vulnerability to serious illness.

CHWs are trusted messengers, often coming from the same communities they serve. Their lived experience, community connections, and cultural competency enable them to bridge the gap between health and human services and populations that have historically been underserved or marginalized.

According to [Advancing Californias Community Health Worker and Promotor Workforce in Medi-Cal](https://www.chcf.org/resource/advancing-californias-community-health-worker-promotor-workforce-in-medi-cal/) <<https://www.chcf.org/resource/advancing-californias-community-health-worker-promotor-workforce-in-medi-cal/>>, CHWs have a long history of providing culturally congruent, person-centered services that bridge different systems and improve the health and well-being of the people they serve. Their work is essential to creating a person-centered, integrated system of care that addresses both physical and behavioral health, along with social needs.

Examples of national recognition of Community Health Workers include when President Barack Obama declared October 13, 2016 as National Community Health Worker Day, affirming the value and contributions of this essential public health workforce. More recently, Congress designated August 28 through Sept 1, 2023 as the inaugural National CHW Awareness week.

The Department requests that the Board of Supervisors continue this legacy by proclaiming the last week of August as Community Health Worker, Promotoras de Salud, and Community Health Representatives Week in Sonoma County.

The Department of Health Services employs 18 Community Health Workers across multiple programs, working to connect community members and clients to essential health and social services, and providing health education to promote well-being. In 2024, a team of 4 CHWs was hired in the Department to drive community engagement and outreach efforts, as part of an effort to institutionalize the valuable work of CHWs in a government setting.

Recognizing the last week of August as Community Health Worker, Promotoras de Salud, and Community Health Representatives Week in Sonoma County brings much-needed awareness to their role and affirms the County's commitment to equity, access, and community-led health initiatives.

Prior Board Actions:

None

FISCAL SUMMARY

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

N/A

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - Resolution - English

Attachment 2 - Resolution - Spanish

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

None