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Development of the Community Health Worker Evaluation Tool Kit has been supported by a grant from The Annie E. Casey Foundation to the University of Arizona Rural Health Office and by support from the Southwest Center for Community Health Promotion of the University of Arizona College of Public Health.



The Annie E. Casey Foundation



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The Community Health Worker Evaluation Tool Kit

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DEDICATION

We gratefully dedicate the Community Health Worker Evaluation Tool Kit to all Community Health Workers, their colleagues and supporters around the world. Whatever their titles, wherever they work and whatever the health challenges they face, Community Health Workers share in the struggle and show the way to healthier, happier lives and communities for all of us.

We invite you to dedicate this copy of the Tool Kit to someone who is important to your work in community health.

Dedicated to:

Dedicated by:

“The Community Health Worker knows the community
- its history, assets, needs, geography and politics.
The Community Health Worker knows how to
navigate systems and find resources.
The Community Health Worker encounters
challenges and always finds a way to deal with them.
The Community Health Worker is a powerful cultural educator
who has fine ears and can truly listen with the hearts”.

Lorenza Zuñiga

Promotora de Salud/Community Health Worker

“For nearly five decades many great Community Health Programs, although successful in their efforts to improve the health and quality of life for the underserved communities, lost funding due to insufficient data or measuring outcomes and impacts.
I believe the Community Health Worker Evaluation Tool Kit will greatly help existing and future programs measure the quality and caliber of their interventions.”

Yvonne E. Lacey

*Co-Chair, Advisory Council of the National Community Health Advisor Study
and Community Health Worker Specialist*



Acknowledgments

Thank you to all who shared their stories and resources, including the staff and evaluators of such strong and model Community Health Worker programs. Thank you also to the following programs, organizations and individuals that provided valuable assistance and guidance to the development of the Community Health Worker Evaluation Tool Kit.

Programs and Organizations

AVANCE, Inc. Family Support Program

AVANCE, Inc.-El Paso Chapter

Arizona Health Start and The Bureau of Community and Family Health Services,
Arizona Department of Health Services

Border Vision *Fronteriza* Initiative, University of Arizona Rural Health Office

Centro Comunitario Juan Diego

Community Action Organization, Opening Doors Oregon

Community Health Advisor Network, A Program of the Center for Sustainable Health Outreach

Community Health Advocates, Center for Healthy Communities

Community Health Workers Evaluation Project, Opening Doors New Mexico

Community Health Worker Outreach and Children's Health in Massachusetts

Community Health Representative Program, Tribes Nationwide and the Indian Health Service IHS

Dept. of Health Policy and Management, The Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene
& Public Health

East Side Health Worker Partnership, University of Michigan School of Public Health USMSPH II

El Paso First Network

El Paso Community Voices Initiative, W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Family Health Foundation

Harrison Institute for Public Law at the Georgetown University Law Center and the Center for Policy
Alternatives

Health Care and Aging Studies Branch, Division of Adult and Community Health, National Center for
Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Health Education Training Centers Alliance of Texas (HETCAT) and West Region Program Office

Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services

Healthier Communities Department, Spectrum Health

Juntos Contra el Cancer, UA, Arizona Cancer Center, Minority Cancer Prevention Program



La Comunidad Sana, La Familia Sana, Inc.

Latino Health Access

Mariposa Community Health Center/*Platicamos Salud*

MELD/Even Start, For the Love of Children

Mesa Associates

Migrant Health Promotion, Monroe, Michigan

New Mexico Border Health Office

Project Jump Start, University of Arizona Rural Health Office

Project Reach Out, Redwood Community Health Coalition, Sonoma County, California Department of Health Services

California Program of Project Concern International

Promotores/as Comunitarios, Planned Parenthood of Los Angeles

Promoviendo Vidas Saludables, Migrant Health Promotion

Pan American Health Organization, El Paso Field Office

Quality Metric, Inc.

Rio Colorado Border Volunteer Project, Western Arizona Area Health Education Center

La Clinica de Familia (LCDF) Promotora Program

School of Public Administration and Policy, University of Arizona

Southwest Center for Community Health Promotion, UA College of Public Health

The Annie E. Casey Foundation

The Border Health Initiative of Project Concern International

The Community Health Worker Project Serving the Frail Elderly with Dementia, Kaiser Permanente

The Health Assessment Lab

The Harborview Medical Center House Calls program

The Hesperian Foundation

The Irvine Foundation

University of Kentucky, Center for Rural Health, Kentucky Homeplase Program

U.S.-Mexico Border Health Association, Training and Technical Assistance Division

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Western Arizona Area Health Education Center (WAHEC)



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Lisa Hasegawa, White House Office on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

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Kim Kratz, Migrant Health Promotion

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William Lofquist, Development Publications, Inc.

Joelene K. Lono, Ke Ola Mamo, Honolulu, Hawaii

Sanjay Mathur, AVANCE, Inc.-El Paso Chapter

Dwyan Monroe, The Johns Hopkins University

Jose S. Moreno and Bonnie Lara, El Paso Community Voices

Ricardo Millet, Director Evaluation Division, W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Aminyah Muhammand M'Backi, National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition

Rosamaria Murillo, *Promoviendo Vidas Saludables*, Migrant Health Promotion, Inc.



Jo Ann Myers, Office of Rural Health, University of Kentucky Center for Rural Health

Jason Newman, Harrison Institute for Public Law, Georgetown University

Andrew W. Nichols, University of Arizona, Arizona Area Health Education Centers

Janice Nittoli, The Annie E. Casey Foundation

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Introduction to the Tool Kit

Welcome to the Community Health Worker Evaluation Tool Kit!

The Tool Kit is meant to be a practical, practitioners guide to program evaluation. The Tool Kit reflects our belief that the purpose of evaluation is to help you make your program as good as it can be, to help you measure your program's success, to help you sustain your program and to help you defend your program when necessary. For these reasons, it is results oriented. It focuses on your program's outcomes and impacts and costs and benefits so that you can better answer the kinds of questions that are asked by funders, agency directors, boards of directors, policy makers and evaluation researchers who may be working with you.

The Tool Kit was developed in response to the need for guidance in evaluation that was expressed loudly and clearly by practitioners, including Community Health Workers (CHWs), other program staff, sponsoring agencies, funders and evaluators from many CHW programs across many regions of the country during the preparation of the National Community Health Advisor Study (NCHAS, 1998).

This seminal study found that many frontline CHW program staff lack evaluation skills. It also noted that CHWs themselves are rarely engaged in developing evaluation plans, designing protocols and refining instruments. One consequence of this omission is that many evaluations miss important results. Community Health Workers then may become frustrated and demoralized, feeling that their work is not highly valued because no one is documenting some of their important accomplishments. CHWs, who often are tasked with collecting much of the evaluation information, may become resistant to doing so, feeling that it is not really important enough to be taking time away from their "real" work.

The NCHAS included an exhaustive review of the field, and its authors and consultants developed a framework that suggested levels of evaluation, evaluation methods and types of information that could be gathered. The Tool Kit includes a modified version of that framework. The new version concentrates on results, and we hope you will find it useful and thought provoking.

Based on the findings of the NCHAS, The Annie E. Casey Foundation has supported the Tool Kit as the logical next step to promoting sound, feasible CHW program evaluation.



Our Tool Kit team is ultimately responsible for the Tool Kit. However, as our acknowledgements show, we had a lot of help from many people. We began the project in May 1998 with a focus group held at the National Promotores/CHW Conference in Phoenix. That was followed by meetings with CHWs and program directors at the American Public Health Association (APHA) meetings in Washington, D.C. in November 1998, by a meeting of evaluation experts and CHWs at the May 1999 National Promotores/CHW Conference and, finally, by two meetings of professional evaluators and CHWs at the 1999 APHA meeting in Chicago.

During this process we kept in touch with as many programs and individuals as possible via email, mailings from our growing database and conference calls. We solicited actual tools or instruments from programs, conducted case studies, kept up with the evaluation literature, attended meetings and asked for still more help at strategic moments.

What will you find inside the Tool Kit?

First, we offer an overview of evaluation in Section 1, summed up in twenty-one basic principles that should guide all CHW program evaluations, with the possible and partial exception of those that are part of a research program rather than a service program. There is a Logic Model Development Guide in Section 2, which we believe is a fundamental evaluation tool. Ours has been developed and provided to us by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and we are pleased to be able to share it here.

Then there are the tools themselves, organized according to the Tool Kit's evaluation framework, in Section 3. We could not possibly include all the useful tools, so we had to choose, and that section of the Tool Kit explains how we decided what tools to include. You will also find referrals to other tools and a directory of the programs that contributed their tools.

We created two new tools for the Tool Kit. "The River of Program Life" provides a visual, group approach to reflecting on your program's successes and challenges and is one way of highlighting and illustrating elements of the logic model. The other new tool is our "Cost-Benefit Analysis Primer", which will help you justify your program in terms of dollars and cents. We also provided partial support for the development of a client satisfaction survey that can be adapted to many kinds of CHW programs. These tools are also included in Section 3.

To illustrate some of the strategies, issues and experiences of actual evaluation, we conducted several case studies, which you will find in Section 4. One of the lessons learned is that first person success stories of clients and CHWs are as important as impressive statistics when you present your program's results. Another is that an effective evaluation requires marketing and visibility.

We provide a guide to writing program proposals and reports in Section 5. This section guides you through some typical proposal formats and includes "boilerplate" language that you are welcome to use for your own proposals.



Finally, Section 6 of the Tool Kit includes a selected bibliography and a glossary of evaluation terms. These, too, may be useful to you as you plan and conduct your own program evaluations.

This first version of the Tool Kit is not the end of this project. We hope to hear from many of you with comments and suggestions for improving it. There will also be a CD-ROM version of the Tool Kit available soon. And we hope to have the Tool Kit on the World Wide Web before long, to make it interactive and dynamic, to be changed and improved as all of us learn more about how to tell the great success stories of our CHW programs.

