My name is Lorena Verdugo. I am here today representing AzCHOW, which is the Arizona Community Health Workers Association, in which I currently serve as Vice President on the Board of Directors.

Currently the State of Arizona has community Health Workers already in our health system within

* County and Tribal Health Departments
* Hospitals
* Community Health Centers and many other health settings

The role of the Community Health workers has demonstrated to have an evidence-based impact on both health and outcomes and access to care and cost savings to the healthcare system.

I myself also being a CHW at El Rio Community Health Center during the past 9 years have encountered many patients dealing with chronic health conditions, such as cancer diagnosis. I work with patients whom have not only had to deal with the unfortunate news about having cancer, but now are also challenged with navigating a whole new world and health system.

Adding to the diagnosis, many are faced with unfamiliar medical terms thrown at them, billing issues, treatment options, finding support groups, or even with something so simple such as where to receive a wig while undergoing chemo. These are all problems in which I have been able to take the time and sit with these patients and their families to work on problems solving, provide education, navigation, social support and even transportation if needed.

Because of these services provided by a CHW the patients are then able to get their appointment, receive much needed treatment, walk down the street with confidence and feel a sense of relief about their fears.

As you can see, my scope of practice is so essential to those that are suffering from these detrimental chronic health conditions.

Thank you, I will be available for any questions you might have.