Integrating Community Health Worker into a new Sickle Cell Disease Adult Clinic

Mary E. Brown, President & CEO
Sickle Cell Disease Foundation of California
National Minority Quality Forum Sickle Cell Disease Satellite
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"... the frontline lay workers who serve as a bridge between clinicians and their patients have been around for several decades in the U.S., but they have rarely been fully integrated into care teams for a variety of practical and cultural reasons.

Martha Hostetter and Sarah Klein
Why are CHWs Vital in Sickle Cell Care?

- CHWs can link patients to needed social and other services
- To reduce barriers to getting the best medical care – the “social determinants of health”
  - Insurance
  - Housing
  - Transportation
  - Language
  - Culture
  - Literacy
  - Psychological – trusting the healthcare system
  - Negotiating the ER and other clinics
Sickle Cell Disease Foundation of California: Recognized as a Full Partner in 2 Federal Grants

Sickle Cell Disease Community Based Organizations (CBOs) - largely marginalized and under utilized: COST – Missed opportunities to promote improved health outcomes

HRSA’s SC Treatment Demonstration and Newborn Screening Grants: foster meaningful CBO engagement.

- Pacific Regional Treatment Demonstration Collaborative (PSCRC) uses SCDFC as a full partner
- Newborn Screening Grant funds Community Health Workers and experienced Sickle Cell Nurse Advisor
CBO at the Table → Adult SCD Clinic Design
MLK Jr. Outpatient Center, Los Angeles, CA

Cross sector collaboration: Clinicians, Public Health, Consumer Based Org

- October 2015: 1st meeting - approval to develop clinic – LA Department of Healthcare Services
- Bi-weekly: clinic design - identify core clinical team components, services, fill SW/Data Mgr. funding gaps, training, CHWs & Nurse Advisor (SCDFC $)
- Bi-weekly PR meetings: mission, vision, value, tagline. Print, Social media, video
- Summer 2016 – Training clinical staff/CHWs – trauma informed care
- July 2016 – Mock clinic
- August 2016 – Soft opening
- September 2016 – Webinars – pediatric SCD clinics
  ... and Official Opening

Mary Brown, Sickle Cell Disease Foundation of California and Ellen Rothman, MD, Chief Medical Officer, MLK Jr. Outpatient Clinic
CBO Value: Trust

New! Sickle Cell Clinic at MLK Jr. Outpatient Center
Adults with Sickle Cell Disease...We can provide the care you have always wanted!

“Adults with sickle cell disease deserve health care providers that understand the disease, its complications, and their pain. Knowing the people who worked hard to open this clinic gives me confidence it will meet the community’s needs.”

Mary Brown, President & CEO
Sickle Cell Disease Foundation of

Phone / Email queries → SCDFC
CHWs in the Adult SC Clinic at MLK Jr. Outpatient Center

Connect people to social and legal services, housing and transportation support, insurance

Come from our communities - one speaks Spanish.
Community Health Worker – Valuable Clinic Resource

- Contact first time patients before clinic visit to introduce themselves and clinic processes
- Contact returning patients – reduce ‘no-show’ & other barriers
  - Help arrange for transportation
- Accompany patient to other needed services
- Conduct home visits
- Explain and reinforce clinician instructions
- Inform clinicians about patient barriers, help find solutions
- Access EMRs and makes notes in the record
Barriers to integrate CHWs into care

- Training, Standards, Scope – no national uniformity
- Reimbursement: public and private insurers
- Limited commitment: support ends with grant end
- Finding a place for CHWs on care teams
- Understanding how CHW adds value
- Disseminating our model throughout the U.S.

Help us create solutions!
THANK YOU

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