



# Portland Health Equity Alignment

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2024 Maine CHW Summit

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# Learning Objectives

1. Describe the operating principles & goals of the Alignment's CHW Committee.
2. Brainstorm an activity to address Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) in your community through collaboration between CHWs & community partners.

# How we got here: Analysis of the MHP's cross-sectoral partnerships & community needs

MHP  
Community  
Wellness





## How and when we started...

The Minority Health Program Stakeholder Alignment began in 2018 through....

### Priorities:

- Building relationships
- Collaborating
- Improving community health
- Advancing health & social equity
- Empowering the work of CHWs
- Respecting wisdom of community members and value their input
- Recognizing the need for building a shared vision



## How and when we started...

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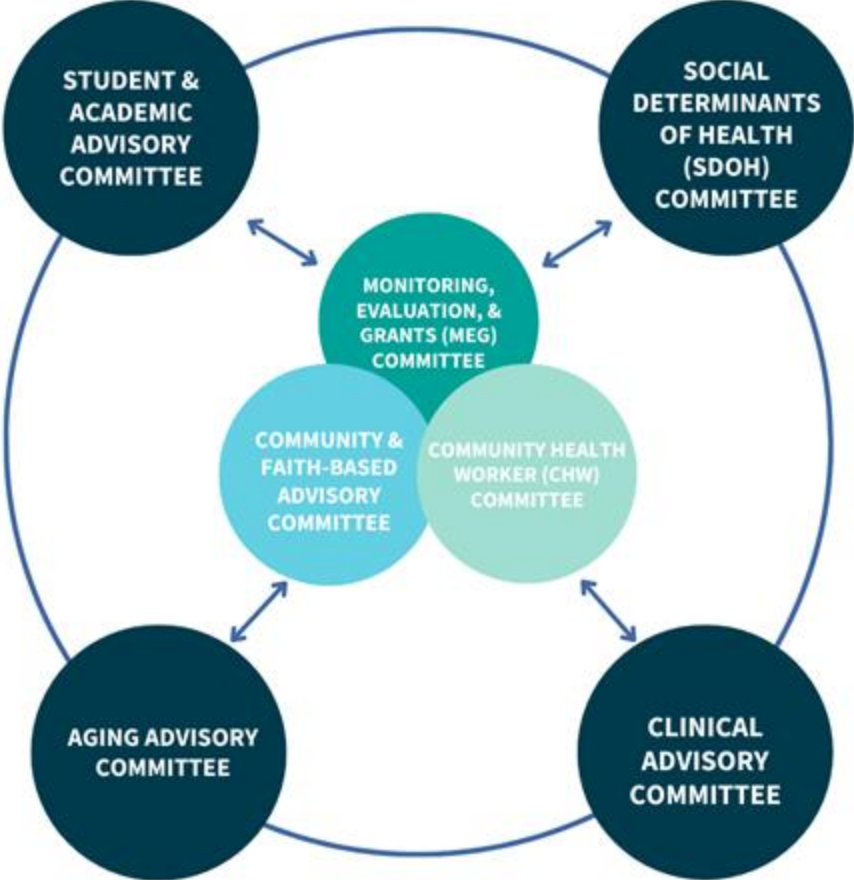
### Priorities:

- Evaluating gaps in data collection
- Learning to collect the right data
- Giving CHWs access to EPIC
- Improving health literacy
- Use of plain language
- Engaging cross-sectoral partners to address the needs of our most vulnerable populations

# 2018 MHP Stakeholder Alignment Structure



# 2024 Portland Health Equity Alignment Structure



# 2024 Committee Chairs





# CHW Committee Goals & Operating Principles

- a. Provide CHWs in the Greater Portland area with opportunities to network, collaborate, share resources, express frustrations & ways to heal, and receive & offer peer support with other local CHWs.
- b. Work closely with PPH Leadership, Committee Chairs, Community Faith-based Advisory Committee, & the MEG Committee.
- c. Assign a liaison to communicate with all other committees.
- d. Collaborate with all other Alignment committees to inform members about their community's current health & social needs, as well as emerging issues in Greater Portland, and to identify opportunities to address those issues through strengthening relationships, reporting barriers to service providers, and collaboratively designing culturally & linguistically appropriate interventions.

# CHW Committee Goals & Operating Principles

- e. Ensure that all Alignment projects align with overarching goals & are designed to meet community needs & emerging issues, as well as advise & support all other committees' work as needed.
- f. Train CHWs and provide needed tools to successfully advocate for the communities they serve, especially at the policy level, and pass these skills & knowledge on to community members to use in their own advocacy efforts & have a presence at planning tables.
- g. Collaborate with organizations (e.g. MCD Global Health) to provide CHWs with the training & tools necessary to actively participate in decision-making discussions & initiatives that support & strengthen the CHW workforce at the local & state level (e.g. MaineCare CHOWs consultants for the PC Plus Program, MECHWI.)

# CHW Committee Goals & Operating Principles

- h. Educate health & behavioral health care facilities' providers about CHW services & encourage these facilities to hire CHWs or contract with agencies & public health departments that provide CHW services in order to integrate CHWs into their care teams.
- i. Work to expand awareness of and access to CHW services for *all* vulnerable populations in Greater Portland including racial & ethnic minorities, New Mainers, older adults, LGBTQ+ communities, low-income community members, disabled community members, at-risk youth, the unhoused community, and more.



What issues can we address through the CHW Committee?

# 1. Addressing: Lack of collaboration & peer support among CHWs in Portland, South Portland, Westbrook, Windham, and Gorham

- Establish strong partnerships with local healthcare & social service providers, CBOs, etc. to:
  - Collaboratively address clients' needs
  - Build out effective referral processes
  - Mitigate CHWs' caseload
  - Build a supportive local CHW network
- Through meetings, provide CHWs in Greater Portland with opportunities to:
  - Network
  - Collaborate
  - Share resources
  - Express frustrations & ways to heal
  - Receive & offer peer support with other local CHWs.

# 1. Addressing: Lack of collaboration & peer support among CHWs in Portland, South Portland, Westbrook, Windham, and Gorham

- Collaborate with MCD Global Health & MECHWI to:
  - Increase CHW participation in MECHWI's Peer Support Group
  - Appoint a temporary CHW Committee Chair lead alongside the Alignment founder in order to identify & train CHWs who are ready to take over
- Introduce a proposal to establish a statewide paid CHW Self-Care Day

## Example!

Collaborating with local providers & CHWs to assist cancer patients

Amevi Assoutovi, CHW  
City of Portland's  
Health Equity Program

## 2. Addressing: Lack of awareness of CHW services among healthcare & social service providers

- Educate health & behavioral health care facilities' providers about CHW services
  - Encourage facilities to hire CHWs or contract with partners that provide CHW services in order to integrate CHWs into their care teams.
  - Explain how CHWs can address SDOH and their roles (cultural brokering, interpretation, translation, outreach, advocacy, & referrals)
- Work to expand awareness of and access to CHW services for *all* vulnerable populations in Greater Portland including:
  - Racial & ethnic minorities, New Mainers, older adults, LGBTQ+ communities, low-income community members, disabled community members, at-risk youth, the unhoused community, & more.
- Collaborate with other Alignment committees to:
  - Identify opportunities to strengthen relationships
  - Report barriers to service providers
  - Design culturally & linguistically appropriate interventions/trainings; make trainings available to service providers.

### 3. Addressing: Exclusion of CHWs in decision-making processes regarding addressing health disparities

- Train CHWs & provide tools to advocate for their communities, especially at the policy level, & share these skills with community members to use in their own advocacy efforts
- Collaborate with organizations (e.g. MCD Global Health) to provide CHWs with the training & tools necessary to participate in discussions & initiatives that support & strengthen the CHW workforce at the local and state level including:
  - MaineCare CHW Consultants for the PC Plus Program
  - MECHWI Committees
  - DHHS CHW Steering Committee





# Open Discussion: Cross-Collaboration among CHWs



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