



Massachusetts Association of Community Health Workers

c/o Massachusetts Public Health Association

434 Jamaicaaway, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

June 24, 2010

An Act to Establish a Board of Certification of Community Health Workers in Massachusetts (H4130)

Purpose

Establish a **Board of Certification of Community Health Workers** in response to recommendations for a community health worker (CHW) certification program mandated in Section 110 of Chapter 58 of the Acts of 2006.



Professional Development Highlights of CHWs

- 2006: CHWs identified in Health Care Reform Law as critical for increasing access to health care and eliminating health disparities.
- 2007: Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) released a comprehensive national study of the CHW workforce¹
- 2009: US Department of Labor recognized CHWs as a distinctive workforce by providing CHWs with a unique standard occupational classification (SOC) [21-1094] in the 2010 revisions²
- 2010: **Massachusetts Department of Public Health's** Community Health Worker Advisory Council released its legislative report with 34 recommendations for building a sustainable workforce, including **support for establishing a board of certification.**
- 2010: Community health workers listed as health professionals in recent national health reform law.

Cost Neutral

The Board of Certification of CHWs would be established within the Division of Health Professions Licensure at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Startup costs will be paid out of the existing **Quality in Health Professions Trust Fund**. Future certification fees will replenish the trust.

Benefits of Board

- Enhance the quality of services communities receive from CHWs
- Ensure CHW training that is accessible and of high quality
- Support financing mechanisms for a sustainable CHW workforce
- Support integration of community-based wellness and prevention efforts in health reform
- Advance CHW workforce development

Action Step

- **Call your representative** and ask him/her for their support of H4130 because it is now on the House calendar (Find out who is your representative is at www.wheredoivotema.com)

For additional information, contact Cindy Marti, Policy Director of Massachusetts Association of Community Health Workers at (617) 524-6696 x108 or cmarti@mphaweb.org or visit www.machw.org.

¹ *Community Health Workers National Workforce Study*, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, March 2007. <http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/chw/>

² Federal Register: 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Notices, January 21, 2009. <http://www.bls.gov/soc/soc2010final.pdf>