

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IDPH Awards Community Health Worker Grant to Illinois Public Health Association

Organization and partners will work to promote CHW careers, benefits

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) has awarded a grant to the Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA) to develop a multi-year campaign supporting and promoting the work of community health workers (CHWs).

Community health workers are trusted members of their communities, who serve as a bridge between health care and social services and the community. CHWs assist with access to health services, and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery. CHWs also create healthier communities by increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency, through outreach, community education, informal counseling, social support, and advocacy.

The grant funding supports CHW programs around the state by creating a campaign to improve awareness and understanding of what CHWs do and support the effective integration of CHWs into public health, health care, and human services organizations. The campaign will also increase the supply of a diverse and highly qualified CHW workforce in the state.

“Illinois’s public health depends on building trust within our communities,” said IDPH Director Dr. Sameer Vohra. “Community health workers are critical frontline workers who have a close understanding of the communities they serve. IDPH is excited to partner with IPHA to help many caring, dedicated individuals find career paths as community health workers. Our goal is bolstering the inclusion of CHWs in care teams to improve the health of their communities.”

“Community health workers are essential to building trust in public health,” said Tom Hughes, Executive Director of the Illinois Public Health Association. “We’ve seen firsthand how powerful it is when CHWs are supported and recognized as part of the care team. For years, we’ve partnered with CHWs, local health departments and community organizations to expand this workforce across Illinois. This campaign gives us the opportunity to build on those partnerships, lift up CHW voices, and ensure more communities feel seen, heard, and connected to the care they deserve.”

The grant is entitled the Campaign to Advance the Community Health Worker Workforce in Illinois. The initial grant provides up to \$25,000 to IPHA to develop a multi-year plan to promote and advance the CHW workforce in the state. Upon development of the plan, IPHA will be eligible for further, non-competitive

annual “continuation grants” to implement the plan, for a period up to three years and a maximum award of approximately \$2 million.

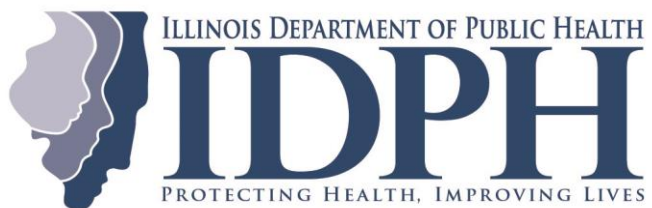
Established in 1940, IPHA, an affiliate of the American Public Health Association, is Illinois’ oldest and largest statewide voluntary organization devoted exclusively to matters of public health. The Association is a well-known and respected health organization devoted to fulfilling its mission, which is to strengthen and support public health throughout Illinois communities by mobilizing partners and advancing health equity.

As part of its work under the grant, IPHA will enlist the help of several partners, including:

- Illinois Community Health Workers Association
- Illinois Primary Health Care Association
- National Kidney Foundation of Illinois
- The HAP Foundation

For updates on this campaign and IPHA’s ongoing CHW workforce development efforts, visit www.ipha.com.

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