



Community Health Alignment Initiative (CHAI) Application - FAQs

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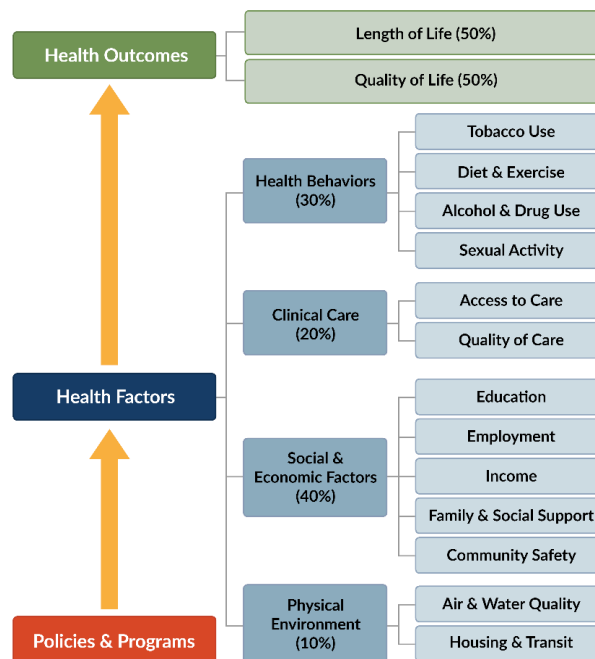
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Section 1: CHAI Program Information:

1. Why was CHAI established?

- The CHAI program was established by the South Carolina General Assembly Proviso 33.20 titled the Medicaid Accountability and Quality Improvement initiative 2023-2024 Appropriations Act in 2023 which authorized SCDHHS to contract with the Center for Community Health Alignment (CCHA) in a collaborative effort to expand the Community Health Worker (CHW) workforce with the goal of improving health outcomes for individuals without access to affordable health insurance by facilitating resource connections and access to safety net providers.
- A basis for understanding why we will be focusing on increasing the CHW workforce to support people who are uninsured can be seen in the County Health Rankings Population Health Model below. We know that clinical care is important, but it only impacts about 20% of our health. However, health behaviors, social and economic factors and the physical environment where someone lives impacts the other 80%. These are the areas where CHWs, with support from their larger teams, organizations and partners, can assist.



County Health Rankings model © 2014 UWPHI



2. What are the target populations for the CHAI program?

- Individuals living in high priority ZCTAs (Zip Code Tabulation Area) who are uninsured, or at high risk of becoming uninsured, with priority given to communities with higher rates of chronic disease or chronic disease risk factors and lower access to primary care. To determine the higher needs ZCTAs, we utilized diabetes and high blood pressure data from [the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Interactive Atlas of Heart Disease and Stroke](#) (2019). The uninsured rate was derived from the 2021 American Community Survey data. The standardized provider rate information is drawn from [SC Community Health Worker Prioritization Index \(2020\)](#) Applications must indicate how CHWs will serve individuals living in these areas. CHWs may serve individuals from other areas as well, but the application must indicate how these ZCTAs will be prioritized.

The forty highest-need ZCTAs include:

Aiken	29801
Allendale	29810
Anderson	29624
Barnwell	29817
Berkeley	29436
Charleston	29406
Charleston	29405
Chester	29706
Clarendon	29148
Clarendon	29102
Darlington	29550
Darlington	29532
Dillon	29536
Florence	29501
Florence	29505
Florence	29506
Georgetown	29440
Greenville	29611
Greenville	29605
Horry	29576
Lancaster	29720
Lee	29080



Marlboro	29512
Marlboro	29525
Orangeburg	29048
Orangeburg	29163
Orangeburg	29115
Orangeburg	29118
Richland	29203
Richland	29204
Richland	29201
Spartanburg	29302
Spartanburg	29301
Spartanburg	29306
Sumter	29150
Williamsburg	29590
Williamsburg	29554
Williamsburg	29556
Williamsburg	29056
York	29730

3. Who is eligible to apply?

- Clinical and community-based organizations, including but not limited to community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, hospitals, health clinics, place-based organizations.

4. Does an organization have to employ CHWs?

- Organizations that receive funding will need to either be:
 - Organizations that currently employ CHWs and work in high priority ZCTAs;
 - Organizations that work in high priority ZCTAs and have capacity to add CHWs to their team;
 - Organizations that have CHWs but do not work in high priority ZCTAs but have partnerships and/or strategies defined to expand to those areas;

5. Why is CCHA interested in organizational readiness?

- Since there is a need to implement strategies to serve people who are uninsured as effectively and efficiently as possible, the review team will consider organizational readiness in addition to ability to serve high need areas. Upon review of applications, if it



is noted that there are high need areas where coverage is needed but where there are not organizations with high levels of implementation readiness, a portion of funding will be reserved to build capacity of organizations in the area who are interested in providing CHW services but need technical assistance to organize and implement a plan; those organizations will be contacted for a virtual interview and dialogue about a capacity building process.

6. What else will the organizations that receive funding commit to?

- Identify and support an appropriate supervisor for the CHW(s). Ideally, a more experienced CHW can be a supervisor. Alternatively, the supervisor should have experience working in high need communities and attend the CHW Supervisor Training.
- Enrolling hired CHWs in core competency training (if they are not already certified) and supporting them to participate in other CHW-related trainings and professional development.
- Participate in quarterly, virtual check-ins with the CCHA team on progress, deliverables, and anything else related to program.
- Partner with CCHA to determine organizational readiness for implementation and goals for technical assistance around CHW best practices. Sites that are determined to have a high level of implementation readiness will participate in fewer technical assistance sessions. Sites that need more technical assistance will have more frequent sessions with the CCHA technical assistance providers.
- Participate in webinars by and site visits from the CHAI Evaluation team and/or the CCHA technical assistance providers as well as peer-to-peer learning opportunities.
- Actively participate in program evaluation by collecting and reporting data on the indicators listed below in Section 3.

7. What is the funding/application timeline and how will funding be allocated?

- Nov. 15, 2023 - CHAI application released
- [Nov 29, 2023 CHAI information session via Zoom 3-4pm \(English\)](#)
- [Dec 1, 2023 CHAI information session via Zoom 3-4pm \(Spanish\)](#)
- Dec. 15, 2023 - Applications due
- Jan 15, 2024 - Decisions on funding will be made by the CHAI Advisory Council and required documents will be sent to funded organizations.
- Jan 31, 2024 - Disbursement process will be initiated. Disbursement will consist of monthly electronic payments to organizations as long as all requirements are submitted on time and complete.
- Funding for Year One will be from February 1, 2024- January 31, 2025

8. What is the Center for Community Health Alignment's role?

- CCHA shall maintain responsibility for the collaborative effort to expand the Community Health Worker Program to meet the goal of improving health outcomes for individuals



who do not have access to adequate health insurance by facilitating individuals' connections to safety net providers and community resources.

9. Specific Duties of CCHA

- Maintain responsibility for the Community Health Alignment Initiative (CHAI).
- Determine how to expand the CHW Program to clinical and community-based settings in a way that remains consistent with CHW philosophy and best practices defined by field expertise.
- Provide SCDHHS with a timeline for implementation of the CHAI.
- Ensure that CHWs are properly trained in the tasks expected of them.
- Provide guidance and expectations to funded subrecipients on how to maintain CHWs' ties to the community.
- Develop a process for and provide subcontracts of funding to clinical and community-based organizations for hiring and support qualified community health workers to achieve the CHAI goals.
- Ensure that each site focuses on one/or more health conditions and the social determinants of health factors that they determine to be most relevant to the needs of the individuals that are uninsured or underinsured that they serve.
- Provide SCDHHS with programmatic and impact evaluation data, which will be reviewed with them on a regular basis to assist in the operation and ongoing evaluation of the initiative.

10. What is the CHAI Advisory Committee and who is on it?

- Upon notification of funding from SCDHHS, CCHA convened an advisory committee of CHWs, Access Health SC initiatives, hospital networks, and other stakeholders to provide input and direction on the development of CHAI for the Palmetto State. This advisory committee consists of several subcommittees that focus on Data and Evaluation, Funding Priorities, and CHW Program Fidelity. Following the guidance provided by these individuals, CCHA is planning to implement CHAI starting in January 2024. For more information see <https://communityhealthalignment.org/chai/>

11. Who can I contact if I have questions?

- For additional information about the Community Health Alignment Initiative (CHAI) please send an email to chai@mailbox.sc.edu. **Please include CHAI Application in the subject line of the email.**



Section 2: CHWs and Roles:

1. Who do we hire to be a CHW for this CHAI initiative?

- The CHW should be a resident of the communities to be served and/or a person who has established trusting relationships with the communities.

2. What are the duties of the CHWs that will be funded through CHAI?

- To address access to care, appropriate healthcare utilization, social determinants of health, health education gaps, and other needed services so that individuals have more tools and support to be healthy. CHW roles include:
 - Facilitating cultural mediation among individuals, communities, and health/social service systems
 - Providing culturally appropriate health education and information
 - Care coordination, case management and system navigation of healthcare and social service systems
 - Providing coaching and social support
 - Advocating for individuals and communities
 - Building individual and community capacity
 - Providing direct service
 - Implementing individual and community assessments
 - Conducting outreach
 - Participating in evaluation and research
- CHWs will need to do outreach and develop community partnerships with organizations serving the target communities to engage individuals without insurance, or at risk of becoming uninsured. At intake, the CHWs will conduct a screening of healthcare and social service needs, level of need, and individual's strengths and challenges. The CHW will engage the individual and any other team members or partners to determine a plan for supporting the individual by utilizing any of the CHW roles above. CHWs will also engage in cultural mediation with providers, advocacy, and capacity building as applicable and needed to best serve the individuals and communities of focus.



Section 3: Evaluation and Data Collection:

1. How does CCHA have to account for the funds spent?

- CCHA will submit quarterly reports and one final summary report to the SC Department of Health and Human Services. Data collected from funded organizations will be utilized to complete these reports and are essential:
 - Details on the CHAI structure, status, and workplan;
 - Project successes on hiring and incorporating CHWs to serve identified communities;
 - Barriers encountered throughout the project;
 - Narratives on how the Center for Community Health Alignment's goals were met and the impact of the CHAI on the CHW workforce, individual South Carolina residents, and the hospitals affiliated with specific CHAI programs;
 - Summarization of metrics, as applicable, including health improvement indicators and the number of individuals reached;
 - Future directions and sustainability planning; and
 - A listing of CCHA partners as of each reporting quarter.

2. Who will be evaluating the CHAI work?

- CCHA aims to partner with the Community Health Worker Center for Research and Evaluation and the Center for Applied Research and Evaluation at USC to do the evaluation (*still in process*). In our evaluation, we will be using the CHW Common Indicators, a set of process and outcome indicators that have been developed with CDC support and substantial and on-going CHW leadership over the course of 7 years. Asterisks below signify that one or more CHW Common Indicators will be used to measure this construct (or concept). The CHW Common Indicator Grid is attached so that you can see what each indicator includes and recommendations for collecting the indicators.

3. What will evaluation entail?

- Funded organizations will agree to the following:
 1. Complete an annual or semi-annual survey of CHWs and CHW supervisors to evaluate the extent they're implementing their program according to CHW best practices*
 2. Report the number and type of contacts between CHWs and participants by month.
 3. Report the number, type, and "completion rate" (i.e., closed-loop referrals) of CHW-facilitated referrals (and for noncompleted referrals, the reason for noncompletion) for clinical and social service needs*
 4. Report the level of need, changes in level of need, amount of time participants are being actively served by a CHW, as well as their reasons for becoming inactive.



5. Administer participant surveys (at baseline and every six months and/or when participants leave the program) regarding their health status, social support, and empowerment *
6. Collect identifying data that allows the evaluation team to determine changes in health status with South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs (*process and details to be determined*)

4. What type of data collection system will be necessary?

- Funded organizations will need to utilize a data collection system that allows the CHWs to track the specific indicators above. In the application, the organization will provide information on what kind of tracking system they are using and if it has the necessary capabilities. If an organization does not have access to an appropriate data tracking system, CCHA can work with the organization to get access to a system that has the necessary capabilities.
- If you have questions about the evaluation plan or requirements, we are here to help! Please contact CCHA at chai@mailbox.sc.edu with questions about the evaluation requirements.



Section 4: Budget

1. How much funding is available for organizations?

- Approximately \$3 million is available in year one. Award amounts will vary based on the number of applications funded and the scope of each project. Awards are expected to be in the range of \$85,000-300,000 depending on the number of CHWs the organization proposes to hire/fund. We expect that this funding will be reallocated by the SC Legislature in future budget years, but it is not guaranteed. CCHA should know in June, 2024 about funding for year two.

2. What else is the funding going to?

- Program administration, evaluation, training, and technical assistance.

3. What can/should be included in the applicant's budget?

- CHW salaries- at least \$20/hour
- Benefits- if not provided by organization, stipend given and proof of enrollment in a health insurance plan will be required.
- Supervisor time (as a percentage of time the supervisor will support the CHWs)
- Travel (mileage to serve individuals, conduct outreach, professional development)
- Supplies necessary for project including cell phone, computer or laptop, mifi device
- Data system upfit or purchase (organization will need to be able to demonstrate ability to provide required data for project evaluation. If the organization already has a data collection tool that is able to extract the necessary data, but needs to budget for extraction time, that can be included. If the organization does not have a data system that will allow for tracking the necessary data, funding to purchase a system can be included).
- Portion of data coordinator time if extraction will be needed
- CHW Core Competency and CHW Supervisor training (if CHWs and supervisors are not trained).
- Continuing education/professional development
- Patient needs they want to be able to cover (transportation, short term medication assistance, emergency hotel rooms)- need to show how they will pay for them (i.e. travel vouchers) *not for clinical visits/providers
- IDC rate up to 10% (optional)



Section 5: CHAI Application

1. How can I access the Community Health Alignment Initiative Application?

- The CHAI application will be submitted online through the REDCap platform.
 - The CHAI application can be found at this link:
https://redcap.link/CHAI_Application_for_Funding
- The CHAI application can also be submitted through email. Once downloaded and completed, please send completed CHAI application to: chai@mailbox.sc.edu

2. Other important logistics

- The "Save & Return Later" option at the bottom of each page lets you save your response and return any time prior to the deadline(s). You will be given a return code that can be entered via the "Returning?" option in the top right corner of the REDCap form.
- Only one proposal should be submitted for each organization (or team/department). Those responsible for starting the form should ensure that the rest of your team has the return code and that you each are accessing/working in only one version.
- **All fields are required unless indicated as optional. Organizations submitting applications are responsible for ensuring that each question has been completed.**
- Once you have submitted the form, you can save the completed version as a PDF. You will also have the option of receiving a confirmation email upon submission.

3. What if I misplace or forget to write down the return code?

- Return codes can be retrieved on the backend. Email CCHA at chai@mailbox.sc.edu if you need your return code. **Please do NOT start a new application.**

4. CHAI application timeline

- The deadline for Part A of the proposal is **Friday, December 15th, 2023, at 5:00pm EDT.**
- We encourage earlier submission if possible. The forms will automatically close after this time, and **late submissions will not be accepted under any circumstances.**
- We encourage you to plan on submitting ahead of the deadline to avoid any potential technical or other delays.