



Telehealth Community Navigation Training Program

Community Health Workers – A Proven Model

The [Promotora](#)/Community Health Worker (P/CHW) model is a proven, effective means of educating and promoting healthy communities and addressing health disparities among at-risk groups. The integration of these trusted community members into local government programs is considered a viable means for advancing community resilience, preventive care, and wellness. Since 1997, Dia de la Mujer Latina (DML) has educated thousands of Promotores and CHWs in providing general disease education and assisting vulnerable populations in accessing quality healthcare, thereby improving overall outcomes in the communities. In 2012, DML took its signature Community Navigator Training to 5 HHS Regions.

COVID-19 -- Telehealth Community Navigation Program

When news spread of COVID-19 within the USA, DML realized a need to start educating the Promotores/CHWs so they could support their communities and more specifically, highlight the myths and rumors surrounding the pandemic which is interfering with people's willingness to seek help. Program development began in January, was approved by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), and the first training event took place on February 25, 2020.

Due to social distancing polices, DML introduced the concept of Telehealth Community Navigation (TCN) process and how a properly scripted telephone call might reduce some of the loneliness, fear, and mistrust surrounding the pandemic. Telehealth Community Navigation is a way that a trusted member of the community, i.e. a Promotora/Community Health Worker, can be trained to begin a conversation with someone who may be in need of education and navigation services, whether for physical or behavioral health, whenever needed and wherever the person is, by using a computer, tablet, or smartphone

DML believes this can also serve as a framework for other racial/ethnic groups by tailoring the training to their respective communities, thereby preparing them for a “new normal using telehealth.” DML also developed a bilingual training for Contact Tracers approved by TX DSHS.

First Level Training – *The DML Body, Mind and Spirit Connection*

DML's new bilingual Telehealth Community Navigation Training Program begins with an understanding of the current landscape of our public health system. It explores the disconnect between at-risk communities and how the system fails to address the cultural barriers that continues to impact negatively upon many of our communities of color. This is the first in a three-part training series.

DML first level training covers:

- Learn about the essential services of public health and care coordination
- Define the applications, benefits and challenges of telehealth delivery.
- Identify the ethical, legal, and regulatory considerations surrounding Telehealth.
- Recognize the role of the telehealth community navigation as part of a person-centered care coordination team.



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Once trained on ethics and the restrictions outlined in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), DML contracted Promotores/CHWs to begin scripted telephone calls to thousands of DML community members that have attended previous health fiestas. Using DML's **body** (how are they feeling), **mind** (what do they know about COVID 19), and **spirit** (would they like for us to pray) connection method the results were compelling.

Out of the first 1,300 calls, only 19 people had been tested and most others stated they would never agree to it due to the distrust of officials and government. It became clear that some populations were being disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, so we modified our approach with the purpose of addressing the racial/ethnic disparities and health inequities worsened by the COVID-19 crisis.

Second and Third Phase Training

Second phase training focuses on Telebehavioral health i.e. anxiety, depression, stress and stigma, expected in the earlier part of June 2020.

The final training module focuses on Social Determinants of Health and Health Literacy and COVID by the end of June.

Día de la Mujer Latina, Inc. (DML)

For almost 25 years, DML has created strategies for remedying health disparities by providing culturally and linguistically tailored education delivered by its team of Promotores/CHWs. These local heroes understand the healthcare system and its cultural barriers. They recognize that improved health literacy plays an important role in addressing many of the social determinants of health and that poverty, education, race/ethnicity, age, and other factors influence a person's overall health.

Additionally, much of the current information does not resonate with local populations because the language or images used in the materials are not culturally or linguistically appropriate. We are also concerned that many fall victims to bad propaganda, myths, rumors, and scams. DML, together with the Intercultural Center for Health, Research, and Wellness, prepared and strengthened the Promotores/CHWs' understanding of the Coronavirus by dispelling myths and rumors and applying core competencies in their outreach among our despaired and medically underserved Latino populations.

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