

Minnesota CHW Curriculum

The Minnesota Community Health Worker curriculum is based on the core competencies that are identified in Minnesota's CHW "Scope of Practice." The curriculum also incorporates health promotion competencies as an introduction to a broad range of individual, family and population health needs. The internship is the centerpiece of the curriculum's practice competencies. It enables CHW students to fully apply and integrate what they have learned in the program to ensure an effective transition to the CHW role.

PHASE 1 -- Role of the CHW - Core Competencies (9 credits)

1. Role, Advocacy and Outreach

- Credits = 2 credits in classroom
- Description: This course focuses on the role of the community health workers personal safety, self-care, and personal wellness and the promotion of health and disease prevention for clients.

Objectives

1. Explain the limits of the CHW role
2. Use emergency preparedness (911) when needed
3. Demonstrate personal safety
4. Practice self-care and personal wellness
5. Practice time management by setting goals and objectives, establishing priorities, and organizing assignments
6. Know when to ask for help
7. Use outreach strategies
8. Work as a liaison between provider and client and the client and agencies
9. Advocate for individuals and communities

2. Organization and Resources

- Credits = 1 credit classroom
- Description: The course focuses on the community health worker's knowledge of the community and the ability to prioritize and organize work. Emphasis is on the use and critical analysis of resources and on problem solving.

Objectives

1. Demonstrate knowledge about community resources

2. Navigate the community with confidence
3. Use effective home visit strategies
4. Incorporate health determinants when applying principles of health promotion and disease prevention
5. Demonstrate critical thinking as a framework for solving problems and decision making

3. Teaching and Capacity Building

- Credits = 2 classroom credits
- Description: This course focuses on the community health worker role in teaching and increasing capacity of the community and of the client to access the health care system. Emphasis is on establishing healthy lifestyles and clients developing agreements to take responsibility for achieving health goals. Students will learn and practice methods for planning, developing and implementing plans with clients to promote wellness.

Objectives

1. Collect client data specific to health behaviors, safety, and psychosocial issues
2. Provide clients with information based on individual needs and desires
3. Construct a contract with clients that uses goals to promote health
4. Utilize a variety of teaching techniques with clients
5. Work with clients to foster healthy behavioral changes
6. Increase the capacity of the community through health promotion activities and preventive health

4. Legal and Ethical Responsibilities

- Credits = 1 classroom credit
- Description: This course focuses on the legal and ethical dimensions of the community health worker role. Included are boundaries of the CHW position, agency policies, confidentiality, liability, mandatory reporting and cultural issues that can influence legal and ethical responsibilities.

Objectives

1. Apply agency policies
2. Work within boundaries of the CHW position
3. Protect confidentiality
4. Demonstrate an understanding of HIPAA
5. Apply basic concepts of liability
6. Recognize the implications of mandatory reporting
7. Provide full disclosure of necessary information regarding clients' health status (to the extent client agrees)

8. Describe how ethics influence the care of clients

Coordination, Documentation and Reporting

- Credits = 1 classroom credit
- Description: This module focuses on the importance and ability of the CHW to gather, document and report on client visits and other activities. The emphasis is on appropriate, accurate and clear documentation with consideration of legal and agency requirements

Objectives

1. Gather appropriate client and community information
2. Examine the financial, health, and social services information relevant to clients and client families
3. Demonstrate effective tracking of clients throughout the contact process
4. Use healthcare terminology correctly when recording in client records

6. Communication and Cultural Competence

- Credits = 2 classroom credits
- Description: This course provides the content and skills in communication to assist the Community Health Worker in effectively interacting with a variety of clients, their families and a range of healthcare providers. Included are verbal/non-verbal communication, listening and interviewing skills, networking, building trust and working in teams. Communication skills are grounded within the context of the community's culture and the cultural implications that can affect client communication.

Objectives

1. Demonstrate effective communication skills when collaborating with clients and members of the source team
2. Relate "culture" appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication when interacting with clients, their families and healthcare providers
3. Employ active listening and interviewing skills to collect and share relevant information
4. Use conflict resolution strategies to deal with difficult behaviors and to realize empowerment in self and with clients
5. Recognize the uniqueness of and resulting implications of the community culture on the health and well-being of clients
6. Support clients and healthcare providers in "translating" culture specific behaviors in order to promote needed services and resources
7. Use networking skills to ensure proper engagement of services and resources for clients and their families

Phase 2 -- Role of the CHW - Health Promotion Competencies

Healthy Lifestyles

Course Description

This course focuses on the knowledge and skills a CHW needs to assist clients in realizing healthy eating patterns, controlling their weight, integrating exercise into their lives, taking their medications, talking with their health providers, controlling substances such as tobacco, managing stress, achieving life balance and attaining personal and family wellness. Emphasis is on learning strategies that can be used to aid in client awareness, their education and incorporation of health into their daily lives. This course also provide information and activities in which the CHW can assimilate these concepts into their own lives.

Objectives:

1. Identify the principles of health and healthy lifestyles
2. Describe the elements of healthy lifestyles including weight, exercise, recreation, relaxation, and managing stress
3. Discuss the considerations of supporting a healthy lifestyle such as assisting clients with understanding healthy eating patterns, planning for exercise, being knowledgeable about their medications, talking with their doctors and controlling substances such as tobacco.
4. Define life balance and describe the ways in which clients and their families can achieve it
5. Explain strategies that can be used to make clients aware of and incorporate health into their lifestyles
6. Demonstrate different ways to educate clients about healthy lifestyles
7. Promote a healthy lifestyle in self, clients, families, and communities

Heart Disease & Stroke

Course Description

This course focuses on CHWs working with clients and community members in preventing heart disease and stroke as well as working with those who already have heart disease or have experienced a heart attack or stroke. Emphasized is an understanding of the physiology of the heart, risk factors and warning signs for heart disease and stroke, emotional and socio-economic impact of heart disease and stroke and common treatments. Also included are strategies for CHWs to work with clients on prevention, achieving healthy lifestyles and accessing needed resources.

Objectives

1. Describe how the heart and blood vessels work
2. Recognize the risk factors for and causes of heart disease and stroke
3. Relate the warning signs of heart attack and stroke, and the signs of heart disease and other conditions that can lead to heart attack and stroke
4. Explain the most common treatments for diseases of the heart and blood vessels, for heart and blood vessels, for heart attack and stroke, and for contributing conditions, such as high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol and diabetes
5. Discuss the emotional and socio-economic impacts of heart disease and stroke on clients and their families.
6. Identify ways CHWs can work with communities and community members to prevent heart disease and stroke by encouraging healthy eating, physical activity, tobacco control, and stress reduction at the individual, family and community level.
7. Demonstrate how CHWs can assist their clients, families, and the people in the community who are living with heart disease or a stroke-related disability take care of themselves, and prevent a second heart attack or a second stroke.
8. Discuss the strategies needed to help clients take greater control over their health

Maternal, Child and Teen Health

Course Description

This course emphasizes the needs and requirements to support the health of mothers, children and teens. Emphasis is on knowledge and skills related to the stages of motherhood including pregnancy and prenatal care, labor and delivery, the post-partum experience and the cultural implications of birthing. Also included are the benefits of breastfeeding and the nutritional needs of mothers and infants. Emphasis is also on the healthy development of the child from infancy through adolescence including developmental stages and their tasks. Issues such as sexuality, family planning, sexually-transmitted diseases, substance abuse and domestic violence as well as the resources needed by mothers and their children are also discussed.

Objectives

1. Describe the cycle of birth from prenatal to labor and delivery to post-partum care and the role the CHW can play in this cycle
2. Explain cultural implications of the cycle of birth and mothering of infants
3. Relate the benefits of breastfeeding and how to assist mothers if they select to
4. Discuss the nutritional needs of mothers and infants
5. Relate the life stages of children including early childhood development through to teen years and the unique aspects of each stage
6. Explain the special considerations needed when dealing with teen behaviors and their health

7. Discuss the significance of such issues as sexuality and family planning when supporting clients and their families
8. Describe the implications of STDs, substance abuse, and domestic violence and their impact on clients, their families, and the community
9. Demonstrate the role of the CHW in identifying resources and providing access to those resources needed by mothers and their children

Diabetes

Course Description

This course focuses on the role of the CHW in working with clients with diabetes. Emphasis is on understanding diabetes, its risk factors, signs and diagnoses and its long term complications. Strategies for assisting diabetic clients with balancing their lives to achieve the highest level of wellness is a primary focus. The role of the CHW in diabetes prevention, control, resource identification and education is also included.

Objectives

1. Define diabetes
2. Recognize the risk factors for diabetes
3. Identify the signs of diabetes and two tests used for diagnosing diabetes
4. Explain how to balance food, physical activity, and hygiene with treatment
5. Discuss the long term complications associated with diabetes
6. Develop plans for teaching diabetic clients and helping them achieve their highest level of wellness
7. Demonstrate the role the CHW plays in diabetes prevention, control, resource identification, and education

Cancer

Course Description

This course focuses on the role of the CHW when working with cancer patients and their families. Emphasis is on understanding cancer, its risk factors, screening and tests for detection and diagnosis, and the types of cancer treatments. Understanding the emotional factors involved in a cancer diagnosis and its treatment as well as cultural considerations are included. Also covered is the role of CHWS to help identify resources, facilitate client access to those resources as well as give aid and support to cancer clients and their families.

Objectives

1. Discuss the incidence of cancer and its risk factors
2. Describe how cancer is formed in the body and list the terminology used to describe cancer

3. Identify the appropriate screening tests for diagnosing selected cancers
4. List the types of treatments used for cancer clients and their implications
5. Identify the possible stages clients may go through when diagnosing selected cancers
6. Recognize how cancer can impact different cultures
7. Identify appropriate resources needed by cancer clients and how to link clients with those resources
8. Demonstrate the role of the CHW in educating and supporting cancer clients and their families

Oral Health

Course Description

This course focused on a broad range of topics needed to understand and promote oral health. Included are dental anatomy, infection control, oral hygiene instruction and care plus a guide for parents, use of fluoride and dental caries prevention as well as nutrition required for good oral health. Access to dental coverage for dental care and oral health is covered along with the identification of resources that can be provided by CHWs to promote optimal levels of oral health for their clients, their families and in their communities.

Objectives

1. Describe dental anatomy and list the names and parts of the mouth
2. Explain the requirements needed to realize personal safety and protection from infection
3. Demonstrate hand hygiene and the conditions for antisepsis
4. Relate the strategies needed to offer oral hygiene instruction such as tooth brushing and flossing
5. Discuss the elements of oral hygiene care and the guidelines that parents can use
6. Identify the nutrition needed to achieve good oral health
7. Explain how fluoride is used and dental caries can be prevented
8. Identify insurance resources and how to use screening forms and complete Medicaid applications
9. Locate oral health resources for clients and their families, and ways in which they can access them

Mental Health

Course Description

This course provides CHWs with an introduction to mental health and illness. Emphasis is on the CHW role in promoting mental health across cultures and decreasing the stigma of mental illness. Specific knowledge and skills focus on recognizing possible signs of mental illness and

early intervention, being aware of the ethical and legal aspects of working with clients with mental illness, identifying mental health resources, referring clients and assisting them with access to resources. This course also provides opportunities for the CHW to promote the mental health of self, clients, families and communities.

Objectives

1. Define mental health and mental illness
2. Discuss the incidence and impact of mental illness and its cultural implications
3. Describe indicators of good mental health across the life cycle
4. Recognize causes of mental illness and its at risk stressors
5. Identify symptoms and the importance of early interventions
6. Explain the ethical and legal aspects of the CHW role in working with mentally ill clients
7. Demonstrate empathy for those affected by mental illness and discuss these issues with sensitivity
8. List local mental health resources and identify barriers to accessing care
9. Promote mental health in self, clients, families, and communities

Phase 3 -- Practice Competencies - Internship (2 credits)

Internship

- o Credits =2 credits
- o Description: 72-80 hours of supervised practical experience that allows opportunities for the student to prepare for independent work in the Community Health Worker (CHW) role.

Objectives:

During the internship, the student will:

1. Review agency policies related to the role of Community Health Worker
2. Integrate content from CHW classes into the internship experience
3. Work within agency program/design to participate in some aspect(s) of the CHW role. (Mentor considers student's background and abilities and works with student to meet course objectives.)
4. Promote personal safety and safety of client.
5. Adhere to agency policies, such as confidentiality.