



Request for Proposals: 2026 Rural Community Health Worker Conference

The Minnesota Community Health Worker Alliance (MNCHWA) advances the CHW workforce through education, advocacy, and systems change to promote health equity, and we host a Rural CHW Conference to strengthen, connect, and elevate CHWs working in rural communities where access, visibility, and resources are often limited.

Conference Information:

MNCHWA invites proposals for the 2026 Rural Community Health Worker Conference to be held October 8th and 9th in Worthington, Minnesota. The theme for this year's conference is **Hands On, Hearts In: Practicing the Skills That Power Rural CHW Work.**

Conference Audience:

CHWs, CHW Certificate students, CHRs, Promotoras, and other related community-based roles, CHW employers, public health professionals, health providers, policy makers, payers, academic and training partners.

Location:

Worthington, Minnesota on the campus of Minnesota West Community and Technical College.

Learning Objectives:

1. Practice hands-on skills that power rural CHW work
Attendees will engage in hands-on, interactive learning to practice core Community Health Worker skills—such as motivational interviewing, suicide risk assessment, deep listening, and trauma-responsive communication—rooted in the realities, relationships, and resource contexts of rural communities.
2. Showcase CHW-informed best practices that strengthen program implementation
Attendees will advance understanding and discussion of CHW-centered programs and practices that empower CHWs to co-create initiatives, influence program design and implementation, and integrate lived experience and community knowledge through supportive organizational structures.

3. Strengthen the big tent of CHW work through inclusion and belonging
Attendees will be able to recognize and affirm the full scope of the CHW workforce, ensuring this conference reflects, values, and is for everyone doing heart-centered community health work including certificate-holding and non-certificate-holding CHWs, Community Health Representatives (CHRs), Promotoras, and related community-based roles.

Conference Format:

This fully in-person conference will have approximately three Plenaries (approximately 1 hour), twelve breakout sessions (approximately 45 minutes) and up to 20 poster presentations.

Presentation Proposal Information

Timeline

Call for Proposals Opens	May 1 st , 2026
Proposal Submission Deadline	June 30 th , 2026
Notification of Acceptance	August 7 th , 2026
Presenters Confirm Attendance	August 14 th , 2026
Conference Dates	October 8 th and 9 th 2026

Benefits for Presenters

All presenters must register for the conference. If you are selected, the benefits are as follows for each presentation type:

Plenary (lecture, workshop or panel):

- Up to two complimentary conference registrations
- Up to two presenters' names, photo, and biographies in online conference program (if multiple proposals are combined into one panel, two presenters from each proposal may be featured).
- Presentation abstract in online conference program

Breakout Session (lecture, workshop or panel):

- Up to two complimentary conference registrations
- Up to two presenters' name, and photo in online conference program
- Presentation abstract in online conference program

Poster:

- One complimentary conference registration
- Primary presenter's name in online conference program
- Presentation title in online program

Note: The presentation type is subject to the discretion of the 2026 Rural CHW Conference Planning Committee and may be adjusted to align with event objectives and scheduling requirements.

Criteria for selection:

Proposals will be selected by a sub-committee of the Rural CHW Conference Planning Committee. If you wish to participate in the planning committee, please email rachel@mnchwalliance.org.

Priority will be given based on the following set of criteria:

1. CHW Leadership, voice, involvement: presentations submitted by CHWs or with CHWs as co-presenters will be prioritized. If your presentation does not feature a CHW as a presenter, but CHWs have voice or leadership in creating the content, please mention that in your proposal.
2. Relevance to conference Learning Objectives
3. Relevance to conference theme
4. Expertise of presenter(s), including lived expertise of CHWs
5. Relevance to the concerns of CHWs working in rural settings
6. Balance of the content from other accepted proposals: we will work to ensure that a broad array of topics are covered. Proposals with similar topics or themes may be asked to combine with another proposal.