



MEETING NOTES

Meeting Purpose: This meeting convened health care providers, community-based organizations, and social service agencies to a panel discussion of local community health workers (CHWs) and promotores to raise awareness and elevate the importance of their role in our ACEs Network of Care.

Attendees:

- Allison Guevara
- Araceli Castillo
- Becky Shoemaker
- Britta Vigurs
- Cameo Culcasi
- Denise Gonsalves
- Diana Valadez
- Jeffery Gordon
- Jorina Elbers
- Josie Smith
- Julissa Silva
- Laura Wishart
- Najeeb Kamil
- Priscila Bacio
- Rebecca Nolzco
- SIndia Garcia
- Stella Laurmen
- Suzanne Frank
- Suzette Reuschel-DiVirgilio

ACEs Community Support Team: A Conversation with Community Health Workers and Promotores

- Allison Guevara introduced the moderator, Diana Valadez, Promotora Coordinator at Cradle to Career (C2C), and panelists: Julissa Silva, Promotora, C2C; Rebecca Nolzco, Promotora, C2C; and Araceli Castillo, Community Health Outreach Worker, Salud Para La Gente (Salud).
- Diana prompted the panelist to share their role
 - Araceli Castillo is a Community Health Outreach Worker at Salud that focuses on building trusting relationships with patients, patient advocacy, and connecting patients to resources. Additionally, Araceli shared that the effectiveness of CHWs is helping hard-to-reach patients and supporting them while they achieve their health care goals.
 - Rebecca is a Promotora at C2C that helps connect members of the community to tools or resources. Rebecca also shared that she is a student at Cabrillo College on her path to acquire her CHW certificate.
 - Julissa Silva is a Promotora at C2C that helps connect community members to local resources.
- Diana prompted the panelist to share how their life experiences has prepared them for the role as CHWs/Ps
 - Araceli shared her extensive education background focused on CHW, human services, family development. Additionally, Araceli also shared her background as a daughter of migrant farm workers and her work with vulnerable communities in Santa Cruz, Monterey, and San Benito Counties.
 - Rebecca shared that her experience comes from trainings along with her lived experiences that geared her with compassion to support the community.
 - Julissa shared that the trainings she has received and her daily experiences has prepared her to fulfill her role as a promotora.
- Diana prompted panelist to share examples of how they have helped patients tackle adversity, trauma, and toxic stress
 - Araceli shares with patients the Santa Cruz County resource calendar.
 - Rebecca carefully listens to community members to provide them resources geared towards their needs.
 - Julissa is open-minded and listens to community members and ensures confidentiality.
- Diana asked Araceli to share the needs, gaps in services/resources, and the most frequently used resources.
 - Araceli emphasized the need for affordable housing is an issue that community members are facing . Housing programs have extensive waiting lists. There is low access to dental care for adults with Medi-Cal. The programs that are helpful to community members are: Medi-Cal, CalFresh, WIC, transportation services, etc.

- Diana asked Rebecca to share daily challenges she faces and strategies to manage stress
 - Rebecca shared the strategies she uses to manage stress and practice self-care. She shared that daily challenges are balancing her priorities as an individual, mother, student, and promotora.
- Diana asked Julissa to share what she enjoys from being a promotora, and suggestions for organizations interested in implementing CHWs/Ps.
 - Julissa shared her passion as a promotora and understanding the importance of being the connection to help the community.
 - Julissa shared that organizations interested in implementing CHWs/Ps should first orient staff of the role of CHWs/Ps, providing trainings, and updates on resources and policies.

Open Panel Discussion

- Is there a spiritual component involved when CHWs/Ps provide support?
 - Rebecca shared that as a promotora, she does not bring up religion with community members because of the consideration that persons have different beliefs and must learn to respect that.
 - Allison shared that the spiritual component is not part of CHWs/Ps trainings, but there are promotoras and CHWs who are involved in their faith-based organizations. Promotoras are encouraged to bring along their personal experiences forward, but acknowledging the sensitivity of spirituality as people may have different beliefs.
- Are there other service needs besides those mentioned?
 - Araceli shared that there are families that travel to Mexico for dental care due to the low insurance coverage for dental care in the U.S. Patients have dental care coverage, but there is a shortage of dental care providers.
 - Diana shared that specialty care services are hard to access due to the costs that some insurances won't cover. Diana also mentioned that mental health access is a need in the community that also comes with costs that most families/patients don't have the financial access to.
 - Julissa shared that families lean towards herbal medicine because of their financial situation.
 - Araceli shared that there are patients that seek care when they are not feeling well emotionally and mentally, but are discouraged to seek care when they don't receive the proper resources or care from their providers when providers recommend to "get rest," "go on a walk," etc. as a solution.

Closing

- Our next ACEs Community of Practice meeting is on Wednesday, November 29, 12 - 1 pm.