



**Date:** Wednesday, January 10, 2024

**Subject:** Senate Bill 403-FN

Dear Chairman Birdsell and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for accepting this testimony supporting Senate Bill 403-FN on behalf of the New Hampshire Public Health Association (NHPHA), a statewide non-profit public health membership association founded in 1992. Our mission is to improve the public's health by championing public health policy and practice, promoting health equity, and enriching the workforce.

Senate Bill 403-FN acknowledges the significance of Community Health Workers (CHWs) and their contribution to enhancing the well-being of the general public in New Hampshire. CHWs play a vital role in enhancing health outcomes and reducing health inequalities within our state. They bridge the gap between underserved communities and essential healthcare, services, and resources. In essence, CHWs serve as an indispensable safety net for residents of both rural and urban areas in New Hampshire, tirelessly working to deliver healthcare and social services to individuals facing poverty and discrimination, which hinder their overall health, welfare, and survival.

The vast majority of patients under the care of Community Health Workers belong to the extremely low-income bracket, with most falling below the Federal poverty level. Our CHWs cater to populations that have been historically neglected by the conventional healthcare system, such as Indigenous or People of Color (BIPOC), individuals with limited or no proficiency in English, those without insurance coverage, and those without a permanent residence. The majority of CHWs' patients are either enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP or are dually enrolled in Medicare and Medicaid.

Community Health Workers play a crucial role in improving health outcomes and delivering a significant return on investment (ROI). Nevertheless, when grants expire, the discontinuation of CHW services adversely affects the individuals residing in historically underserved communities that we aim to assist. To address this issue, implementing sustainable payment models like Medicaid Reimbursement would enable us to expand the CHW workforce, providing them with a fair wage, professional growth prospects, and fostering greater diversity within the healthcare profession.

We strongly encourage the committee to support Senate Bill 403-FN in order to cultivate a future healthcare workforce in the Granite State. We kindly request your vote in favor of passing this bill.

If you have any questions or need more information, I can be reached at [hbedri@nhpha.org](mailto:hbedri@nhpha.org).

Thank you in advance for protecting the health of our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Bedri', is positioned above the typed name.

Hanan Babikir Bedri, MS, MA  
Executive Director  
New Hampshire Public Health Association