



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 24, 2020

Leading Health Equity Organizations Launch National Community-Based Workforce Alliance

Collaboration formed to advocate for local community health workforces and fill critical gaps in pandemic response efforts

Los Angeles, CA – As COVID-19 cases surge nationwide, 16 leading health equity organizations have launched a national alliance to help officials scale and leverage the skills of a community-based workforce to slow the pandemic and protect the hardest-hit communities. The [Community-Based Workforce \(CBW\) Alliance](#) was formed to connect pandemic response efforts to the existing community-based workforce, which includes trusted, trained local experts – such as community health workers, doulas, promotoras de salud, faith-based leaders, mutual aid groups, retirees, unemployed residents and students - at a critical time in the public health crisis.

As President-elect Biden's new COVID-19 Task Force convenes, the CBW Alliance is committed to helping federal, state and local officials equitably fund and activate community-based workforces. As a key element of public health response efforts - like President-elect Biden's proposed Public Health Corps - a community-based workforce can help prevent coronavirus spread, speed the reopening of schools and businesses, build meaningful employment opportunities and address the racial inequities that have left communities of color harder hit than others by the pandemic.

“Since January, U.S. leaders have missed an opportunity to deploy community-level strategies to support our frontline doctors and nurses and our overburdened public health departments,” said Denise Octavia-Smith, Executive Director of the National Association of Community Health Workers, a member of the Alliance. “By investing in and swiftly integrating community health workers and others into the broader community-based workforce, we can ensure that COVID-19 pandemic response efforts are more equitable and effective.”

CBW Alliance members include:

[THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY HEALTH](#)

[WORKERS \(NACHW\)](#)

[HEALTHBEGINS](#)

[COMMUNITY HEALTH ACCELERATION PARTNERSHIP](#)

[HEALTH LEADS](#)

[FAMILIES USA](#)

[PARTNERS IN HEALTH](#)

[INSTITUTE FOR HEALTHCARE IMPROVEMENT](#)

[LAST MILE HEALTH](#)

[PENN CENTER FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS](#)

[THE UofSC CENTER FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH](#)

[ALIGNMENT](#)

[VISION Y COMPROMISO](#)

[EL SOL NEIGHBORHOOD EDUCATIONAL CENTER](#)

[THE CENTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE](#)

[INTEGRATION \(RUSH UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER\)](#)

[THE FITZHUGH MULLAN INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH](#)

[WORKFORCE EQUITY \(AT THE GEORGE WASHINGTON](#)

[UNIVERSITY MILKEN INSTITUTE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH\)](#)

[THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION](#)

[THE CAMDEN COALITION](#)

“As the U.S. grapples with how to respond to the pandemic and rebuild health systems, we must prioritize investment in community health workers as one of the most efficient and equitable ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and expand access to health”, said Raj Panjabi, CEO of Alliance member organization Last Mile Health .

“Public health moves at the speed of trust,” said Rishi Manchanda, CEO of HealthBegins, another Alliance member organization. “With COVID-19 surging, the Alliance will help make the case - to the incoming Biden administration and the public – that we need to fund and deploy thousands of trusted community-based workers in the fight against the pandemic. We must act.”

Backed by initial philanthropic support, the CBW Alliance has to date:

- Identified six core principles for engaging a community-based workforce in the pandemic response;
- Highlighted examples of cities that have applied the principles - like Baltimore, Chicago and San Diego;
- Informed legislative efforts to combat the pandemic;
- Examined the impact of community-based workforces on increasing mental health challenges;
- Informed national and local strategies for equitable vaccine distribution;
- Developed tools and resources to support local health departments including a national Playbook for Community-Health Workers.

In the months ahead, the CBW Alliance will continue these efforts, advocate at federal and state level, and provide needed support to local health departments, community-based organizations and advocates on the ground who are fighting on the frontlines of the pandemic.

Support the guiding principles and learn more at www.communitybasedworkforce.org

About the Community-based Workforce Alliance

Formed in May 2020, the Community-based Workforce Alliance is a group of 16 organizations with a collective mission to ensure that the COVID-19 pandemic response and rebuilding efforts are equitable and effective and involve, fund, strengthen, and elevate trusted community-based workers. The Alliance works to advance six Community-Based Workforce Principles for Pandemic Response & Resilience, developed by HealthBegins, through advocacy, communications, monitoring and technical assistance.

Contact:

grace@healthbegins.org

###