

Testimony of

Deb Polun  
Chief Strategy Officer  
Community Health Center Association of Connecticut (CHC/ACT)

*Commenting on  
Senate Bill 1470: An Act Concerning Medicaid Reimbursement for  
Community Health Worker Services*

Human Services Committee  
March 11, 2025

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on Senate Bill 1470, An Act Concerning Medicaid Reimbursement for Community Health Worker Services.

On behalf of the Community Health Center Association of Connecticut (CHC/ACT), and its sixteen member health centers, I want to thank the Committee for its dedication to improving the HUSKY program and the health of people in our state. Connecticut's Community Health Centers serve more than 440,000 people each year – about 1 in every 8 residents – providing medical, behavioral health, and dental care in hundreds of locations across the state.

In addition to providing this high-quality care, Community Health Centers are also significant employers, with about 5,000 employees across the state, including hundreds providing Community Health Worker (CHW) services. At our health centers, CHWs work with patients to help them overcome barriers to getting and staying healthy. For example, they provide connections to other community-based resources, like food pantries and housing assistance; help coordinate transportation to medical appointments; and help them schedule and understand preparation for screenings like mammograms and colonoscopies. All of the health centers and CHC/ACT also employ CHWs to provide education, outreach, and application assistance for HUSKY, Covered Connecticut, and Access Health CT. Much of this work is provided by CHWs who are from the same communities and cultures as their patients, and who are or become trusted resources.

Connecticut has recognized the value of the Community Health Worker role in improving access to health care, helping navigate the system, and improving health outcomes. A stakeholder group provided input to DSS over the past year to establish Medicaid reimbursement for these critical services. Yet no final report has been issued and this vital resource to increase access to care remains unfunded.

This bill would require a second report each year. We urge the Committee instead to require Medicaid to reimburse for CHW services and to recommend funding be included in the state budget to support that implementation.

Thank you for your consideration and your hard work on behalf of our great state. Please feel free to reach out with any questions: [dpolun@chcact.org](mailto:dpolun@chcact.org) or 860.667.7820.