

INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2017-034

State of Arkansas  
91st General Assembly  
Regular Session, 2017

**A Bill**

HOUSE BILL 1257

By: Representatives Richey, V. Flowers, Murdock

Filed with: House Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor  
pursuant to A.C.A. §10-3-217.

**For An Act To Be Entitled**

AN ACT TO CREATE THE COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER ACT; AND  
FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

**Subtitle**

TO CREATE THE COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER  
ACT.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 20, Chapter 6, is amended to add an  
additional subchapter to read as follows:

Subchapter 2 – Community Health Worker Act

20-6-201. Title.

This act shall be known and may be cited as the “Community Health  
Worker Act”.

20-6-202. Definitions.

As used in this subchapter:

(1)(A) “Community-based organization” means an organization that  
provide healthcare services and is:

- (A) An organized or institutionalized entity;
- (B) A non-profit distributing organization;
- (C) Self-governing; and
- (D) A voluntary organization.

1                   (B) "Community-based organization" does not include a  
2 government entity;

3                   (2) "Community health worker" means an individual who:

4                   (A) Is:

5                                 (i) Not a licensed healthcare professional or a  
6 healthcare provider;

7                                 (ii) Eighteen (18) years of age or older; and

8                                 (iii) Certified under this subchapter; and

9                   (B) Provides services to:

10                                (i) Patients under a patient care plan as directed  
11 by:

12   (a) A treating physician; or

13   (b) A pharmacist for medication adherence or  
14 chronic disease management; or

15   (ii) Discharged hospital patients who do not qualify  
16 for or have refused home health services, unless the individual providing the  
17 services is working as an employee or agent of a home health agency;

18                   (3) "Health benefit plan" means an individual, blanket, or any  
19 group plan, policy, or contract for healthcare services issued or delivered  
20 in this state by a healthcare insurer, health maintenance organization,  
21 hospital medical service corporation, or self-insured governmental or church  
22 plan in this state;

23                   (4) "Healthcare professional" means a person who is licensed,  
24 certified, or otherwise authorized by the laws of this state to administer  
25 health care in the ordinary course of the practice of his or her profession;

26                   (5) "Healthcare provider" means a hospital, an ambulatory  
27 surgical center, a primary care center, an outpatient psychiatric center, a  
28 home healthcare agency, a skilled nursing facility, or an individual licensed  
29 to render covered healthcare services; and

30                   (6) "Treating physician" means a physician who is directly or  
31 indirectly involved in providing health care to the patient.

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33                   20-6-203. Community health worker – Certification.

34                   (a) To be eligible for certification by the Department of Health as a  
35 community health worker, an individual shall:

1           (1) Not be licensed as a healthcare professional under Arkansas  
2 Code Title 17, Subtitle 3;

3           (2) Either:

4                   (A) Successfully complete a community health worker  
5 training program from a school or training program approved by the  
6 department; or

7                   (B) Have worked as a community health worker for the past  
8 one (1) year; and

9                   (3) Submit an application with an application fee as determined  
10 by the department.

11           (b) For the purposes of relicensure, a community health worker shall:

12                   (1) Complete fifteen (15) hours of training;

13                   (2) Submit a renewal application with a renewal application fee  
14 as determined by the department, in consultation with the Arkansas Community  
15 Health Worker Association; and

16                   (3) Be active in performing the skills of a community health  
17 worker.

18           (c) The department shall create and maintain a registry of approved  
19 community health worker training programs to be made available to the public.

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21           20-6-204. Services of a community health worker.

22           Services provided by a community health worker are limited to:

23                   (1) Health literacy services;

24                   (2) Health education and community research activities;

25                   (3) Basic home environmental assessments;

26                   (4) Basic health screening and tests;

27                   (5) Basic healthcare services that do not require a professional  
28 license under Arkansas Code Title 17, Subtitle 3, or specialized training  
29 under § 20-77-2301 et seq., in order to be performed, such as first aid and  
30 diabetic foot checks;

31                   (6) Basic needs that are not met by personal care attendants;

32                   (7) Community services;

33                   (8) Medication compliance under a patient care plan, as directed  
34 by a treating physician;

35                   (9) Chronic disease monitoring and education; and

1           (10) Appropriate referrals to community providers, healthcare  
2 providers, or healthcare professionals.

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4           20-6-205. Patient data and information.

5           (a) Patient and personal data and information accessed or attained by  
6 a community health worker shall be confidential and privileged as required  
7 under state and federal law.

8           (b) If a community health worker does not maintain the confidential  
9 and privileged nature of the data or information, the community health worker  
10 shall be subject to any penalty under state and federal law for a breach of  
11 confidential data or information.

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13           20-6-206. Compensation to a community health worker.

14           A community health worker certified under this subchapter may receive  
15 compensation for services provided from:

16                   (1) Medicare;

17                   (2) The Arkansas Medicaid Program;

18                   (3) A private insurance policy or plan;

19                   (4) A health benefit plan;

20                   (5) A healthcare provider or healthcare professional; or

21                   (6) A community-based organization.

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23           20-6-207. Immunity.

24           (a) A person or entity that employs a certified community health  
25 worker shall not be liable for the actions or omissions of a certified  
26 community health worker.

27           (b) The following shall not be liable in any way for the actions or  
28 omissions of a certified community health worker:

29                   (1) A healthcare provider or an employee or authorized agent of  
30 a healthcare provider;

31                   (2) A contractor leaving a contractual relationship with a  
32 healthcare provider; and

33                   (3) A healthcare professional or an employee or authorized agent  
34 of a healthcare professional.

1           (c) A certified community health worker acting in good faith in  
2 accordance with training and experience received shall not be liable for an  
3 act or omission.

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5           20-6-208. Construction.

6           This subchapter does not:

7                   (1) Confer any authority on a community health worker to make  
8 healthcare decisions on behalf of a patient or a healthcare professional;

9                   (2) Create a private right of action against:

10                           (A) A healthcare provider or an authorized agent of a  
11 healthcare provider; or

12                                   (B) A healthcare professional or an authorized agent of a  
13 healthcare professional;

14                   (3) Remove the obligation of a third-party payer to cover a  
15 healthcare item or service that the third-party payer is obligated to provide  
16 to a patient under the terms of a valid agreement, insurance policy, plan, or  
17 certification of coverage or health maintenance organization contract;

18                   (4) Alter existing state laws or rules governing the scope of  
19 practice of a healthcare professional; or

20                   (5) Authorize, encourage, or promote drug-induced, chemical, or  
21 surgical abortions.

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24 Referred by the Arkansas House of Representatives

25 Prepared by: VJF  
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