

Resource Guide for Community Health Workers: Patient-Centered Care Promotion

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Healthcare Studies

Introduction

North Shore Physicians Group (NSPG) is the largest multi-specialty group on the North Shore. They are affiliated with Salem Hospital and are now a Mass General Brigham member. NSPG's mission is to provide comprehensive patient-centered care through a team of healthcare professionals, including primary care physicians (PCPs), nurses, social workers, community health workers (CHWs), pharmacists, nutritionists, behavioral health counselors, and other specialists involved in patient care. Patient-centered care allows better care coordination across all clinical specialties. Some other services include:

- Urgent care
- Same-day appointments
- Access to a network of specialty physicians affiliated with NSPG, Salem Hospital and Mass General Brigham
- A common electronic medical record system used by all physicians and hospitals affiliated with NSPG.
- Patient Gateway offers online access to your physician's office through a secure, electronic portal. View test results, request appointments and referrals, email physicians, download forms, and more.
- Specialty consultations in Mass General Hospital, Brigham and Women's Hospital, and Mass General Brigham network
- Community Van screening for blood pressure and providing COVID-19 vaccines and boosters

(North Shore Physicians Group, n.d)



Objective

To create a resource guide for community health workers to promote efficient patient-center care for all the patients they oversee via primary care providers referrals from NSPG sites.

Related Literature

- Galbraith (2017) found that positive outcomes were possible for both the patients and site due to the close care coordination they obtained from the community health workers after they were discharged home from the hospital. As a result, patients could navigate the system, which helped meet their current needs, and hospital utilization decreased; thus, the cost of inpatient care went down.
- Social determinants of health are critical factors in the health care system, especially in the distribution and health care equity. During the pandemic, social determinants of health and other inequalities have been key factors why COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted Black, Hispanic/Latinx, Native Americans and other minorities. Some of these social determinants of health include access to healthcare, economic insecurity, poor neighborhood and housing conditions, and availability of resources (Turner-Musa et al., 2020).

Materials & Methods

- Collected data utilizing NSPG's Social Determinants of Health Assessment (SDOH)
- SDOH was administered from the Community Van during peak hours of operation
- Conducted a written survey for community health workers of the most utilized services by patients. The CHW survey was distributed to 7 community health workers during the team meeting on the 8th week of the internship.
- Based on the results of the assessments, revisions were made to the available resources in Microsoft Teams and outdated information was deleted.

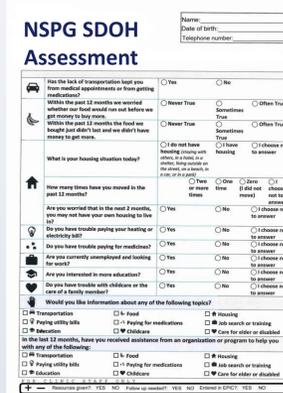
Community Health Worker (CHW) Survey

1. From the following list, pick the resources that patients ask the most in the Social Determinants of Health Assessment. You can select more than one answer:
 - 1. Food Assistance
 - 2. Transportation Assistance
 - 3. Housing Assistance
 - 4. Paying Utility Bills
 - 5. Childcare
 - 6. Paying for medication
 - 7. Job research or training
 - 8. Care for the elder or disabled
2. Please write down any other resources that you think you should have it in the resource guide.



Source: Social Determinants of Health. (n.d.) Healthy People 2030. <https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health>

- Created a completely new channel for CHWs in Microsoft Teams with sub-channels of the most utilized resources
- Used the SDOH categories for the sub-channels
- Extra resources were added apart from the main SDOH categories so CHWs can access them when needed.



A screenshot of the NSPG SDOH Assessment form, which includes questions about transportation, food access, housing, utility bills, childcare, medication, job training, and education.

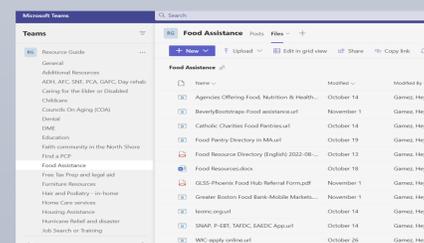
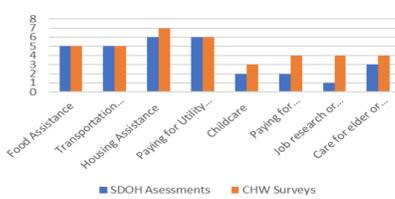
Results

Resources	SDOH assessments collected (30)	CHW Surveys Collected (7)
Food Assistance	5	5
Transportation Assistance	5	5
Housing Assistance	6	7
Paying for Utility Bills	6	6
Childcare	2	3
Paying for medication	2	4
Job research or training	1	4
Care for the elder or disabled	3	4

SDOH Assessment Results



SDOH Assessment and CHW Survey Results



Screenshot of the channel created for the resource guide and sub-categories

- Based on the SDOH assessment, the most utilized resources were housing assistance (score=6) and paying for utility bills (score=6), followed by food (score=5) and transportation assistance (score=5).
- The least utilized resources were job research or training (score=1) along with childcare (score=2) and paying for medication (score=2).
- The CHW survey indicated that community health workers provide more resources for housing assistance (score=7) and paying for utility bills (score=6), followed by food and transportation assistance (both score=5).
- CHWs also scored low in childcare. A total of 3 CHWs selected this category.
- There was a tie between paying for medication, job research or training, and care for the elder or disabled (score=4).

CONCLUSIONS

- CHWs demonstrate satisfaction with having a resource guide as they spend less time in databases researching the different resources, which helps to provide more patient-centered care.
- There was a need for an organized resource guide so community health workers could invest their time more efficiently.
- After each SDOH assessment was collected, the information requested by patients was provided to them onsite. Sometimes the information was not readily available; however, these resource guides will alleviate this concern.
- Based on the CHW survey and SDOH assessment, the resources patients need the most are housing, paying for utility bills, and food and transportation. The resource guide focused on these main categories; some even had sub-categories. For example, housing assistance has a sub-category named shelters and rooming housing.
- Microsoft Teams is the way CHWs and the site supervisor communicate. Therefore, it made sense to create a channel named "resource guide." This channel includes sub-channels with all the SDOHs categories and anything else requested by the site supervisor and CHWs.
- Several databases, and individual websites were analyzed and added to each channel.
- CHWs already had some resources but they outdated and disorganized. This project was an opportunity to transform the system into a cohesive and relevant guide.
- The experience was unique and has provided knowledge on the different types of non-profit organizations that dedicate themselves to helping the community.



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Source: [Community Care Van Schedule \(massgeneralbrigham.org\)](https://www.massgeneralbrigham.org)