

KANSAS COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER COALITION

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SPOTLIGHT:

KANCARE OMBUDSMAN OFFICE

BY AURORA MYERS, KANCARE OMBUDSMAN VOLUNTEER PROJECT SPECIALIST

See if this sounds familiar: “I just found out I lost my Medicaid coverage and I don’t know why! Who can I talk to?” “I want to apply for KanCare, but this form is confusing.” “My dad needs more help in the home than I can give, and I don’t know what we should do next.” “I applied for KanCare months ago, but I haven’t heard anything back.” The KanCare Ombudsman Office is here to help with questions like these!

The KanCare Ombudsman Office is a free resource to KanCare members and applicants as they access their coverage and make sense of the KanCare processes. Anyone can call the toll-free number at (855) 643-8180 during regular business hours and talk to their staff and a team of volunteers. In some cases, the staff can meet in-person by appointment to assist in completing an application -- or they can refer an applicant to local resources who have been trained to provide the same application assistance.

The KanCare Ombudsman Office not only helps members and applicants directly, but they know that improving access and reach for Kansans means equipping those who work day-to-day in the local communities. **You’ll find links, fact sheets, checklists, and guides at their website.** The Office is in the final stages of producing free YouTube videos addressing common questions around issues like application assistance and grievance/appeal filings. The hope is that local workers can feel confident and equipped to help KanCare members and applicants in their communities. Call them if you’d like to be added to their list of community liaisons who can provide in-person KanCare application assistance appointments!

The KanCare Ombudsman Office is in Topeka, and it has a satellite office in Wichita and another in Olathe. They work to connect all Kansans with the health coverage they need. They are eager to visit with your local task forces or coalitions – to arrange a visit, call (855) 643-8180 and ask for Aurora Myers. Think of their office the next time you hear a KanCare question!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Brown Bag Webinar Series: Independent Study Courses Available

KU Medical Center Area Health Education Center is offering a series of courses on Engaging Patients with Disabilities and Chronic Health Conditions:

- Understanding Health Disparities and the Social vs. Medical Model of Disability. [Learn more.](#)
- Addressing Real-Life Experiences of People with Disabilities. [Learn more.](#)
- Creating an Accessible Health Care Environment. [Learn more.](#)
- Navigating Medicare, Medicaid, & Employment for Individuals with Disabilities. [Learn more.](#)

You can participate in any or all four of the sessions and each one can be completed at your own pace. [Check out the flyer](#) for more info or contact Hannah Franzen at hfranzen@kumc.edu.



New Evidence-Based Programs from KanQuit Available January 1st

New year, new services and resources! On January 1, National Jewish Health began offering Kansas the following services:

- Toll-free number for youth to call or text and a youth-focused cessation website
- Behavioral Health trained coaches
- Confidential and user friendly, web-based support
- Look out this Spring for a relaunch of Brief Tobacco Intervention Training.

The phone number, website, and enrollment eligibility requirements remain the same for services. Visit KSquit.org to learn more.



Free Webinar: CHW Resources

Join the American Diabetes Association's upcoming webinar: *Diabetes 101: Resources for CHWs* on Thursday, February 6 at 12:00 PM. Learn valuable information about diabetes and understand possible roles CHWs can play in diabetes management and prevention. To [learn more and register, visit here.](#)

IN THE NEWS

Governor Kelly Announces Bipartisan Medicaid Expansion Bill

Did you hear the recent exciting news from Topeka? In the [State of the State Address](#), Kelly announced Medicaid expansion will be a top priority this session and introduced an expansion plan made in conjunction with Senate Majority Leader Denning. The bill is [SB 252](#) and would allow Kansans who sit at the 138% federal poverty line to be covered under Medicaid. Follow along as the bill is discussed to see if expansion is in our horizon!



Recognizing and Sustaining the Value of CHWs and Promotores

The California Health Care Foundation recently released a brief exploring how CHW/Ps contribute to California and the nation's health care system delivery. Noted impacts of the value CHW/Ps add are: improved health outcomes for those with chronic diseases (particularly racial minorities); advancement of health, cultural, and economic equity; improved patient engagement through overcoming geographic, cultural, and linguistic barriers; and a financial ROI.

The brief dives into various ways organizations across the country have been able to finance CHW/Ps: Medicaid Managed Care Organizations covering services; Medicaid State Plan Amendments to provide services related to health homes, preventive services, or targeted case management; and grant funding. The report outlines challenges, such as a lack of sustainable funding and resources and the lack of professional development pathways for the workforce. The report has possible solutions specific to California that could be adapted elsewhere. To read the report and learn more, [visit here.](#)



KHI Report: Insurance Coverage

The Kansas Health Institute recently released a fact sheet that shows health insurance coverage for Kansans in 2018 by congressional district and age. In 2018, 8.8 percent, which is over 250 thousand, of Kansans were uninsured. Almost a third of Kansans have insurance through public insurance. The most uninsured district was the 4th at 10.2 percent of people uninsured. The report also found that there are over 38 thousand uninsured children in Kansas. The greatest amounts of uninsured children was in the 4th district at 6.1 percent. Dive into the numbers more by checking out [KHI's fact sheet here.](#)

TELL YOUR STORY

We are collecting Community Health Worker success stories and want to know yours. Please take a moments to share so that we can raise awareness of CHWs in Kansas.

[Click here to share your story!](#)



2020

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COMMITTEE UPDATES

The **Advocacy Committee** brainstormed potential future opportunities for CHW advocacy presentations. They also discussed the executive committee's response letter to KDHE Secretary Norman and future steps related to this. The committee talked about the proposed Medicaid Expansion bill and how it relates to advocating for CHWs. Their next meeting is **Tuesday, February 11 at 11:00 am.**

The **Education Committee** discussed a possible format for implementation of a CHW Education Pilot project and created a task force to work on a grant application that could be used to pay for a pilot if received. In addition, the brainstormed ways to create buy-in to this project and around the concept of training-the trainer.

Their next meeting is **Tuesday, February 18 at 3:00 pm.**

The **Executive Committee** brainstormed ideas for a CHW Coalition Success Letter to highlight coalition accomplishments, progress committees have made on tasks, and goals for the year. They also discussed KDHE Internal CHW Discussions and strategic planning.

Their next meeting is **Wednesday, February 5 at 1:00 PM**

The **Sustainability Committee** talked about the follow-up email with Secretary Norman. They then held a discussion about the relationship between the sustainability of the coalition and sustainability of the profession. Their next meeting is **Tuesday, February 25 at 2:00 PM.**

The **Symposium Committee** is has chosen the theme for the CHW Symposium on June 11, 2020 - *Kansas CHWs: Building Resilience Through Training & Resources*. The committee last met in December to identify action steps related to purpose and goals, worked on developing an agenda and structure for the day, and discussed methods of recruitment and promotion. Their next meeting is **Monday, February 17 at 10:00 AM.**

Want to review the notes? [Click here](#) to find all of the documents you need!



@kschwcoalition