

1 INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2015-197

2
3 REQUESTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND
4 LABOR STUDY THE IMPACT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS IN OTHER
5 STATES AND THE POTENTIAL BENEFIT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS TO
6 THE STATE OF ARKANSAS.

7
8 WHEREAS, community health workers are increasingly being acknowledged
9 as integral members of the United States healthcare workforce; and

10
11 WHEREAS, community health workers are community members who work
12 primarily in community settings and who serve as connectors between
13 healthcare consumers and providers to promote health among groups that have
14 traditionally lacked access to health care; and

15
16 WHEREAS, community health workers are also known as community health
17 advocates, lay health educators, community health representatives, promotores
18 de salud, and various other terms; and

19
20 WHEREAS, community health workers are not new to the healthcare
21 workforce, but have served communities in many capacities for decades; and

22
23 WHEREAS, community health workers are uniquely qualified as connectors
24 because community health workers speak the language of their community, know
25 the values and priorities of the community, and recognize cultural buffers;
26 and

27
28 WHEREAS, many interventions that integrate community health workers
29 into healthcare delivery systems are associated with:

- 30 (1) Reductions in chronic illnesses;
31 (2) Better medication adherence;
32 (3) Increased patient involvement;
33 (4) Improvements in overall community health; and
34 (5) Reduced healthcare costs; and

1 WHEREAS, approximately forty (40) states have include community health
2 workers in aspects of health care; and

3
4 WHEREAS, approximately fifteen (15) states have enacted legislation to
5 establish advisory bodies, scope of practice, certification or training
6 programs, standard curriculums with core skills, Medicaid payment
7 reimbursement, other reimbursement, or integration into team-based health
8 care for community health workers; and

9
10 WHEREAS, Arkansas law does not specifically include community health
11 workers or provide for the licensure of community health workers; and

12
13 WHEREAS, community health workers could potentially fulfill the role of
14 care coordinators under any healthcare delivery model and in the patient-
15 centered medical home model to fill the gaps in the community healthcare
16 resources,

17
18 NOW THEREFORE,

19 BE IT PROPOSED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR OF
20 THE NINETIETH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

21
22 THAT the House Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor study the
23 impact of community health workers in other states and to evaluate the
24 potential benefit of community health workers to the State of Arkansas,
25 including without limitation:

26 (1) The types of reimbursement that could be available for
27 community health workers;

28 (2) The scope of practice of community health workers;

29 (3) The certification or licensure requirements for community
30 health workers;

31 (4) The national trends regarding community health workers; and

32 (5) Existing studies and data regarding community health
33 workers.

34
35 Respectfully submitted,

36

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36

Representative Chris Richey

District 12

By: JMB/JMB