

Community Health Worker Community of Practice

Connecting people, knowledge and practice for fairer, healthier communities

Community Health Navigator Forum 2026

Sharing practice.
Strengthening communities.
Shaping the future.



1. Context

Community health workers (CHWs) and navigators play an important role in helping people and communities access and navigate primary health care and all aspects of the health system.

The Community Health Worker Community of Practice (CoP) was established in 2019 to bring together people who work with and support CHWs and navigators across diverse settings. The CoP provides a space to connect, share experience, build skills and knowledge, and work together to strengthen the CHW workforce and improve health equity.



2. Activities

The CoP brings together people working in and supporting community health worker, navigator and related roles, including:

- community health workers
- community health navigators
- peer and lay navigators
- bilingual and multicultural workers
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers
- people from health services, community organisations, universities and research and policy organisations.



We share knowledge and experience across diverse settings.



We provide and co-develop tools, resources and learning opportunities.



We build relationships across organisations, research and policy.



We highlight innovative practice and real-world examples.



Community of Practice leads

The CoP is co-led by:

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Hosted by the
International Centre for Future Health Systems (ICFHS), UNSW.



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Meeting details



Meetings since
2019



Held every
2 months

Open to members from across Australia who are interested in CHW-related research, policy and practice.



Membership

A diverse membership from:

- Universities (e.g. UNSW, University of South Australia, University of Melbourne)
- Health services and local health districts
- Multicultural and refugee health organisations
- Community organisations
- Research and policy partners
- Community health workers and navigators and allies



Interested in joining?

Membership is free. Contact:

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3. Successes and challenges

Successes

- ✓ Regular meetings and a sustainable platform for ongoing collaboration since 2019
- ✓ Sharing practice, resources and learning across diverse settings
- ✓ Guest speakers and case examples highlighting innovative practice
- ✓ Building relationships across organisations, research and policy
- ✓ Increased visibility of CHWs and navigators and their contribution to health equity

Challenges

- ⚠ Diverse terminology and role definitions across settings
- ⚠ Varied training, support and resourcing arrangements
- ⚠ Integrating navigator roles within health and community teams
- ⚠ Sustaining engagement across different sectors and regions
- ⚠ Need for a flexible framework that reflects different contexts and communities



4. Future goals



Grow the community

Welcome new members and expand across regions and settings.



Develop and share resources

Build a repository of tools, examples and evaluation findings.



Strengthen collaboration

Link practice, research and policy, and identify opportunities for future research.



Influence systems and policy

Use collective experience to promote recognition and sustainable resourcing of CHWs and navigator roles.



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