

A National Review of Training Requirements for Community Health Workers

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Community health workers (CHWs) are important members of the public health workforce who link community health and social services. CHWs have unique and close relationships with the communities they serve. However, there are no national standardized requirements or policies for training or reimbursement for CHWs. The purpose of this project was to complete a national review of training requirements for CHWs by state, an update from a 2023 review conducted by the UCEDD.

Common terminology for CHWs

- Promoters/promotor de salud/promotores
- Outreach workers
- Outreach specialists
- Outreach coordinators
- Community care coordinators
- Others

Methods

- Collect and organize data from all 50 U.S. states and District of Columbia:
 - CHW training programs
 - CHW certification programs
 - Agencies responsible for certification oversight
 - Reimbursement for CHW services
 - CHW-specific legislation
- Data sources:
 - State government websites
 - Medicaid documents
 - Legislative databases
 - Policy trackers.

Results

Training

A total of 40 states have state-approved training programs, 9 states have independent agency training programs, and 2 states are establishing state programs.

Certification

In addition to the 29 states with certification, 8 more states are in development.

Legislation

Many states have passed policies related to CHWs.

Reimbursement

CHWs services are reimbursed through varied structures.

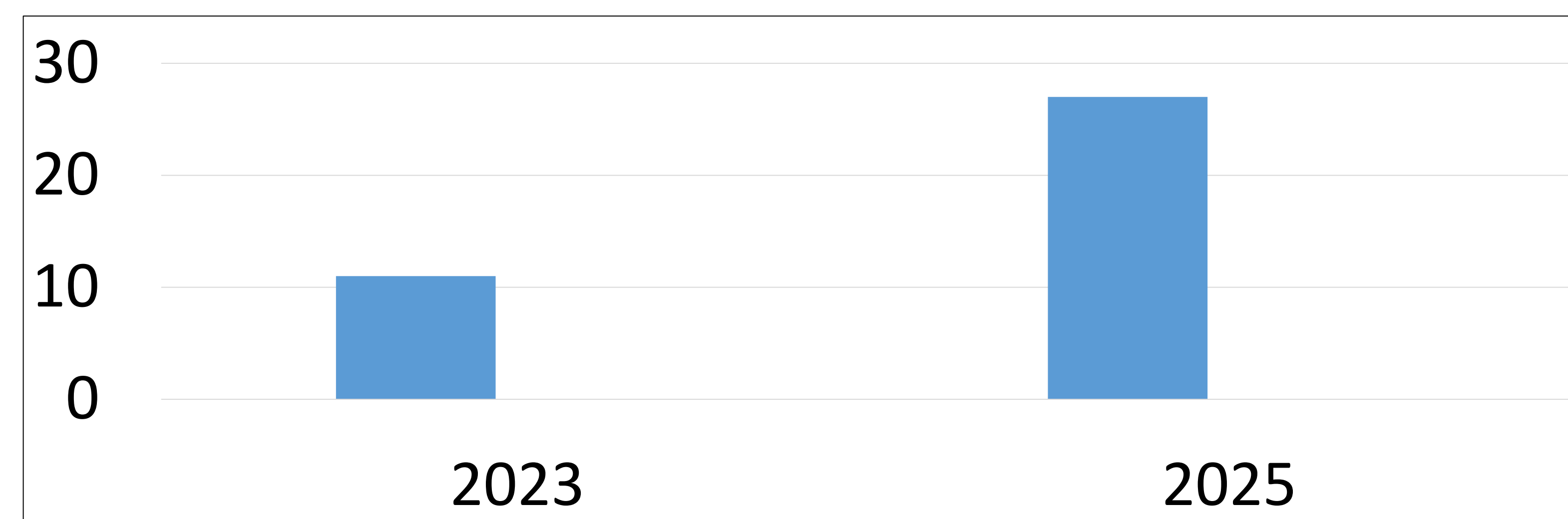
State-approved training programs (n=40)

Certification status	n	%
Certificate	29	72.5
Considering	3	7.5
No plans	8	20

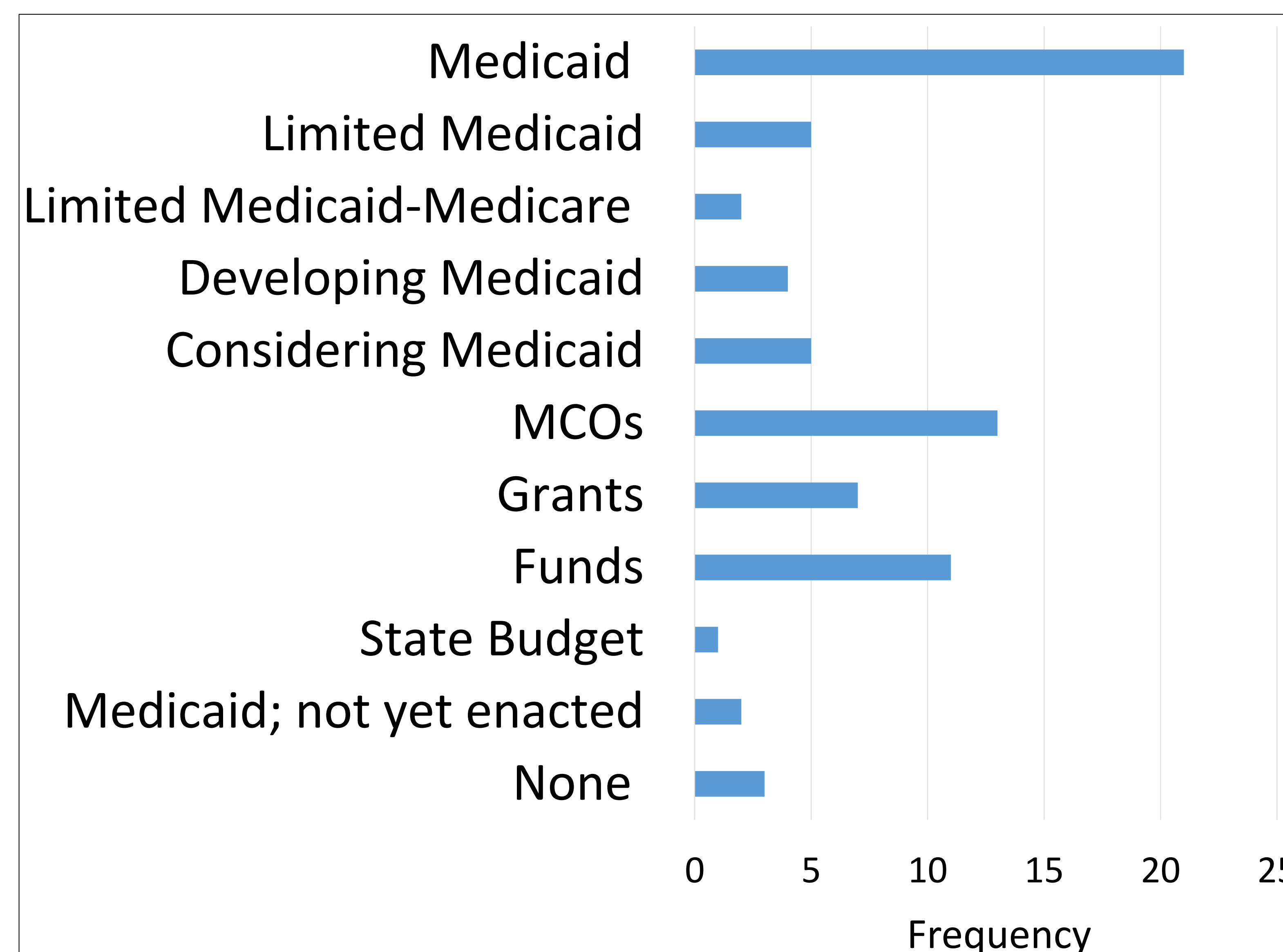
Non-state training programs (n=9)

Certification status	n	%
Considering	2	22.2
Developing	1	11.1
No plans	6	66.7

Legislation



Reimbursement



CHWs in Connecticut

- State-approved training programs: **Yes (4)**
- State-operated certification: **Yes (optional)**
 - Department of Public Health
 - Community Health Worker Advisory Body
- Legislation: **Yes**
 - SB 126 passed in 2017
 - HB 7424 passed in 2019
 - SB 989 passed in 2023* (Medicaid)
 - SB 1470 passed in 2025

Discussion

CHWs have an important role in advancing health equity, access to care, and social support in communities. There is growing state-level recognition of CHWs through certification programs and legislation from 2023 to the present. Many states now offer or are developing formal training, typically with state public health department oversight. Despite this progress, some states remain in the early stages of CHW workforce development, with few formal policies or programs in place.

This project highlights the dynamic and rapidly evolving policy environment surrounding CHWs in the United States. States are increasingly formalizing the role of CHWs through policies, training, certification, and reimbursement strategies, recognizing their critical contributions to public health, care coordination, and health equity. The findings offer a foundational tool for researchers, policymakers, and community organizations seeking to promote sustainable integration of CHWs into healthcare systems.

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