

# CHW Workforce Development Advisory Board Strategic Plan

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FLORIDA COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER COALITION

# Community Health Worker (CHW) Workforce Development Strategic Plan 2022

## Background information on CHWs in Florida

Community Health Workers (CHWs) have been used to increase access to quality health care for decades both in the United States and around the world. CHWs may be known by other job titles such as outreach worker, health navigator, and more\*, but their primary characteristic is their function as a trusted member of the community they serve. That trusted relationship is particularly helpful in helping people navigate the impact of discrimination and poverty, frequently experienced by people with low incomes and without regular healthcare access.

In Florida, during the mid-2000s, a group in Miami affiliated with the Collins Center developed a full curriculum for CHWs. Several community-based organizations hired CHWs for work with migrant farm workers, and for recruitment for university-initiated community based participatory research. However, these organizations were local, and no statewide approach had been developed.

In 2010, the Cancer Control Program in the Florida Department of Health received a CDC grant focused on Policy, Systems and Environmental (PSE) Change, and one of its components was to increase the utilization of CHWs to support access to cancer screenings and care. A statewide Steering Committee was established along with workgroups on Curriculum, Practice, Policy, Research and Networking-Communication. During the next five years, the Florida CHW Coalition grew to include more than 600 members. It sponsored annual two-day Summits that attracted more than 300 attendees. The Steering Committee transitioned to a Board of Directors and obtained 501(c) (3) tax-exempt status. The Board and Coalition created a mission statement: “The Florida CHW Coalition, Inc. is a statewide partnership dedicated to the support and promotion of the CHW profession through collaboration, training, advocacy and leadership development.” The Coalition’s vision is to be the leader for support and advocacy for Community Health Workers and their allies.

Another significant accomplishment concerned certification. The Coalition established the Certification Implementation Workgroup and began working with the Florida Certification Board to set core competencies and a training and grandparenting process to allow experienced CHWs to document their knowledge and become certified due to their portfolio experience. Regional informational trainings were conducted around the state along with recorded webinars, resulting in more than 450 certifications in the first year.

Through its annual summits, monthly virtual meetings, regular educational trainings and connecting with the broader health community, the Coalition increased opportunities for agencies to work together to promote health prevention and health management activities. The FCHWC serves as a potent network to contribute to program development, service utilization and to address various social aspects (housing, transportation, employment, etc.) that intersect with health conditions and access to care.

Data about the health outcomes of benefits of CHW utilization is plentiful, particularly about chronic disease management and cancer prevention and treatment. CHWs play a key role in community-based participatory research, further proving their effectiveness as part of the health care team. One example is the University of Florida College of Pharmacy collaboration on training for medication therapy management for CHWs conducting home visits that had significant improvements in blood pressure and diabetes management.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need to use CHWs for resource connection, health education about vaccines and contact tracing. The federal government provided grant funding for Florida's Health Planning Councils, led by the Southeast Health Planning Council based in Palm Beach County, to hire CHWs. Other community-based organizations (CBOs) also enlisted CHWs to conduct outreach and provide important access to resources, health information and providers.

## **2022 Workforce Development Project**

A statewide subject matter expert advisory board\* was established. The Advisory Board met six times and their thoughts comprised the topics included in this Workforce Development Strategic Plan. This Strategic Plan will be a living document on the Florida CHW Coalition website and will be updated as implementation steps are completed.

This Workforce Development Strategic Plan focuses three areas regarding CHW workforce growth and sustainability: Marketing, Education/Training, and Reimbursement.

Simultaneous to the 2022 Workforce Development Project, the FCHWC conducted a census of CHWs and CHW employers. Data from the census will also be incorporated into this Strategic Plan since it will inform various elements of marketing and education planning.

### ***Marketing Plan to promote CHWs***

Distribution of the Florida CHW Toolkit is the primary part of the 2022 marketing plan. The CHW Toolkit that was developed in an earlier strategic planning process in 2019 is being shortened and redesigned. It will be designed by a graphic arts subcontractor and will be distributed and available in both digital and print form. The first distribution will be a news release to various organizations announcing the availability of the Toolkit and encouraging including the link to the Toolkit in their own media components (newsletters, e-newsletters, web sites, etc.) and will occur in July and August 2022. Following the initial announcement, additional announcements will be made on a quarterly basis. Revisions will be made as feedback is received and the Coalition will update the printed edition of the Toolkit biannually. The digital version will be the primary version, but a small number of print copies will be available for those without digital access.

**Objective:** Create and disseminate a Florida CHW Toolkit to provide employers and CHWs with essential resources to promote and grow the CHW profession

**Action:** Contract with Graphic Designer for Provider Toolkit for distribution in both digital and print formats (July 2022)

**Action:** Write a news release announcing the availability of the Toolkit and send to the following organizations for inclusion in their electronic and/or print newsletters:

Statewide promotion via community partners as recommended by advisory board members:

- Florida Association of Community Health Centers
- Florida Association of Free and Charitable Clinics
- Florida Hospital Association
- Florida Nursing Association
- Health Planning Councils (11 offices)
- Area Health Education Centers Network
- Florida Community Health Worker Coalition
- Florida Department of Health County Health Departments (CHDs)
- Office of Minority Health and Health Equity

Department of Children and Families (My Florida MyFamily.com)  
Other state agencies as relevant  
University CHW projects: UM, UF, USF, SPCC, MDCC  
Florida Historically Black Colleges and Universities:  
Florida A&M University, Bethune-Cookman University, Florida Memorial University, Edward Waters College  
Florida Asthma Coalition  
Diabetes Self-Management Organizations  
YMCA/YWCA  
Rural Health Networks (9 networks)  
Florida Rural Health Association  
Emergency Management (Red Cross and others)  
Hospital Emergency Response Coalitions (HERC)  
Managed Care Associations  
Florida Medical Associations/Societies (and active County Medical Associations)  
Medical societies for ethnic minorities:  
African American:  
Central Florida Medical Society  
Northeast Florida Medical Society  
T. Leroy Jefferson Medical Society (Palm Beach)  
James W Bridges Medical Society (Miami)  
Hispanic/Latino:  
Tampa Bay Latin American Medical Society  
National Hispanic Medical Association Conference – Florida Chapter  
Hispanic Health Initiative  
State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) agencies and Project Area Workgroups (PAWs)  
Faith Based Organizations, e.g., Faith in Florida  
Linked In  
CareerSource Florida Network (24 workforce boards)

**Action:** identify appropriate contact info for list above (July and August 2022)

**Action:** produce statewide webinar to present Toolkit, post recording on FCHWC website (July 2022)

**Action:** include Toolkit introduction and announcements in all regional and statewide in person or virtual or hybrid programs the FCHWC hosts and/or attends

**Action:** translate Toolkit into Spanish and Haitian Creole (July 2022) and add availability to all announcements

**Exploratory Action:** short video creation by CHWs about their work to place on Instagram and/or TikTok and other social media platforms such as What's App

**Exploratory Action:** identify marketing/media professionals to develop short video to explain CHW role

### ***Education/Training Plan***

CHWs include people with a range of educational experiences, from those who have knowledge through their lived experience, to those who have completed training programs to those who may have advanced degrees. The common factor is that CHWs know the community they serve, and have the skills to impart that knowledge to connect people to resources they don't know about. CHWs are educated in core competencies and in their roles and responsibilities as part of a health care team or as a representative of an organization promoting health.

## **Benefits and barriers to certification**

Certification has definite benefits: employers can be assured that their hire has met standards and has been appropriately trained. At the same time, some CHWs provide excellent community service without certification. Certification can be a barrier for recent immigrants, people with less formal education, people with low incomes and for people who have been involved in the criminal legal system. The FCB allows people with prior arrests to get certification if the infraction was not of a sexual nature and the candidate has not had subsequent or recent criminal charges. Due to these barriers, when the FCHWC began discussing certification, consensus was firmly behind maintaining voluntary certification in Florida so as not to exclude people with effective CHW skills and assets who are not certified

Another barrier to certification is paying for training from FCB certified education providers (CEP). The Florida CHW Coalition has become a CEP and is committed to supporting access to free or supported training. The Palm Beach Medical Society has established a training program and is a CEP. Their training program costs \$33/hour, demonstrating how important support for training is especially for people with low incomes.

Additional barriers have been reported with the certifying agency such as not being assigned a specialist to work with or having trouble dealing with that specialist. Additionally, paying for re-certification can be difficult since CHW positions may be grant funded and time limited. Penalties for missing a deadline are quite steep and CHWs have reported opting out of recertification due to the high cost of late fees. Data collected in the 2022 census will help to inform the extent of these problems, so this section of this plan will change once that data is analyzed.

Both tangible and intangible benefits are connected to certification. Certification documents and attests to competencies and ethics and confers confidence for expectation of professional behaviors and attributes. Various employers may provide higher compensation as a result. Less tangible benefit is recognition for talents based on community knowledge and lived experience, and the self-worth and pride in one's efforts that accompanies acknowledgement of a job well done.

## **Promotion of trainings**

One training per quarter per region is conducted. These trainings will encompass chronic disease training as well as training about certification, so each CHW is aware of the certification process. The trainings are listed on the website training calendar. Printed flyers are also be distributed to the respective regional coordinators as well as the Coalition membership. A separate educational portal is being established that will include self-paced training modules accessible to CHWs to complete training modules on their own time and at their own pace. These modules will be monitored for efficiency and thorough completion. Each CHW will receive a certificate of completion at the end of each module. Supervisors will also be able to view the progress of the training to be aware of the CHW training status for each module.

The trainings are placed on our social media platforms as well as included within the monthly newsletters and brochures.

The Department of Labor has recognized CHWs (along with other health care workers) and has announced a new Apprenticeship program. CareerSource Florida can assist CBOs or educational institutions with applying for participation in the Apprenticeship Program.

- 1. Objective: To support CHW education and certification through promoting trainings and by advocating for increased opportunities for training and education**

**Action:** Produce webinar for a CHW meeting on the Department of Labor Apprenticeship Program with CareerSource Florida.

**Action:** Identify appropriate agencies and/or institutions who could be interested in Apprenticeship.

**Action:** Add Apprenticeship Programs to the activities covered by the Practice/Curriculum Subgroup.

**Action:** Catalog and advertise training opportunities. This catalog will identify all the Approved Education Providers in Florida and should include a map of where they are when training is conducted in person. Catalog will be available in September or October 2022.

**Exploratory Action:** Contact the Arizona CHW Association that provides its own certification program. Discover what processes other states have developed regarding certification, using the National CHW Association as a resource. Consider having the Florida CHW Coalition explore a certification program that is independent of the FCB. Some other states use their Department of Health as the certifying agency, while Ohio uses the Nursing Board.

### **Roles of CHWs**

Roles and Responsibilities and promoting understanding of CHW expertise is included in the CHW Toolkit, which is the primary tool for marketing CHWs. The CHW Toolkit has information for both CHWs and prospective employers. [Provider Toolkit 2022](#)

The 2022 Florida Legislature passed HB183, which supports the DOH Office of Minority Health and Health Equity (OMHHE) and outlines providing a health equity liaison in each county. It also specifies promoting the use of CHWs to expand health equity throughout the state. The OMHHE will use the CHW Toolkit to promote CHWS.

Telehealth: During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, telephone contact with clients was an essential tool CHW used to maintain or establish relationships with target populations. Telehealth will continue to be an important outreach tool.

### **CHW Career Lattice**

When the initial Certification Implementation Working Group met, discussion included eventually establishing tiers for various levels of CHW skills, but further action was deferred to a later time. The Advisory Board agreed that CHWs should be able to be recognized as their level of competency grows and they master new sets of health education learning. For example, some CHWs focus on cancer treatment navigation while others are experts in diabetes management. Other CHWs decide they want to further their education and pursue nursing or medical assistance positions. Having a tiered certification process would assist career advancement. Developing these ideas further will start in the second year of this Strategic Plan.

Resources for exploring development of a Career Lattice:

- Texas DOH has a tiered program.
- Check with the NACHW for other states that may have tiered approaches to career advancement.
- NASHP, MHP Salud and other organizations will be helpful to contact.

### ***CHW reimbursement/payment issues***

The Advisory Board heard from Carl Rush in one of their meetings. He is a long-time promoter of CHWs and a consultant with the National Association of CHWs. He presented an overview of reimbursement issues, focusing particularly on a State Plan Amendment (SPA) that is presented to CMS. Delaware had just submitted its SPA, and Florida could adapt an application learning from their submission.

That process identifies CCM (Chronic Care Management) codes as well as other CPT codes used for billing. FQHCs use a Prospective Payment System instead of billing through Medicaid CPT codes.

As the health care delivery model continues to stress prevention more than fee for service, and as CHWs start to address the social determinants of health, exploring alternative payment and reimbursement models will continue to be a strategic priority.

2. **Objective:** To form a CHW Reimbursement Workgroup to advocate for Medicaid reimbursement, as well as exploring other reimbursement options

**Action:** Establish a workgroup to approach AHCA about a SPA submission using Delaware as a template. Explore using Carl Rush as a consultant to lead that workgroup. The CHW Reimbursement Workgroup will be established by August 2022. It will meet with AHCA representatives in September 2022 and will develop its full agenda and timeline at that time.

**Exploratory action:** Billing can be quite time consuming, and CBOs who use CHWs may not have internal capacity to take on the burden of billing. The Florida CHW Coalition could explore establishing providing billing support as one of its programmatic functions in year two or three of this plan.

**Action:** Conduct Return on investment study to document CHW value in Florida. Additionally, connect with additional study on Return on Community Value from increased health access and attention to social determinants of health.

**Action:** Connect with Medicaid Managed Care Plans (MMCP) and identify which ones already include CHWs as part of their healthcare team. Explore sponsoring a specific meeting with the MMCPs about the value of CHWs.

**Action:** Add CHWs to the agenda of an AHCA MMCP Quality quarterly meeting.

**Identifying partners to increase the employability network of CHWs:** see Toolkit distribution list above. Prioritize 3-5 organizations per year to solidify the employability network for CHWs. These organizations will be CBOs and healthcare service providers (such as clinics, hospitals, managed care organizations). Managed Care organizations would be important to prioritize in this selection process.

### ***Proposed timeline for implementation of marketing, education, and reimbursement plans***

#### One Year

Education and Training catalog & Schedule  
Provider Toolkit distribution  
Establishment reimbursement workgroup to work with AHCA  
Certification data and remedial solutions  
Distribute FCHWC Policy Brief to collaborating partners and interested stakeholders

#### Two Year

Continue marketing – social marketing review  
Consider collaboration with OMHHE for potential contract policies regarding CHWs  
Begin planning for Career Lattice – tiered certification  
Identify graduate student for Return-on-Investment study  
Reimbursement workgroup continues to meet

#### Five Year

Career Lattice established  
Reimbursements in place  
Coalition involved in certification  
Coalition involved in assisting CBOs in reimbursement

<b>Timeline</b>				
<b>ACTION ITEMS – MARKETING PLAN</b>	<b>Quarter 1</b>	<b>Quarter 2</b>	<b>Quarter 3</b>	<b>Quarter 4</b>
Contract with Graphic Designer for Provider Toolkit for distribution in both digital and print formats	July 2022			
Write a news release announcing the availability of the Toolkit and send to the identified organizations for inclusion in their electronic and/or print newsletters	July 2022			
Identify appropriate contact info for list above	July/August 2022			
produce statewide webinar to present Toolkit, post recording on FCHWC website	July 2022			
Include Toolkit introduction and announcements in all regional and statewide in person or virtual or hybrid programs the FCHWC hosts and/or attends	Ongoing			
translate Toolkit into Spanish and Haitian Creole and add availability to all announcements	July 2022			
<b>ACTION PLAN – REGIONAL TRAININGS</b>				
East Central Region Quarterly Training	August 30, 2022- Chronic Disease Training September 6, 2022-Certification Training			
North Central Region – Regional Training	September 19, 2022 – Chronic Disease Training	October 19, 2022 – Certification Training		
Northwest Region- Regional Training		December 2022		
Southeast Region – Regional Training				January 24, 2022
Northeast Region – Regional Training		November 4, 2022		
<b>ACTION PLAN - APPRENTICESHIP</b>				
Identify appropriate agencies and/or institutions who could be interested in Apprenticeship.		October 2022		
Schedule and produce webinar for a CHW meeting on the Department of Labor. Apprenticeship Program with CareerSource Florida		November 2022		
Add Apprenticeship Programs to the activities covered by the Practice/Curriculum Subgroup	July 2022			
Catalog and advertise training opportunities. This catalog will identify all the Approved Education Providers in Florida and should include a map of where they are when training is conducted in person.		October 2022		
<b>ACTION PLAN – REIMBURSEMENT WG</b>				
Establish a workgroup to approach AHCA about a SPA submission using Delaware as a template.	August 2022			



Explore using Carl Rush as a consultant to lead that workgroup.				
Workgroup will meet with AHCA representatives and will develop its full agenda and timeline at that time.	September 2022			
Conduct Return on investment study to document CHW value in Florida. Additionally, connect with additional study on Return on Community Value from increased health access and attention to social determinants of health.		November 2022		
Connect with Medicaid Managed Care Plans (MMCP) and identify which ones already include CHWs as part of their healthcare team. Explore sponsoring a specific meeting with the MMCPs about the value of CHWs.		November 2022		
Add CHWs to the agenda of an AHCA MMCP Quality quarterly meeting.			January 2023	

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# Appendices

## Community Health Worker Titles

Abuse Counselor  
Access Worker  
Accompagnateurs (Partners in Health Haiti)  
Acompañantes (Mexico)  
Adult Case Manager  
Addiction Treatment Specialist  
Asthma Outreach Worker  
Asthma Educator  
Asthma Family Support Worker  
Asthma Peer Educator  
Aunties (Hawaii)  
Bilingual Community Advocate  
Bilingual Family Outreach Specialist  
Bilingual Family Advocate  
Birth Assistant (Doula)  
Birth Attendant  
Birthing Family Support Worker  
Case Management Technician  
Care Coordinator  
Care Transitions Coordinator  
**Caregiver** (All ages and stages of life)  
Career Coach  
Case Worker  
Case Managers (SNAP)  
Certified Application Assistant (CAA)  
Certified Recovery Specialist  
Community Activist  
Community Advocate  
Community Care Specialist (PHI- COVID)  
Community Care Worker (CCW)  
Community Coordinator  
Community Connection Resource Spec. (ACES Aware)  
Community Connector Specialist (CCS) (Kaiser, Molina)  
Community Dental Health Coordinators (CDHC)  
Community Health Associate  
Community Follow-Up Worker  
Community Health Adviser (1998 study)  
Community Health Advocate  
Community Health Aide  
Community Health Coach  
Community Health Coordinator  
Community Health Educator (CHE)  
Community Health Navigators  
Community Health Organizer (CHO Pennsylvania)  
Community Health Outreach Worker (CHOW)  
Community Health Partners  
Community Health Promotion and Awareness Interns  
Community Health Representative (CHR)  
Community Health Specialist

**Community Health Worker (CHW)**  
Community Liaison  
Community-Clinical Linkage Specialist (CCL)  
Community Mental Health Worker  
Community Navigator  
Community Organizer  
Community Outreach Manager  
Community Outreach Navigator  
Community Outreach Worker  
Community Social Worker  
Counselor  
Cultural Case Manager  
Cultural Counselor  
Cultural Interpreter  
Cultural Mediator  
Diabetes Community Outreach Coordinator  
Diabetes Education Associate  
Diabetes Education Mentor  
Diabetes Self-Management Support Associate  
Diabetes Self-Management Support Mentor  
Diabetes Educator  
Diabetes Family Support Worker  
Diabetes Navigator  
Direct Care Worker  
Discharge Planner  
Doula -Greek- "Women Who Serves" (Birth Assistant)  
Educator  
Eligibility Worker  
Enrollment Worker  
Family Advocate  
Family Education Coordinator  
Family Planning Counselor  
Family Support Worker  
Family Advocate  
Family Health Advocate  
Family Health Promoter  
Family Leadership Specialist  
Family Outreach Worker (FOW)  
Family Support Specialist  
Family Support Worker  
Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHV) Nepal  
Financial Counselor  
Frontline Health Worker  
Head Start Teacher Assistant  
Health Advisor  
Health Advocate  
Health Agent  
Health Ambassadors  
Health Assistant

Health Broker  
 Health Communicator  
 Health Educator  
 Health Extension Workers  
 Health Facilitator  
 Health/Nutrition Support Worker  
 Health Information Specialist  
 Health Insurance Counselor  
 Health Promoter  
 Health Liaison  
 Health Specialist  
 Health Workers  
 HIV/AIDS Educator  
 HIV/AIDS Family Support Worker  
 HIV Peer Advocate  
 HIV Prevention Coordinator  
 HIV Risk Assessment/Disclosure Counselor  
 HIV Service Coordinator  
 HIV/STD Prevention Counselor  
 Home Care Worker  
 Home Visitor  
 Home-Based Clinician Intake Specialist  
 Homeless Advocate  
 In Home Support Specialist (IHSS)  
 Independent Living Services Manager  
 Informal Counselor  
 Intake Coordinator  
 Intake Assistant  
 Interpreter  
 La Leche Peer Counselor (Breastfeeding support)  
 Lay Health Advisor (LHA)  
 Lay Health Worker (LHW)  
 Lay Health Advocate  
 Lay Health Worker (LHW)  
 Maternal and Child Health Case Manager  
 Medical Concierge  
 Medical Interpreter  
 Medical Representative  
 Mental Health First Aid Responder  
 Mental Health Worker  
 Men's Health Specialist  
 Men's Health Worker  
 Multicultural Health Brokers  
 Natural Researcher  
 Navigator  
 Neighborhood Health Advocate  
 Nutrition Adviser  
 Nutrition Assistant  
 Nutrition Educator  
 Nutrition Support Worker  
 Mental Health Aide  
 Outreach Advocate  
 Outreach Case Manager  
 Outreach Coordinator  
 Outreach Educator  
 Outreach Specialist  
 Outreach Worker  
 Parent Aide  
 Parent Liaison  
 Part Time Project Associates  
 Participant Advocate  
 Patient Experts  
 Patient Navigator  
 Patient Services Representative  
 Peer Advocate  
 Peer Counselor  
 Peer Educator  
 Peer Health Advisor  
 Peer Health Educator  
 Peer Leader  
**Peer Support Specialist (PSS) (SB 803)**  
 Peer Wellness Specialist (PWS)  
 Personal Health Navigator (PHN) Oregon  
 Physical Activity Specialist  
 Preconception Peer Educator (Dept. of Minority Health)  
 Pre-Perinatal Health Specialists  
 Prevention Specialist  
 Program Coordinator  
 Promotor(a)  
**Promotor(a) de Salud**  
 Promotor  
 Public Health Advisor  
 Public Health Aide  
 Public Service Aide  
 Roving Listener  
 Self-Management Diabetes Coordinator  
 SDOH Specialist  
 Social Determinants of Health Specialists  
 Social Worker Assistant  
 Street Outreach Worker  
 Team Advocate, Level I  
 Team Captains (Peer support diabetes II and BP self-management)  
 Health Extenders  
 Village Health Workers (Malawi)  
 Volunteers  
 Volunteer Health Worker  
 Wellness Ambassadors  
 Wellness Guide  
 Women's Health Specialist  
 Youth Development Specialist  
 Youth Worker-Program Assistant  
 Youth Peer Counselor/Youth Worker

## **CHW Workforce Development Advisory Board Members**

Rebecca DeLorenzo, Chief Executive Officer  
Florida Association of Free & Charitable Clinics

Debbie Hawkins, UF AHEC Associate Director  
Florida Area Health Education Center Network

Andrea Stephenson-Royster, CEO  
Health Council of SE Florida & Okeechobee Rural Health Network

Cheryl D. Love, Chief Clinical and Patient Safety Officer  
Florida Hospital Association

Natasha McCoy, HE Strategic Plan Consultant for Dr. Owen Quinonez, Health Equity Officer  
Florida Department of Health

Jennifer Sousa, Deputy Chief  
Florida Department of Health - Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention

Linda Carmona Sanchez, Director of Grant Management & Outreach  
Florida Association of Community Health Centers

Shauna Houston, Program Manager  
Florida Department of Health - Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention

Melissa Thibodeau, President  
Florida Rural Health Association & Executive Director of Heartland Rural Health Network

Susan Bosse, EDP-Director of Business & Workforce Development  
CareerSource

Judith Dunn, Director of Business Services (Palm Beach)  
FCHWC Policy Co-Chair | CareerSource

Karen Harewood, Director of Business Services (Palm Beach)  
FCHWC Policy Co-Chair | Palm Beach Medical Society