



# Illinois Public Health Association

*The voice of public health in Illinois.*

## **e-News Release**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Illinois Public Health Association Awarded \$500,000 in the Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) Omnibus Appropriations Act**

**SPRINGFIELD, IL** – The Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA) will receive \$500,000 in funding to expand its Community Health Worker Training Programs. The funding was secured as part of more than \$182 million in Congressionally directed spending projects for Illinois for Fiscal Year 2023 through the Omnibus Appropriations Act by U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL). This investment will help IPHA to grow the community and public health workforce.

“IPHA has been a longtime leader in advancing health equity efforts in communities throughout Illinois, especially through the development of career pathways and training for Community Health Workers (CHWs). This funding opportunity will ensure IPHA, along with our partners, can continue our CHW work and support Illinois communities in addressing their resident’s health care needs,” said Tom Hughes, IPHA Executive Director.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, IPHA and its partner organizations were able to train Community Health Workers to administer COVID-19 relief in 92 of the 102 counties in Illinois. The CHWs trained and hired through the project worked with community-based organizations and federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) to fulfill requests from residents such as reliable information about the COVID-19 virus, testing and vaccines; food security; access to healthcare and medicine; safe shelter for quarantine and isolation; assistance with applying for public programs such as WIC, TANF, and Medicaid; and access to behavioral health services. More than 137,000 resource requests were administered during the pandemic phase of the CHW program. Although much work has been completed, more is needed. The new funding awarded to IPHA will allow further expansion of CHW training and ensure more trained and supported CHWs are working in Illinois’ communities.

According to Tracey Smith, DNP, MS, IPHA Director of Community Health, “CHWs are trusted healthcare messengers and navigators who live and work in the communities they serve. CHWs connect community residents with the resources they need to manage their health, address chronic disease issues, and access available services and resources. Not only do CHWs improve health outcomes, programs like IPHA’s are able to facilitate hiring opportunities for trained CHWs which results in new local economic opportunities and promotes health equity. This project will focus on recruitment, training and developing career pathways for CHWs in our state.”

“CHWs are truly transformative in the delivery of health care services. This grant award will ensure IPHA can sustain, expand, and continue its efforts to transform the community and public health workforce,” said Hana Hinkle, PhD, MPH, IPHA President. “IPHA looks forward to working with our partners throughout the state to further develop CHWs who are well-trained and equipped to meet the needs of our communities.”

**Illinois Public Health Association**

The Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA) is the oldest and largest public health association in the State of Illinois. As one of the largest affiliates of the American Public Health Association, IPHA is widely recognized as a leader in the field of public health advocacy, health education and promotion. With a mission to lead in the enhancement and support of the public health system and the practice of public health, focused on health equity and improved health throughout Illinois, IPHA strives for excellence through a variety of programming and advocacy efforts. [www.ipha.com](http://www.ipha.com).

For more information about the FY2023 Omnibus Appropriations Act, including a full list of funded projects in Illinois, visit [Press Release | Press Releases | Newsroom | U.S. Senator Dick Durbin of Illinois \(senate.gov\)](#)

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