

Office of Community Health

Centering community voices in health care practice, education, and research.

OUR MISSION

To braid together the wisdom of community partners, family physicians, and scholars in pursuit of health equity.

OUR VISION

To build and sustain trusting partnerships among community partners, family physicians, and scholars to enable all to be thriving.

Contact Us

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What Is the Role of the OCH?

We center community voices in health care research, education, and practice by

- Building relationships with community partners
- Educating & training the health care workforce
- Engaging in research, evaluation, and quality improvement initiatives for health programs
- Advocating for systems and policy change

Why Do We Need the OCH?

Communities are experts in their own strengths, needs, and social conditions.

Research has established that 80 percent of what impacts health is determined outside the clinic. Nevertheless, it is the clinicians, researchers, and educators who often define health issues and set the agenda for improving health from within clinic walls. Centering community voices is the key to a vibrant, thriving society where health systems equitably support wellbeing for all. If the work of health systems and universities can be redirected to engage with community-specific barriers, assets, knowledge, and opportunities, we can collaboratively construct new systems to promote health for all people.



*Bringing together the expertise
of key players to promote healthy
communities where everyone can
thrive for generations.*

Help the OCH Fulfill Its Mission

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS

We are working in Dane County to provide community health worker training and resources to improve two-way partnerships and learning between physicians and community health workers by:

- Building capacity—providing opportunities for local leaders to become credentialed CHWs as a key strategy for meeting the needs of our community and advancing CHWs' professional development.
- Building power—elevating CHWs as leaders where collective knowledge is shared and relationships are built with topic-area experts.
- Building spaces to be in partnership—creating ways for physicians and CHWs to be in dialogue where all involved can learn from each other.

EDUCATE AND TRAIN THE HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE

We've developed a portfolio of educational materials to teach health professionals locally and nationally how to become community-responsive partners and advocates. Funding could expand our local and national collaborations to further build physician and community capacity to address the social determinants of health.

ADVOCACY

We aim to garner and develop support for recommendations to policymakers of the university, local health systems, and beyond to adopt strategies that support equitable, socially accountable partnerships, education, research, and clinical practice.

RESEARCH, EVALUATION, AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

We strive to promote research that integrates patient and community voices into best practices for health care delivery. We also serve as a resource hub to connect faculty and staff in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health with community research partners. Increased funding would enable training more physicians on shifting narratives and expanding our research team's role in evaluating more of our initiatives through and equity lens.

How can you help?

Your donation will make it possible for us to continue this important work. Donor funding will support educational opportunities, outreach activities, and collaborative community-based projects. To discuss a contribution, please contact Jerome Garrett, MBA, FACHE, at jerome.garrett@fammed.wisc.edu