



# Community Health Workers in Action on the Research and Practice Frontline



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# What do CHWs do?

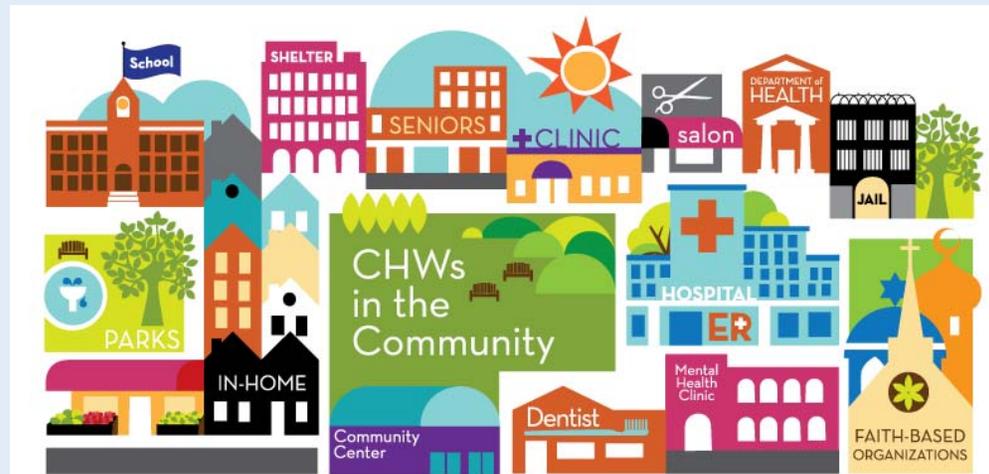
Capacity building

Community-based research

Health education  
and outreach

Individual and  
community  
advocacy

Care coordination  
and patient  
navigation



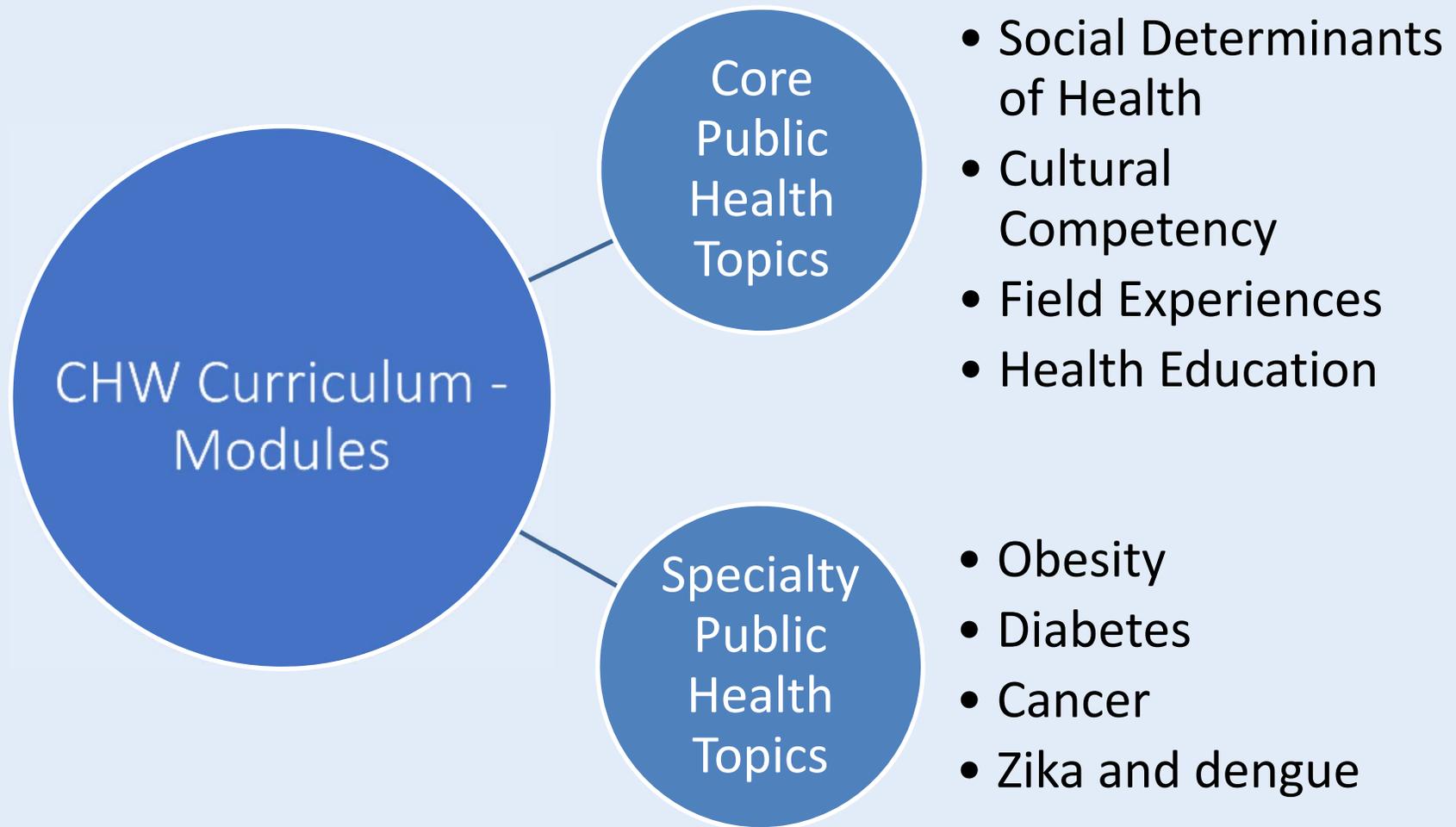
Assisting with access  
to medical and  
non-medical  
services

Social support

Cultural mediation



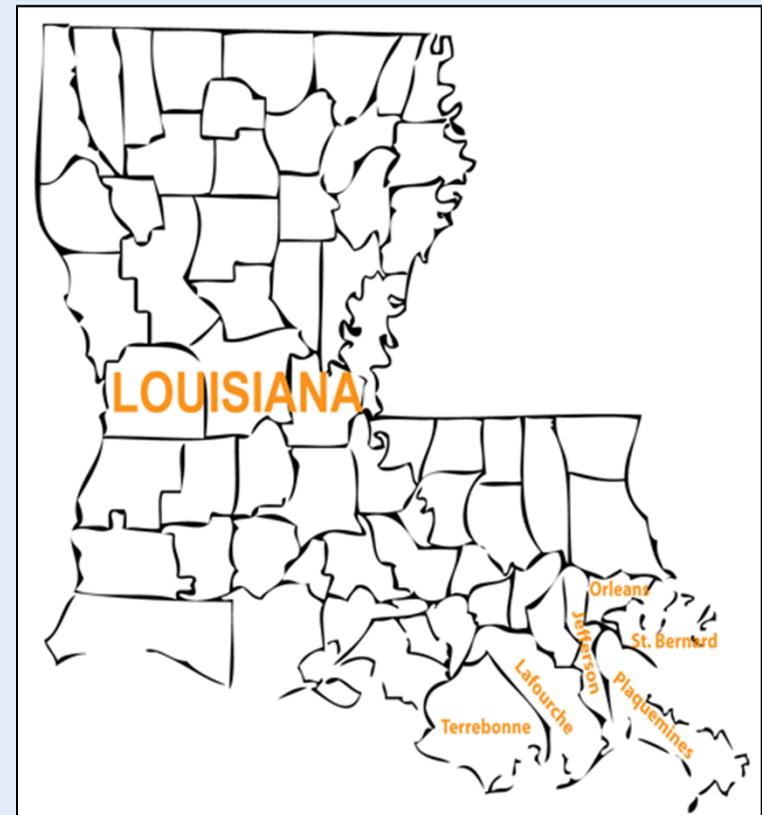
# CHW Training



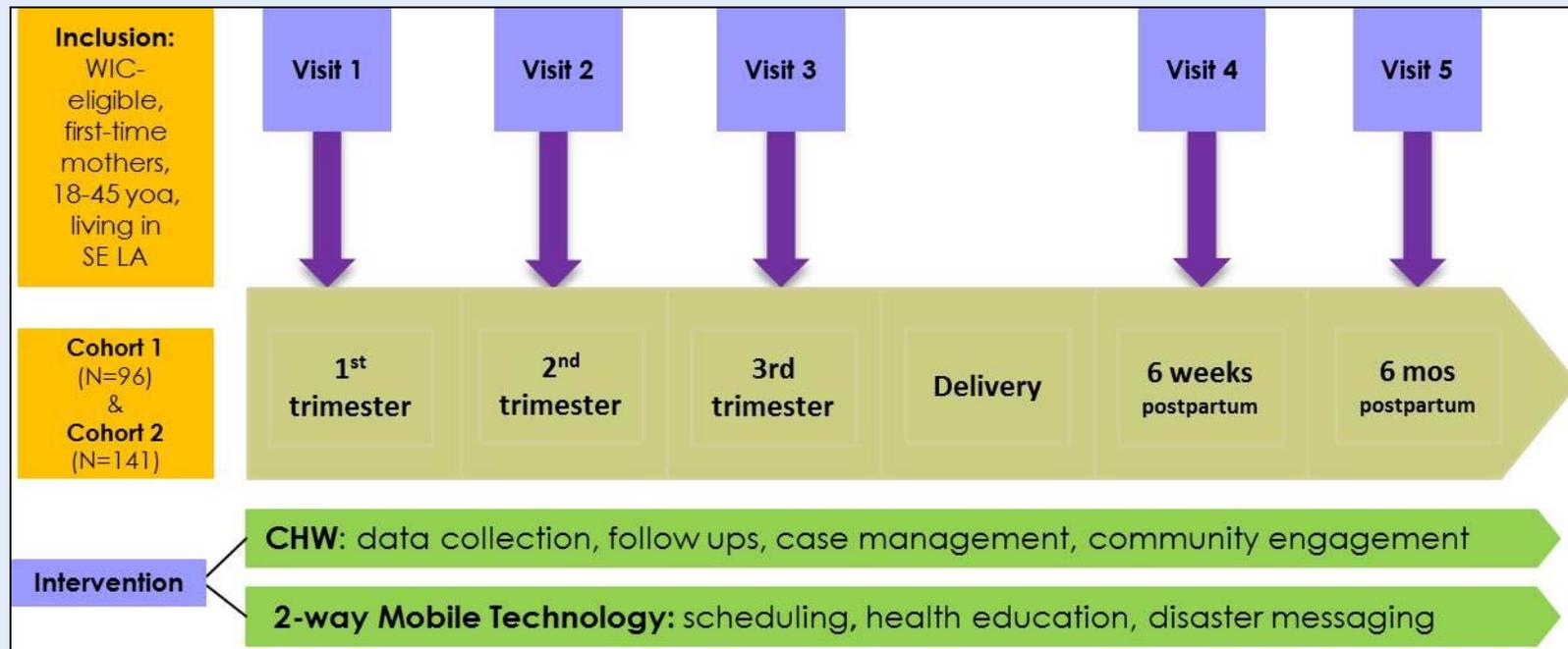
# Gulf Resilience on Women's Health (GROWH)

Four overall aims for 3 research projects and the CODC:

- Determine the effects of the DWH disaster, combined with the other adversities faced by the area, on mental health and reproductive outcomes among pregnant women and women of reproductive age living in affected parishes in Louisiana.
- Characterize exposures of pregnant women and women of reproductive age to selected contaminants through exposure routes of concern to communities - specifically seafood consumption and air.
- Examine the interactions of environmental and social disparities on the health of pregnant women and women of reproductive age.
- Utilize community-based participatory research and outreach strategies to strengthen community resilience in vulnerable Gulf Coast populations.

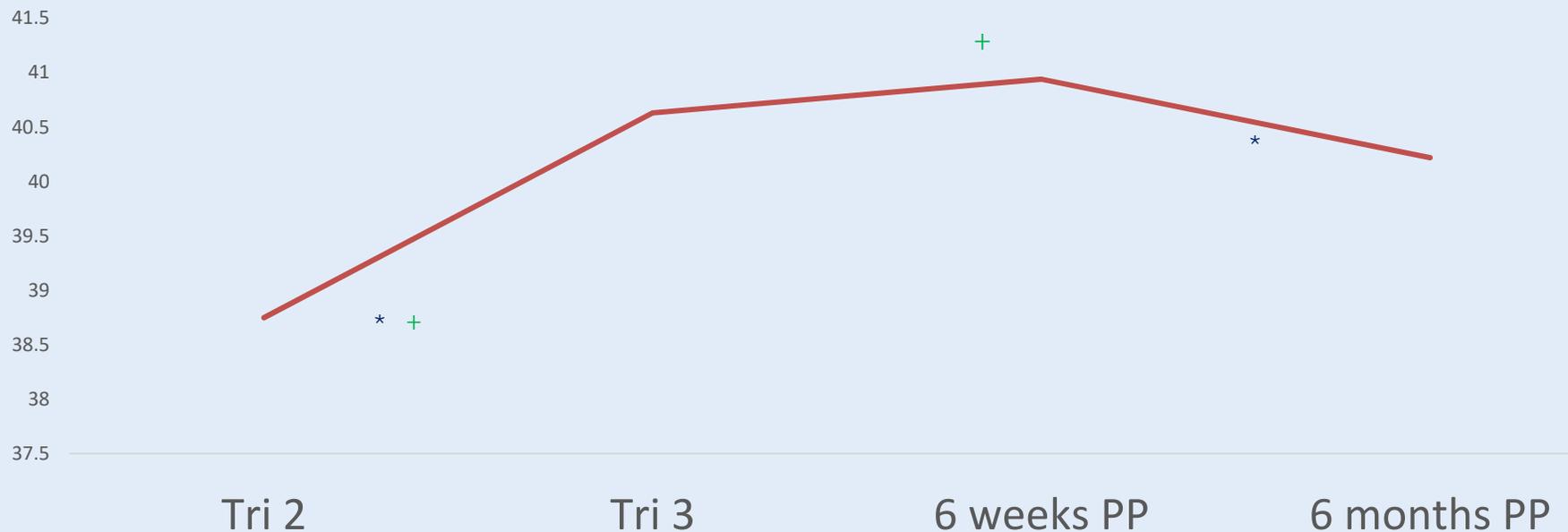


# GROWH Project



# Therapeutic Relationship CHW-Participant

## Scale to Assess Therapeutic Relationship (STAR)



# Associations between nonchemical stressors measured at 6 weeks postpartum and birth outcomes

Non-chemical Stressors	Birth Outcome		t-test	p-value
	Normal	Adverse		
Positive Interaction with CHW	17.50 <sub>+3.58</sub>	17.44 <sub>+3.49</sub>	0.07	0.94
Negative Interaction with CHW	9.28 <sub>+3.00</sub>	10.32 <sub>+1.70</sub>	-2.16	0.03
Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale	4.18 <sub>+3.95</sub>	6.28 <sub>+4.39</sub>	-2.25	0.03
Psychological Distress Scale	9.12 <sub>+3.10</sub>	10.92 <sub>+3.89</sub>	-2.38	0.02
State Anxiety	31.49 <sub>+8.16</sub>	36.36 <sub>+10.74</sub>	-2.40	0.02
Physical Functioning (Sf12)	54.69 <sub>+7.26</sub>	49.34 <sub>+10.81</sub>	2.32	0.03
Mental Functioning (Sf12)	41.19 <sub>+5.68</sub>	39.49 <sub>+6.42</sub>	1.26	0.21

# Comparison of average EPDS scores between CHW- and non-CHW cohorts at 6 months postpartum

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>CHW</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean±Std Dev</i>	<i>p-value</i>
	Overall/non-stratified	No	58	6.26±6.16	0.02
		Yes	107	4.15±3.71	
<i>Income</i>	<10,000	No	16	5.38±6.02	0.37
		Yes	53	3.91±3.69	
	>10,000	No	33	6.36±5.74	0.15
		Yes	45	4.69±3.95	
<i>Marital Status</i>	Married/partner	No	24	4.29±3.95	0.94
		Yes	45	4.22±3.94	
	Single	No	31	7.52±7.14	0.02
		Yes	60	4.10±3.63	
<i>Race</i>	White Non-Hispanic	No	17	7.65±6.02	0.02
		Yes	26	4.00±3.97	
	Black non-Hispanic	No	26	5.92±7.09	0.31
		Yes	60	4.42±3.74	
	Other	No	7	6.14±5.24	0.16
		Yes	18	2.89±2.27	

# Culturally-informed Risk Perceptions

Threats in the environment	Frequency (%)
<b>Violence</b>	<b>55</b>
Hurricanes	55
Outdoor air	45
Drugs	40
Indoor air	35
Cigarette smoke	35
Reckless drivers	30
Floods	25
Money problems	25

## Stratified sample were asked:

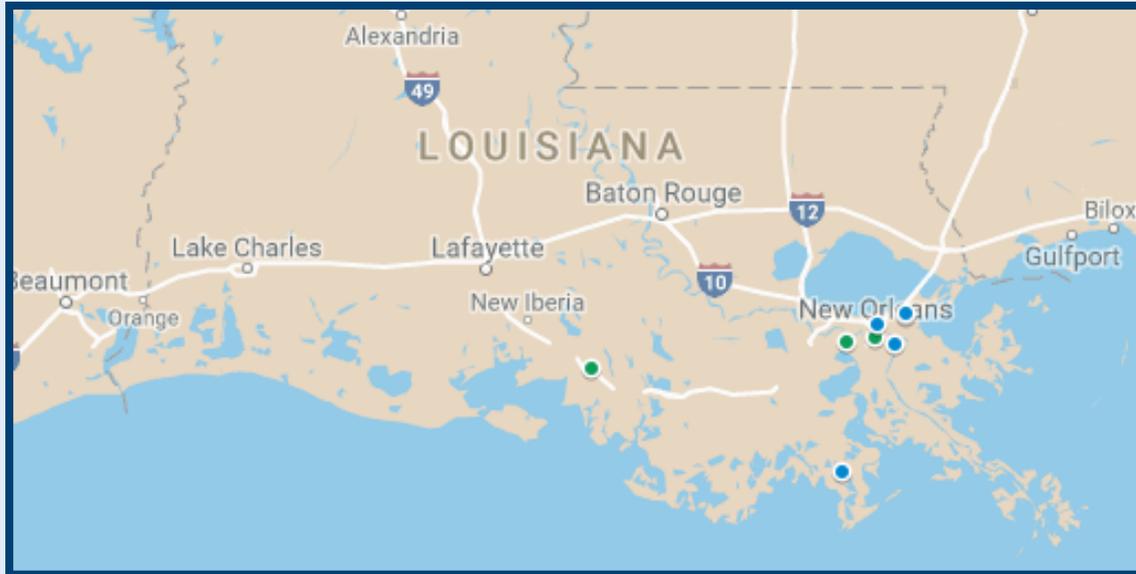
- “What are the things in the environment that threaten mothers and children in your community?”
- “What are ways that mothers prepare or respond to these things?”
- “Who do mothers typically turn to for each of these things?”

# GRHOP CHW Placement Program

- 18 subcontracts with FQHCs and community-based organizations to employ CHWs in AL, LA, FL, & MS
- Subcontracts included:
  - 1 full-time or 2 part-time CHWs
  - 10% effort for supervision of CHW
  - Travel, supplies, etc.
- Most organizations were funded for 4.5 yrs
- Keys to success:
  - Salary support (10%) for supervisors → Organizational buy-in
  - Extensive monitoring and evaluation → Maximized benefits



# CHW Placements in Louisiana



Organization	Parish	CBO/FQHC	Population focus
Jefferson Community Health Clinic	Jefferson	FQHC	Latino community
NOELA Community Health Center	Orleans	FQHC	Vietnamese community
Teche Action Clinic	Terrebonne & Lafourche	FQHC	All
Friends of Lafitte Greenway	Orleans	CBO	All
New Orleans Musicians' Clinic	Orleans	CBO	Uninsured musicians
Plaquemines Community CARE Center	Plaquemines	CBO	All
United Houma Nation	Terrebonne	CBO	Native American community
VIET	Orleans	CBO	Vietnamese community

# Vietnamese Initiatives in Economic Training (VIET)



- Resource center for minority residents in Louisiana
  - Mainly Vietnamese-Americans
- Located in New Orleans East
- Educational and economic training programs
- One-stop shop
- Importance of being from the community
  - Need strong familiarity with community layout and available resources
  - Helps clients connect and open up

# CHWs at VIET: Huyen Tran

- Link clients to resources in community
- Help clients navigate the healthcare system
  - Health insurance enrollment
- Afterschool programs and summer camps
- Assistance in filing taxes
- Programming for elderly



# How do CHWs at VIET help bridge the cultural divide?

Address barriers related to LANGUAGE



# How do CHWs at VIET help bridge the cultural divide?

Address barriers related to AGE



# How do CHWs at VIET help bridge the cultural divide?

Address barriers related to LITERACY



# How do CHWs at VIET help bridge the cultural divide?

Facilitate ACCULTURATION  
(habits & customs)



# GRHOP Practice-based Research

- CHWs and CHW supervisors recently reported in interviews (n=42) that CHWs:
  - Facilitated clients' access to healthcare and other resources in the community
  - Improved community trust and rapport
  - Informed clinic programming to make it more relevant and effective
  - Increased the number of patients/clients seen through the CHW's organization
  - Alleviated medical staff from addressing clients' non-medical issues
- Enablers to CHW program success (Sherman et al., 2017) include:
  - Invested in local relationships and maintained strong presence in community
  - Prioritized outreach and tailored communication to appropriate channel
  - Streamlined existing resources
  - Leveraged existing partnerships
  - Provided transportation services and vouchers to clients
  - Established a clear operating plan and frequent communication within organization
- Organizational buy-in highlights the sustainability of the model
  - The majority of organizations will fund the CHW position after GRHOP funding ends

# Conclusions

- Next steps: Creating sustainability in research and practice
- Implications for:
  - **Science**: environmental health literacy will help improve CHW role in CBPR
  - **Policy**: value of citizen science
  - **Practice**: improve access to and quality of health services

# Thank you!

## Questions? Comments?

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