

New Mexico Medicaid Community Health Workers & Care Coordinators: *Explaining the Billing Differences*

What is a Community Health Worker?

Community Health Workers (also called Community Health Representatives or Promotoras) are frontline public health workers and critical members of health care delivery teams. They provide the social aspects of care that support and enhance the clinical activities that licensed health professionals, like doctors and nurses, perform.

CHW must:

1. **Certify** with New Mexico Department of Health.
2. **Enroll as a Medicaid provider** and obtain a National Provider Identifier (NPI) number.
3. **Credential with** one or more of the four Turquoise Care Managed Care Organization (MCO) in order to serve Medicaid managed care members.

CHWs may work independently, they may be employees of an MCO, or they may be employees a Community Based Organization (CBO).

Learn more about CHWs as Medicaid providers in this [CHW and CHR Explainer](#).

What is a Care Coordinator?

Care coordinators work with members to assess their physical, behavioral, and Health Related Social Needs and preferences, and then share this information with the member's care team to provide safe, appropriate, and effective health care options. The Turquoise Care health plans employ care coordinators with extensive training and experience with the diverse needs of their members. Care coordinators **do not bill** for their services. They are paid directly by the MCOs either as employees of MCOs or through contracts with MCOs.

Only care coordinators can conduct Comprehensive Needs Assessments and complete Comprehensive Care Plans.

CHWs AND CARE
COORDINATORS HAVE
SEPARATE BUT
OVERLAPPING SCOPES
OF WORK

CHWs may be care coordinators themselves, or they may work in tandem to strengthen the care coordinator's efforts, extend navigation support, and strengthen workforce resources. There are many services that both roles can provide. If a member has both, they can work together.

How Do CHWs Bill for Services?

Providers

- **Independent CHWs:** Independent CHWs bill Medicaid or the MCOs directly.
- **CHWs employed by CBOs, hospitals, or clinics:** These CHWs are paid by their employer. The employer submits claims to Medicaid or the MCOs.
- **CHWs employed by MCOs or working under delegated contracts:** These CHWs do not bill Medicaid.

Members

- **Fee for Service:** When a member is fee-for-service, the CHW or their employer will bill Medicaid directly.
- **Managed Care Members:** When a member has an MCO, the CHW or their employer will bill the MCO.

What is Delegated Care Coordination?

MCOs may delegate the responsibilities of care coordination to CBOs. In Turquoise Care, health plans are **required** to delegate care coordination for pregnant and postpartum members.

When MCOs contract with a CBO to provide delegated care coordination, tasks and responsibilities will be specified in the contract and reimbursed by the MCO. The CBO may not bill Medicaid for contracted services.

If a CBO employs CHWs and is also in a delegated contract with an MCO, the CHW cannot simultaneously work under contract with the MCO *and* bill Medicaid for the same service, with the same member, at the same time.

Care Coordination is an administrative function and **not a reimbursable Medicaid service.**