

# 10 WAYS COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS ASSIST IN OPIOID USE DISORDER (MOUD)



Community Health Workers (CHWs) play a vital role in supporting individuals with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD), especially those receiving Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) such as methadone, buprenorphine, or naltrexone. CHWs are a bridge between clinical care and community healing. Their involvement strengthens recovery outcomes and promotes dignity and empowerment for individuals with OUD.

## 1. Educating on MOUD & Recovery Options

CHWs provide clear, culturally appropriate information about OUD, medications, and recovery paths, helping reduce stigma and misinformation.

## 2. Building Trust Through Peer Relationships

As trusted community members, CHWs foster safe, non-judgmental spaces where individuals feel understood and supported.

## 3. Navigating Treatment Systems

They guide clients through enrollment in MOUD programs, coordinate appointments, and explain processes and paperwork.

## 4. Supporting Medication Adherence

CHWs offer reminders, check-ins, and practical solutions to help clients consistently take prescribed medications.

## 5. Promoting Harm Reduction

They educate on safer use practices, distribute naloxone, and connect clients with syringe services or overdose prevention tools.

## 6. Addressing Social Determinants of Health

By helping secure housing, food, transportation, or employment, CHWs reduce stressors that interfere with recovery.

## 7. Linking to Behavioral Health Services

CHWs connect individuals to mental health counseling, peer support groups, and trauma-informed care when needed.

## 8. Crisis De-escalation & Emotional Support

They provide a calm presence during distress and help link clients to emergency behavioral health services if needed.

## 9. Supporting Reentry & Recovery

For clients transitioning from incarceration or detox, CHWs help with continuity of care, reintegration, and stability.

## 10. Advocating for Client Needs

CHWs elevate the voices of clients in MOUD programs, ensuring that services remain respectful, equitable, and person-centered.