

Leveraging partnerships with Community Health Workers to connect with the New Mainer Community

A collaboration with Tri-County Mental Health Services (TCMHS)

Partnerships with mental health agencies play an important role in the prevention field, and Community Health Works (CHWs) are an impactful tool for outreaching individuals, especially those experiencing health disparities. CHWs have lived experiences and connections in the community, and this enhances their ability to build trusting, strong relationships, with residents. Existing studies show CHWs are effective in improving health outcomes, reducing healthcare costs, and bridging the gap in health disparities.

Quote:

“TCMHS is delighted to bring the role of Community Health Workers (CHWs) into our service delivery. Mr. Ahmed Djilouad is the first certified CHW to work at TCMHS, and we are learning so much from him and our new Mainer colleagues. We are approaching this work with cultural humility, aware we have much to learn, but truly excited and hopeful about how this will grow and lead to better outcomes for our communities. Through enhanced collaboration with other key leaders, and a willingness to continue bi-directional learning, there is much we can achieve!”

-Catherine Ryder, Chief Executive Officer, TCMHS

Healthy Androscoggin partnered with Ahmed Mahamoud Djilouad, a Community Health Worker at TCMHS, on **drug impairment and detection (DID)**. Ahmed works with the New Mainer Community. The DID presentation focuses on how to identify different types of substances and individuals who are displaying physical and non-physical signs of impairment. HA staff shared the DID presentation with Ahmed to help increase his knowledge to assist his clients. Staff heard from Ahmed that there is an increasing need of connecting with caregivers and families in the New Mainer community to prevent substance misuse among youth. By connecting with families, caregivers are able to detect substances and the physical and non-physical signs of substance misuse among their children.

Due to these conversations, Ahmed outreached the **Maine Immigrant and Refugee Services (MEIRs) clinical director, and we will be collaborating on a presentation to families in the Somali, Afghan, French, and Portuguese communities at the end of September on DID.** Ahmed will take part in this presentation to help translate the content and co-present the material to participants.



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