

Alachua County Community Health Worker Program

Quarter 3 FY 2024

Apr 1 - Jun 30, 2024

Background: The Alachua County Community Health Worker Program (CHW Program) was formed through a partnership between the UF Office of Professional and Workforce Development, CareerSource of North Central Florida, Alachua County Board of County Commissioners, Pastor Gerard Duncan of Community Partners and Engagement Consultants, and the Florida Department of Health in Alachua County.

The goal of the CHW Program is to improve the health and well-being of Alachua County residents by training, employing, and connecting CHWs with community agencies. The intent is for these CHWs to then assist Alachua County residents with navigating the health care system and connect them with appropriate resources. Through the CHW Program, eligible candidates obtain professional training and certification while community agencies benefit from a pool of qualified candidates that can further their mission in the community.

CHW Recruitment: Recruitment for the CHW Program is primarily conducted by Pastor Gerard Duncan of Community Partners and Engagement Consultants. The eligibility screening of candidates is conducted by CareerSource. The goal of the CHW Program is to enroll 10 candidates. From April 1st to June 30th, the CHW Program maintained 6 enrolled CHWs. There are 2 candidates pending re-enrollment into the CHW Program.

CHW Education & Training: All CHWs are required to complete the online training course offered by UF Office of Professional and Workforce Development as well as the BESTYou 2.0 training. In quarter 3, 1 CHW completed the online course. A BESTYou 2.0 training session was held on June 25th with 4 CHWs attending the training.

CHW Mentorship: Mentorship is primarily conducted by Pastor Gerard Duncan. From April 1st to June 30th, Pastor Duncan meet with all CHWs either in person or via telephone.

CHW Placement: CHWs are matched to community agencies that have partnered with the CHW Program. The matching process is based on agency-requested skills and CHW interest as well as interviews. Agencies with staff that function in the capacity of CHWs may also request that staff enroll in the CHW Program for formal training.

Agency Recruitment: Agencies are approached based on the diverse services provided to the residents of Alachua County including housing, health care, and education. For quarter 3 of FY 23-24, 2 agencies are in the contracting phase to partner with the CHW Program. These agencies are:

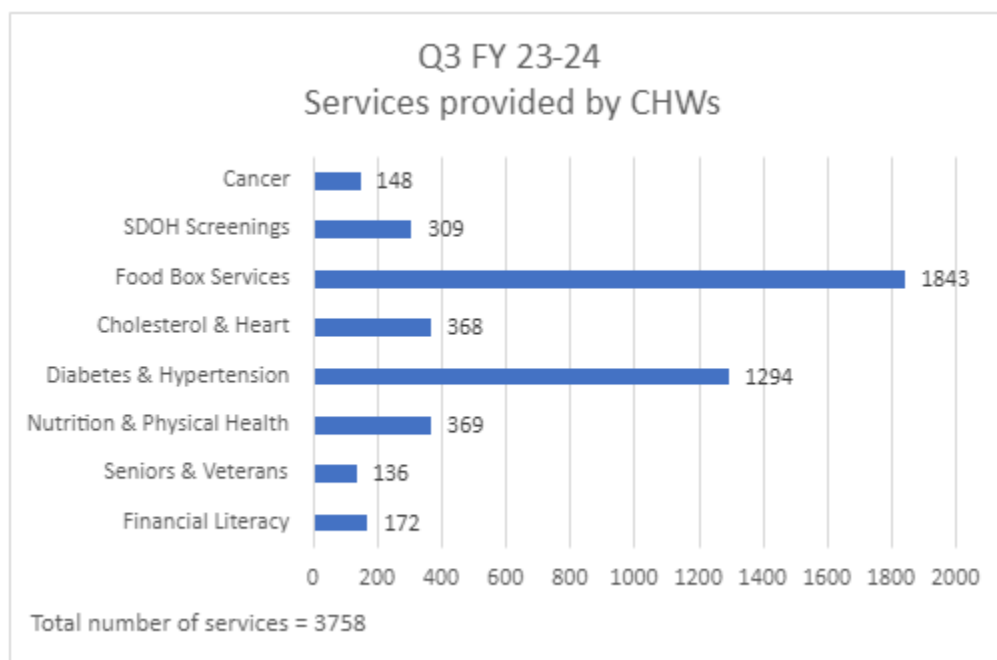
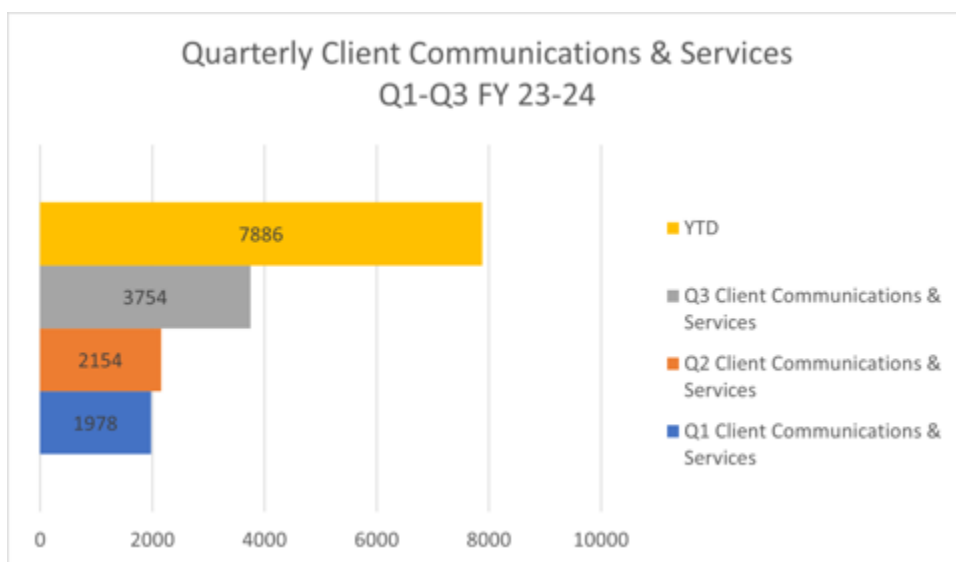
- UF College of Medicine- OB/GYN
- GRACE Marketplace

Two agencies are in the preliminary/application stages. These agencies are:

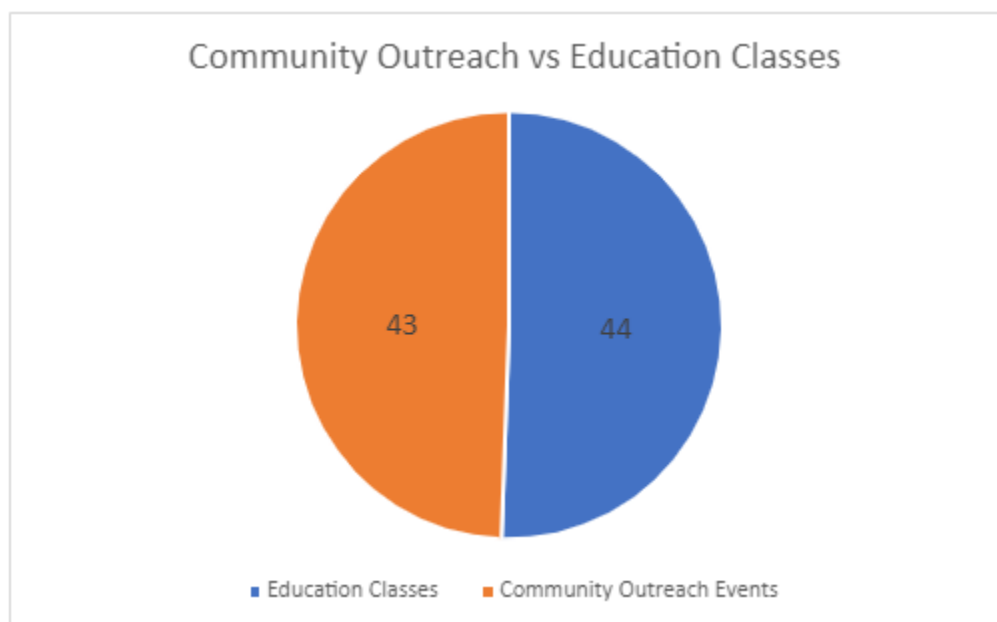
- Caring & Sharing Learning School
- Gainesville Community Counseling Center

CHW Services & Data

For quarter 3 (April 1st to June 30th), CHWs provided over 2000 services to clients, and over 1700 communications, including educational material, surveys etc.



The CHWs organized and hosted 87 community events and classes. Events and classes covered a variety of health enrichment topics including financial literacy, nutrition and physical health, diabetes, and hypertension.



Case Study: CHWs are the heart of Community Resource Center

The challenge: Results of the 2024 Alachua County Community Health Assessment highlighted difference in health outcomes related to food insecurity, food access, diabetes and hypertension throughout the county. Poverty in Alachua County is higher than the state average, and cost-burdened households may have trouble affording and accessing health and social services that can address the above-mentioned differences.¹

The solution: The One Community Family Resource Center (OCFRC) was launched in 2024 with the goal of providing “wrap-around services” to residents of Alachua County. The OCFRC partnered with the Alachua CHW Program to hire and train 3 CHWs to provide services and resources to its clients through its Food is Medicine food pharmacy program. The CHWs were trained to provide education and support on healthy eating, diabetes prevention and management, hypertension etc.

The results: The CHWs at the OCFRC led weekly educational sessions focused on healthy eating with 50 participants. Of the 50 participants, 34 successfully completed the 6-month Food is Medicine program. In quarter 3, FY 23-24, the CHWs led 45 classes, and provided over 1800 healthy food boxes. The CHWs also shared many community resources including cancer screenings, senior services, and oral health.

References

1. Healthy Communities, & Knowli Data Science. (Florida Department of Health, Ed.), Alachua County Community Health Assessment (2024). Gainesville, FL; Florida Department of Health.