



State of Wisconsin  
**Department of Health Services**

Tony Evers, Governor  
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## **Local Community Health Worker Featured in Statewide Campaign**

Darreon Steward, like many young children, grew up watching the Power Rangers and wanted to be a superhero just like them when he grew up. Today, he is a hero in his own way, as a community health worker (CHW), known throughout his community as a trusted advisor on health and community resources.

Throughout Wisconsin, CHWs connect people to health and social services that meet their individual needs. Often, CHWs bring personal experience, alongside expertise and training, to their work by living in the community and/or sharing an ethnicity, language, cultural and life experiences, and/or socio-economic background with those they serve.

“A CHW is that hero, that person that is going to be there for you to help you stay encouraged and be the air underneath their wings. I encourage everybody, I try to let them know that I'm with you in this and we're gonna work together,” Steward said.

CHWs are employed across the state at community-based organizations, local and Tribal health departments, schools, and health clinics. Several Wisconsin health systems and health insurance organizations also work with community partners to support CHW services.

Steward, who works at the City of Sun Prairie Neighborhood Navigators program, is one of several CHWs across the state to be featured in new videos from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) that provide education about the various ways CHWs help their clients and the health care system achieve better outcomes. The videos and other media to create awareness about CHWs launch in March and will run through August of 2024.

The campaign's goal is to shine a light on how community health workers are critical access points to resources that address all factors that impact a person's health, including safe housing, family-supporting jobs, and transportation challenges, along with access to quality health care, nutrition, and early childhood literacy.

Through the campaign, Steward shared his personal experience as a CHW, detailing how he frequently meets with clients to figure out what benefits and services they may need, how personally connects with their struggles, and how he can help connect them to resources that go beyond the care provided in a health clinic, but are just as important to impact a person's health.

“I think the main thing that I would want people to know about community health workers and the work that we do is that we are often reflections of what we didn't get in our environment,” said Steward. “So, we bring that, and we give it to other people. We're working with those people on the other side of America, those people that are forgotten about, those people who are judged without knowing what their struggles are.”

Organizations interested in building CHW programs can find resources and learn more about CHWs and their role in the community on the DHS website at [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/dph/community-health-workers.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/dph/community-health-workers.htm).