



# Community Health Worker Program 2023 Annual Report

# About Our Program

The mission of our Community Health Worker (CHW) program is to improve the health and wellness of the Shenandoah LGBTQ+ community by connecting members to competent and affirming medical providers, addressing LGBTQ+ health disparities in the area, and reducing barriers to access the care that our community needs and deserves. We pursue this mission with a dual focus on direct client engagement and building educational capacity amongst providers and stakeholders to strengthen our networks and raise the standard of care for our LGBTQ+ community.

## The Many Roles of Community Health Workers



Direct Service | Coordinating Care | Building Capacity | Coaching | Health Education  
Cultural Mediation | Advocacy | Outreach | Evaluation & Research | Assessments



## Our Services

### *Affirming Healthcare Navigation*

Program participants can receive one-time consultation or ongoing medical case management services to help navigate the healthcare system, identify affirming providers across specialties, apply for important benefits, and reach their health goals.

### *Transportation Assistance*

Our program can coordinate Medicaid transportation or provide transportation services or financial assistance to and from medical appointments for program participants and those accessing our monthly health clinics.

### *Health Education and Outreach*

The team is available to provide ongoing health education and training across a variety of topics.

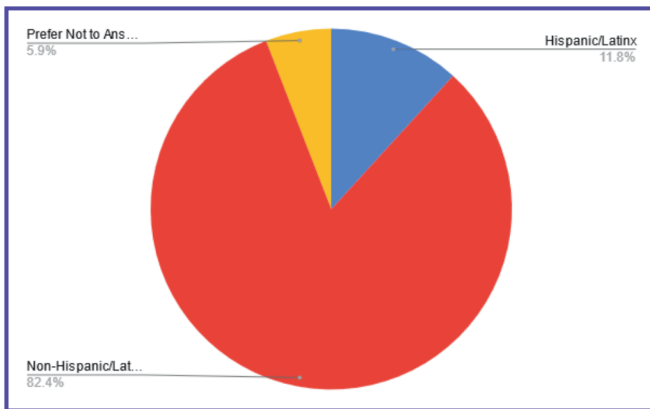
**In a 2019 survey by the Campaign for Southern Equality, more than half of the Southern LGBTQ+ respondents said they found it harder to access quality health care in the South.**

<https://southernequality.org/2019-southern-lgbtq-health-survey>

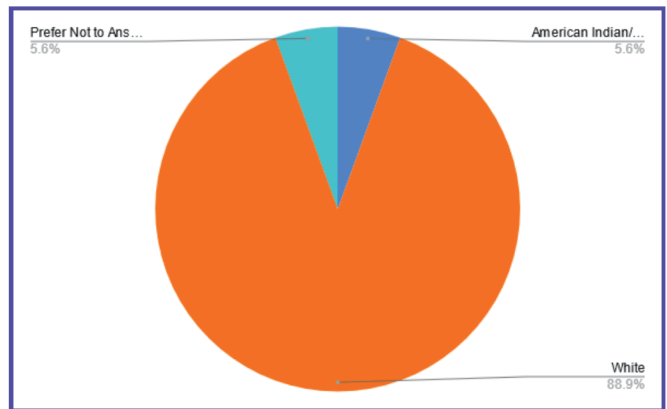
# Our 2023 Program Participants

Our program serves a diverse population of CHW clients. For the LGBTQ+ community, additional intersections such as race, age, or socioeconomic factors increase the barriers to accessing quality health care and contribute to additional health disparities. For this reason, our program centers each client’s unique needs and goals in their case management and care strategies.

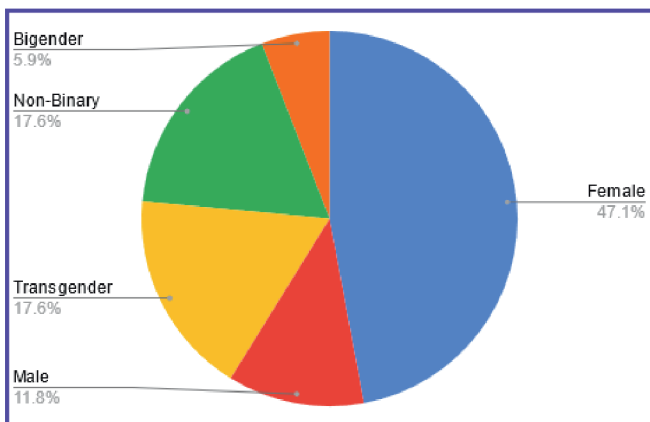
**Ethnicity**



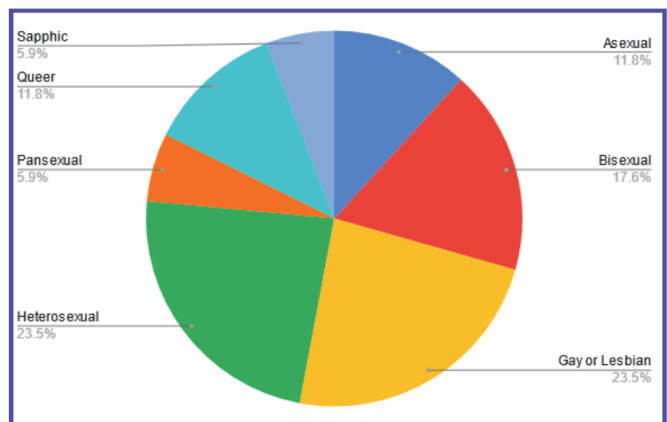
**Racial Identity**



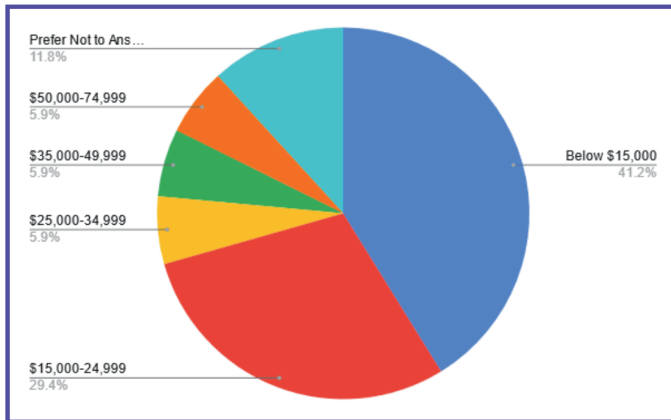
**Gender Identity**



**Sexual Orientation**

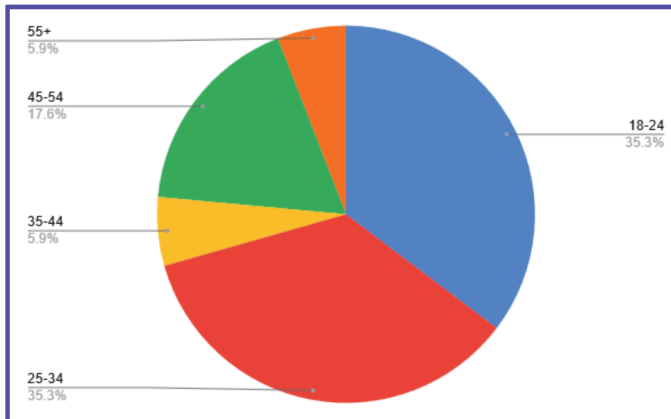


# Our 2023 Program Participants



## Annual Household Income

The majority of CHW Clients (41.2%) reported an annual household income below \$15,000.



## Age

The majority of CHW Clients (70.6%) are between 18 and 34 years old.

59%

Clients experiencing unstable housing

47%

Clients living with a disability

35%

Clients needing transportation assistance

70%

Clients accessing gender-affirming healthcare



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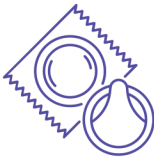
# Common Health Goals

CHW program participants are encouraged to make their own healthcare decisions and set their own priorities and goals. Clients commonly set between 2 and 5 goals that can vary across the diverse spectrum of health and wellness. Clients also are able to add goals at any point during their participation in the program.



## Gender Affirming Care

This can include a wide range of gender-affirming services including starting or renewing Hormone Replacement Therapies, pursuing gender affirming surgeries, name and gender marker changes, and more.



## Sexual Health Services

Many clients struggle to find local sexual health services that are affirming of their LGBTQ+ identity. Those accessing sexual health services may be seeking help with birth control access, safer sex supplies, education, and sexual health screenings.



## Disability Assistance

47% of current CHW clients are living with a disability. Our CHW can assist clients with the process of applying for SSI, connecting them to specialists who can help manage their disability, and more.



## Mental Health Care

56% of CHW clients reported living with a mental health diagnosis. Of those, only 53% were receiving mental health care upon entry to the program. The CHW can help clients access mental health assessments, connect them to affirming mental health providers and develop strategies to prioritize their well-being.



## Eye Care

A common health goal that may be surprising is seeking eye care services. Upon entry to the program, 58% of clients had not seen an eye doctor in over a year. Our CHW can help connect clients to an eye doctor who takes their insurance and provide transportation assistance to the appointment.

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# Program Goals

To ensure success for CHW clients, our program is designed to operate using a health equity lens and meets clients where they are to provide high quality healthcare navigation and support. We operate our program using a trauma-informed and harm reduction framework. Our broad program goals address successful completion of immediate health goals but also address two factors critical in maintaining long-term health and connection to care, i.e., primary care and health insurance.

## Primary Care

At least **80%** of program participants exit with an established Primary Care Provider.

## Health Insurance

At least **90%** of program participants exit with appropriate health insurance.

## Health Goals

We strive to have a minimum of **80%** of health goals met within 12 months of program participation.

*In 2023:*

23%

Clients with a primary care provider upon entering the program



100%

Clients with a primary care provider upon exiting the program

82%

Clients with health insurance on entering the program



100%

Clients who exited the program with appropriate health insurance coverage

76%

Average percentage of health goals completed upon exit of program.

41

Total health goals met!  
A coordinated effort across numerous service providers and community partners.

# Our Impact in 2023

## *Increased rating of physical and mental health (self-reported)*

**73%** Clients reported increased rating of physical health

**55%** Clients reported increased rating of mental health

Clients are asked to self-report rates of their current physical and mental health during their comprehensive intake and exit assessment.

## *Improved healthcare and provider coordination*

**72%** Clients reported increased comfort navigating the health care system on exiting the program

We strive to provide the information and resources necessary for clients to independently continue to meet their healthcare goals beyond program participation.

**100%** Clients living with a disability that were receiving care for their disability on exiting the program

Upon entry to the program, only **12% of clients** who reported living with a disability were receiving care for their disability.

**30** Successful referrals to affirming providers

Our CHW works to build strong networks of local affirming providers for client referrals across a broad spectrum of healthcare needs— including primary care, sexual health services, mental health, gender affirming care and more.

**4.8/5** Average rating of the quality of support provided by the CHW program

CHW clients were asked to assess the quality of support provided by the CHW program in achieving their health goals. Clients rated on a scale from 1-5, with 5 defined as excellent quality support.

## *Breaking down barriers to care: stigma, advocacy, transportation*

**42** CHW goal setting and planning appointments

Appointments with the CHW may include discussing a client's health goals, health education, scheduling health care appointments, obtaining appropriate health insurance, and more.

**32** CHW-supported medical appointments

This includes health care appointments to reach client's goals that our CHW attended to provide support and advocacy. This may also include health care appointments where the CHW provided transportation assistance.

# Our Partnerships

Our program relies on growing a strong network of affirming and competent providers in order to ease health disparities for our rural LGBTQ+ community.



## AUGUSTA HEALTH

- *Augusta Health Mobile Clinic*  
100 clients were able to access primary care services in 2023 during our monthly clinics
- *LGBTQ+ Cultural Competency Trainings*  
Augusta Medical Group leadership and staff participated in a series of trainings focusing on overcoming health disparities for rural LGBTQ+ people and improving overall health and wellness in the Shenandoah Valley.

**Across 24 training sessions, 100% of AMG staff were trained, including 584 team members across 23 specialties.**

## CENTRAL SHENANDOAH HEALTH DISTRICT (CSHD)

- *technical assistance in support of COVID-19 health education and community outreach*
- *vaccination opportunities*
- *sexual health education and safer sex supplies*
- *full-panel STI testing and outreach during our Staunton Pride 2023 event!*



## The ARROW PROJECT

- *monthly support groups facilitated by mental health professionals from the ARROW Project*
- *outreach education and support during our monthly health clinics and partner events!*

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

- *Community Health and Provider Fairs*  
Partnering with over 25 local organizations
- *Staunton Pride 2023 Health and Wellness Hub*  
Event sponsored by Sentara Health Health Hub with over 13 vendors providing services, screenings, resources and education



## HEALTH AND WELLNESS HUB

FULL PANEL STI TESTING	WARM ROOM
BLOOD PRESSURE checks	DIABETES screenings
Vendors, Resources, giveaways and more!	



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# A Letter From the Community Health Worker

Hello and thank you for supporting the programs at Shenandoah LGBTQ Center! My name is Casey and I have been in the position of Community Health Worker since May 2023. My experience with working in this position is that there is a very tangible need for assistance with navigating the ever changing healthcare landscape which has left a vast number of individuals unable to access the care that they deserve.

Our CHW program has celebrated our program's second year of providing services! We see this as a huge achievement for a LGBTQ+ health-focused program serving a rural community such as the SAW region. The success of the program definitely speaks to the needs of the community in that many who interact with the program are simply seeking a medical professional that will view them as a fellow human being (e.g., honoring their identity). Unfortunately, many of the people with this experience feel pressured to have to choose between their safety and receiving the care that they deserve. One example of how our program is helping to address this issue has been through building more affirming provider and referral networks in this area -- including our partnership with Augusta Health and providing cultural competency trainings focused on reducing stigma and overcoming health disparities for rural LGBTQ+ people in this region.

We will continue to serve the community's health needs as best as we can. The lessons of the past two years have uncovered community needs for additional outreach to serve those in more isolated communities, such as students at local colleges and individuals living in the more rural areas of our region. We look forward to continued opportunities for connection with local stakeholders, such as Valley Program for Aging Services and local universities.

The team continually reviews and evaluates CHW program policies to ensure that we are making our services more accessible as well as efficient. This is particularly important as the Center receives more requests to share our inclusive data collection methods.

**Serving in the CHW position has granted me the opportunity to restore hope to individuals that have gone without necessary medical care for years and I consider this to be the greatest part of the work that I do.** I am looking forward to the new relationships that have yet to come in 2024 and I am so appreciative of everybody's efforts to support the mission of the Shenandoah LGBTQ Center!

In solidarity,  
Casey

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# Acknowledgements



AnhThu Nguyen, Executive Director  
Emma Kirby, Programs Administrative Manager  
Casey Shull, Community Health Worker



Shenandoah LGBTQ Center Health Services Committee  
and Training Facilitators:

Emma Neville  
Julie Scofield  
Jordan Zipser

***Funding Support provided by:***

**Augusta Health**

**Virginia Department of Health - CSHD**

**CenterLink - Capacity Building grant**

**Community Action Partnership - Staunton, Augusta, Waynesboro (CAPSAW)**

**Community Foundation of Central Blue Ridge**

## Connect with Us



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