

## IMPACT REPORT

Great Rivers HUB highlights & achievements in 2023

2023

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## DIRECTOR'S SUMMARY

\$341,868.40

reimbursements earned in 2023

### WELCOME TO OUR IMPACT REPORT

In this, the fourth edition of Great Rivers HUB's Impact Report, we hope to provide an enhanced understanding of the impact the Pathways Community HUB model provides. The HUB's work bridges the gap between clinical health and social determinants of health for individuals to improve their health and well-being. This holistic framework leverages Community Health Workers (CHWs), who bring a culturally competent, person-first approach to addressing health inequity. Additionally, Great Rivers HUB provides quality assurance, regularly shares de-identified data with the community, and offers a layer of additional support to the partnering CHWs.

#### **GROWTH & SUSTAINABILITY**

This past year has been one of significant growth. Great Rivers HUB continued its work in La Crosse while managing expansion in Jackson, Monroe, and Crawford counties. Details of our expansion and success can be found on the pages that follow.

The Pathways Community HUB model has allowed us to provide significant infrastructure and sustainability support for CHWs whose organizations partner with us. In 2023, CHW partners earned \$341,868.40 in reimbursements through the model. That amount was split between the counties Great Rivers HUB serves, with La Crosse County partners receiving \$248,068.40, and a total of \$93,800 going to rural county partners (Jackson, Monroe, and Crawford).



#### WHAT IS A PATHWAY?

The Pathways Community HUB model utilizes standardized and evidence-based outcomes, called **Pathways**, to measure success in various areas for each client served. Each Pathway aims to reduce the risk for poor health outcomes. Increased numbers of CHWs in 2023 resulted in a significant increase in completed outcomes. CHWs assisted participants in addressing 79% of identified needs.

Learn more on Page 7.



In addition to these reimbursements, Great Rivers HUB has brought in more than \$1.5M in grant support to the community since 2019. A majority of these grants supported the launch of CHW positions at various organizations, as well as key initiatives with partners throughout the pandemic.

#### **CHW TRAINING**

In 2023, Great Rivers HUB became one of three validated CHW Core Competency trainers in Wisconsin. The training is focused on following the national standard for CHW Core Competencies and is not specific to the HUB model. CHWs from across the region, from HUB and non-HUB partners alike, participated. We are excited to play this role, as validated and standardized trainings are crucial to the expansion of the CHW workforce statewide.

#### **INFLUENCE & IMPACT**

We continue to be an advocate both regionally and at the state level for improved health equity, sustainable support for the CHW workforce, and to ensure measurable outcomes are achieved for those at greatest risk for poor health.

As for our impact, it is our hope that this report demonstrates both the value CHWs and the Pathways Community HUB model bring to our community.

Thank you for your continued support.

**Lindsey Purl** 

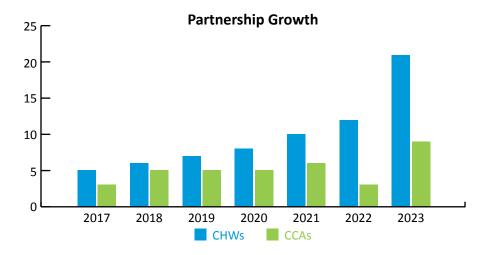
Director, Great Rivers HUB Great Rivers United Way



## HISTORY & GROWTH

Great Rivers HUB began solely as a local implementation of the Pathways Community HUB model with two main goals: 1) to become a certified Pathways Community HUB (achieved in 2019 and maintained since), and 2) to become sustainable as a HUB. It was anticipated sustainability would be reached when there were 35+ Community Health Workers (CHWs) within the HUB's network. Great Rivers HUB has continued to work towards this goal while also taking opportunities to expand its work with other projects that partner with CHWs and improve health equity.

Over the years, Great Rivers HUB has grown from only serving La Crosse County to operating in La Crosse, Monroe, Jackson, Trempealeau, and Crawford counties in 2023. The growth in CHWs and Care Coordination Agency (CCA) partners has also increased significantly in the last year, getting us closer to our sustainability goals (see chart below).



#### **Community Health Worker Workforce**

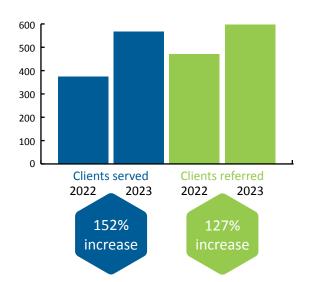
None of the work outlined in this report would be possible without the CHWs connected to Great Rivers HUB. According to the American Public Health Association, CHWs are: "front-line public health workers that have a unique understanding of the community they serve. It is this unique understanding that allows for trust to quickly build between a CHW and the individuals they serve."

All CHWs connected to the HUB have received C3 Core Competency training, Pathways Community HUB model training, and training for documenting in the HUB's database, Care Coordination Systems (CCS). All CHWs are also encouraged to take advantage of local Resilient & Trauma-Informed Community trainings. Each of these CHWs are hired by partnering agencies. Their backgrounds range widely, each CHW leveraging their own experiences to provide trauma-informed and holistic care to the individuals they serve. Great Rivers HUB is an advocate for ensuring any CHW position, even if the position is not partnered with the HUB, includes C3 Core Competency training, and is one of three validated Core Competency training sites in Wisconsin.

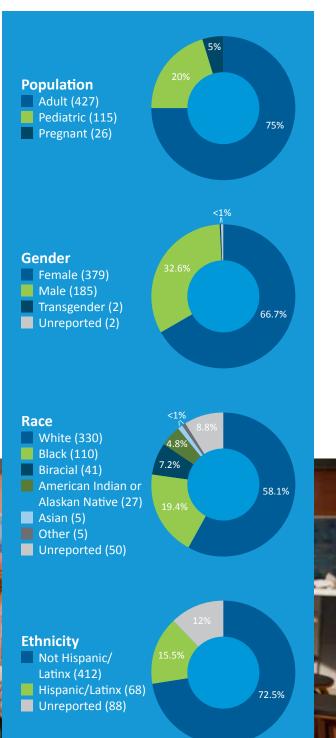


# **CLIENT OVERVIEW**

Great Rivers HUB provides support across four counties through nine partner agencies. Populations served through this model are decided by a community needs assessment and local Community Advisory Boards. That said, populations are served across the lifespan, cultures, race, and genders.







### MEASURING SUCCESS

The Pathways Community HUB model utilizes standardized and evidence-based outcomes, called Pathways, to measure success in various areas for each client served. Each Pathway aims to reduce the risk for poor health outcomes. Increased numbers of CHWs in 2023 resulted in a significant increase in completed outcomes. CHWs assisted participants in addressing 79% of identified needs.

Below are just some of the outcomes achieved for participants served by Great Rivers HUB in 2023. This report highlights outcomes achieved in various regional programs and within specific counties starting on Page 8.

- 50 families found safe and adequate housing
- 159 primary care appointments were made
- 38 individuals established a medical home
- 1,854 basic needs were addressed
- 19 individuals had healthy births
- 110 connections to specialty medical care appointments were made

- 21 individuals received medication literacy and reconciled their medications with a pharmacist or primary care provider to ensure proper adherence
- 17 individuals established mental health care
- 21 individuals found and maintained employment for 30+ days
- 1,303 one-on-one health education sessions were held

In addition to these key outcome measures, CHWs also track several other metrics to demonstrate impact. One of those metrics is a validated depression screening tool. When CHWs meet with participants, they do a monthly needs assessment, which includes an initial PHQ-2 screening. If an individual answers "yes" to one or both questions, that automatically populates a PHQ-9 for the CHW to complete with the individual.

In 2023, the number of PHQ-9 screening facilitated was up 278%. Of those screened, 42% had a PHQ-9 triggered more than one time. Of individuals who were screened more than once, 48% improved their PHQ-9 score over time with a CHW.





## LA CROSSE COUNTY

Great Rivers HUB launched in 2017 in La Crosse County. A Community Advisory Board (CAB) has overseen expansion in La County since that time.

#### **Populations served:**

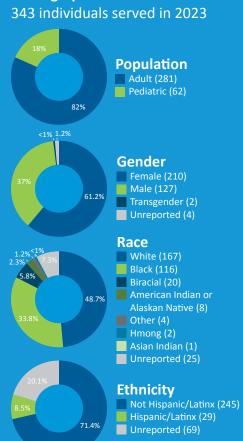
- Frequent ER utilizers
- At-risk pregnant women
- Type 2 Diabetics
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Chronic absenteeism in elementaryaged youth
- School District of La Crosse students experiencing homelessness
- Census tracts 2, 3, 4 or 5

#### **Partners:**

- Black Leaders Acquiring Collective Knowledge (B.L.A.C.K.)
- Hope Restores
- Family & Children's Center
- La Crosse Area Family YMCA
- St. Clare Health Mission

Together, these organizations employed a total of 17 CHWs throughout the course of 2023.





#### Highlights of outcomes achieved:

- 2,860 needs/risks were identified 2,403 of those were successfully completed; 67 were unable to be completed
- 1,058 one-on-one education sessions were completed
- 10 individuals found and maintained employment
- 12 individuals established health insurance
- 28 individuals established a medical home
- 43 medical appointments for needs other than primary care, such as dental, specialty, and mental health care were made
- 23 families obtained housing
- 1,177 referrals for items such as food, clothing, financial assistance, transportation, and other basic needs were made





La Crosse County CHWs have seen numerous stories of success. The story outlined below is just one of many examples of these successes.

The participant was referred to Great Rivers HUB by the School District of La Crosse as part of the Healthy Youth & Families and McKinney Vento programs. The participant and her five children and two grandchildren had recently moved to the area from Milwaukee. They had moved here to be closer to the participant's sister.

The family was unable to stay at the sister's house due to overcrowding. This led to the family living in a hotel room while they looked for stable housing. This is when the CHW contacted the participant and their families.

The CHW, alongside the participant and her sister, assisted the family in overcoming barriers to find safe and stable housing. The CHW helped the family achieve this by assisting in the completion of housing applications, some of which were complex and required tracking down additional documentation. The CHW also attended multiple showings of apartments with the participant and her sister, helping navigate what to look for and questions to ask during a viewing.

Once the participant found housing, the CHW assisted in securing funds for the security deposit through First Free Church and Place of Grace. This, along with first month rental assistance from the participant's sister, allowed the family to move into their new apartment. Since the family came here from Milwaukee with few personal items, the CHW was able to connect the family with The Exchange, which was able to help furnish the family's new apartment.



## **JACKSON** COUNTY

Great Rivers HUB worked with Jackson County's Servant-Led Community (SLC) group to initiate expansion into Jackson County. As part of this expansion, the SLC reviewed the community needs assessment put out by the Jackson County Public Health Department to determine which populations would be served by the HUB.

#### **Populations served:**

One of the populations deemed in need of assistance was families, specifically families with children 18 years or younger. Based on feedback from the community, this was the population identified for the HUB to focus on in Jackson County.

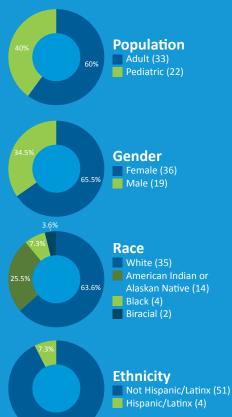
#### **Partners:**

- School District of Black River Falls
- Children's Wisconsin

Together, these organizations employed a total of three CHWs. Expansion of the CHW workforce is expected in 2024. There have been several grants submitted to continue to support this expansion.

#### **Demographics:**

55 individuals served in 2023



#### Highlights of outcomes achieved:

- √ 598 needs/risks identified 416 of those needs were successfully addressed; 48 were unable to be completed
- 5 individuals established mental health care
- 4 individuals pursued and achieved higher education
- 48 one-on-one health education sessions were completed
- 2 individuals found and maintained employment; at the end of 2023, 7 other individuals were working to find employment
- 5 individuals got adequate healthcare coverage
- 3 families found and maintained housing; at the end of 2023, 7 other families were working to obtain housing
- 6 individuals established a medical home
- 38 medical appointments for needs other than primary care, such as appointments for dental, vision, mental health, well-child visits, and specialty care were made
- 7 individuals received medication literacy and reconciled their medications with a pharmacist or primary care provider to ensure proper adherence
- 307 basic needs such as transportation, clothing, furniture, food, and utility assistance were addressed
- 🚺 12 individuals started their tobacco cessation journey







Jackson County CHWs have seen numerous stories of success. The story outlined below is just one of many examples of these successes.

A CHW was working with a client who was pregnant and already the mother to a beautiful three-year-old daughter. Things went well during the birth, and mom and baby were released and went home to begin their life as a new family.

A few days later, the child's father found the mother unresponsive when he tried to wake her from a nap. The father called 911, and the mother was taken to the hospital, where she was pronounced deceased.

The CHW was called to help support the family through this difficult time. The mother had been breastfeeding, so the family and CHW first thought about how to continue feeding the baby. The family reached out to friends who were breastfeeding. They were able to donate milk, and the CHW was able to access formula at no cost to the family. The CHW informed the family that breast milk composition changes as the baby grows, and formula would be their best option.

The CHW reached out to the local church, which provided meals, groceries, clothes, and rental and funeral assistance. The CHW checked in on the family twice a day at the beginning. The CHW assisted with getting dad's name on the birth certificate and providing them with items for the three-year-old.

This family needed a lot of support – it takes a community, and the CHW focused on ensuring this support was provided. If the CHW had not been in the client's life, things may have been very different for them.



## MONROE COUNTY

Monroe County expansion in 2023 was largely supported by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services Chronic Disease and Prevention Program through the 2109 grant.

#### **Populations served:**

Those served in Monroe County included those at risk for severe COVID, with a specific focus on those with significant social determinant of health needs, such as housing.

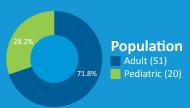
#### **Partners:**

- Families First of Monroe County
- Family Promise of Monroe County

Together, these organizations employed a total of three CHWs.

#### **Demographics:**

71 individuals served in 2023









#### Highlights of outcomes achieved:

Note: Some of these numbers include individuals who were served by CHW-Doulas based in La Crosse County.

- 494 needs/risks identified 313 of those needs were successfully addressed; 8 were unable to be completed
- The most frequent needs identified were housing and establishing a medical home
- 11 individuals obtained housing
- 5 individuals found and maintained employment; at the end of 2023, 8 other individuals were working to find employment
- 102 one-on-one education sessions were held
- 186 basic needs such as clothing, transportation, food, housing, and utility assistance were addressed
- 2 individuals had healthy births; 6 other individuals were supported during pregnancy and are due in 2024





Monroe County CHWs have seen numerous stories of success. Below is just one example of these successes.

A CHW had a client come to them at the beginning of September. Their family of five had been living out of a camper that was not suitable for habitation, especially in the winter. Their teenage daughter was scheduled to undergo open heart surgery the following week. The camper was not suited for recovery following the surgery.

The CHW and their organization immediately began working to get the family into a suitable home. They provided a shelter space for some of the family while the Mom and daughter went to Rochester for surgery. During this time, the CHW worked with the father to identify barriers and make a plan, which included supporting a job search and budgeting support.



"All it took was just a little bit of guidance and inspirational talk. They are now in charge of their life, and I am just here to support them!!!"

- The CHW who helped this family

The family stayed in shelter until December, at which time the family members had a job, a home, and enough money saved up to pay for three month's rent and additional bills.

Prior to working with a CHW, this family had been told by others they wouldn't be able to succeed on their own. The CHW supported them in breaking down the barriers in front of them and building their self-efficacy in moving towards self-sufficiency.



# CRAWFORD COUNTY

Great Rivers HUB engaged with the Crawford County Health & Human Services Department in mid-2023. The data below, therefore, is only for part of the year. Crawford County already had a navigator in place. This person made the transition to the Community Health Worker role but continued to serve the same population.

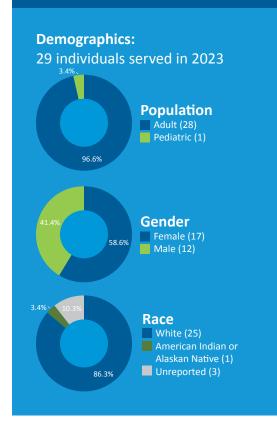
#### **Populations served:**

Crawford County Health & Human Services identified those with mental health or substance use concerns as the target population based on their community needs assessment.

#### **Partner**

Crawford County Health & Human
 Services

This organization employed one CHW.



#### Highlights of outcomes achieved:

- 307 needs/risks identified in 2023 (10.6/individual) 181 of those needs were successfully addressed; 4 were unable to completed
- 4 individuals obtained and maintained housing; at the end of 2023, the 25 other individuals continue to work on obtaining housing
- 🗸 31 one-on-one educational sessions were held
- 15 individuals were supported in finding employment
- 2 individuals obtained health insurance coverage
- 18 medical appointments, such as dental and mental health support, were made
- 125 basic need referrals, including transportation, housing, food, clothing, and utility assistance, were made
- 18 individuals were considering or in implementing an action plan for tobacco cessation





A participant was referred to a CHW through an internal health department. The participant was being evicted from subsidized housing for an environmental safety concern. The participant lacked transportation and had to move in with their adult children who did not have space for them.

While working with the participant, the CHW helped them overcome barriers while navigating the complex rental housing market. The CHW assisted the participant in completing multiple applications for housing. They also served as an intermediary for the participant, updating them on status of application and increasing their self-sufficiency.

While assisting the participant with housing, the CHW also helped the participate navigate their physical health, educating the participant on the importance of immunizations and other preventive measures. The CHW was able to show the participant the benefits of getting influenza and COVID-19 vaccinations. The CHW transported the participant to both vaccinations. This led to discussions on other health topics, such as medical adherence.

Navigating the transportation barrier, the CHW was able to help the participant access their medication and come up with plans for self-sufficiency after the participant is done with CHW intervention. The high level of care navigation allowed for these risks of poor health outcomes to be prioritized while working toward the primary goal of housing. After multiple applications, and some setbacks, the CHW got the participant moved into housing.



## HEALTHY BIRTHS & BABIES

Populations served vary across each of the four counties Great Rivers HUB covers. One of the populations served across all counties is pregnant individuals and their families. The Healthy Births & Babies program was started in 2018 with a focus on pregnant individuals with current or history of substance use/addiction. The program's focus has expanded to include any pregnant individual on Medicaid, or with an identified social determinant of health risk.

Healthy Births & Babies has also expanded to include partnerships with a dual role: Community Health Worker-Doulas. A Doula is a non-clinical individual who is able to provide guidance and support before, during, and after birth to a pregnant/birthing/postpartum individual. Our CHW-Doulas have completed both CHW and Doula training programs.

These positions are currently employed at the Family & Children's Center in La Crosse but have served across multiple counties. Many of the individuals served through the Healthy Births & Babies program were connected with a CHW-Doula to provide additional expertise and support prenatally, at birth, and during postpartum. These dual positions were created as a result of grant funding from the Wisconsin Partnership Program (WPP).

In 2023, 19 babies were born to mothers enrolled in this program.





A CHW-Doula began working with a participant in February. The participant was just coming out of an abusive relationship and was sleeping with her youngest child in the living room of a 1-bedroom apartment. The participant was lacking pregnancy and social support when the CHW-Doula met her, and agreed to have the CHW-Doula at her birth as her support person. The CHW-Doula provided education in a one-on-one setting and navigated to needed resources.

The CHW-Doula was present for the birth, which went well with minimal interventions. A few weeks after the birth, there was a scare with the newborn's breathing. Following a one-week stint in the hospital, the CHW-Doula accompanied the participant and her newborn to Rochester to see a specialist.



"She has come so far, and I am so proud of all the hard work she has put in to get here."

> The CHW-Doula on this mother's journey

Before the end of 2023, the participant was housed in a 3-bedroom, fully-furnished apartment with her two children, and had a full-time job and full-time daycare. Establishing daycare alone required 50 calls to providers by the CHW-Doula. The CHW-Doula also helped get the participant access with child support for the children.

The mother was introduced to Family & Children's Center's Healthy Families program to continue getting education and support during the first five years of her little ones' lives. The CHW-Doula also helped introduce the participant to local moms' groups that she now utilizes on her own. The participant now has connections with other mothers in the area for ongoing informal support.

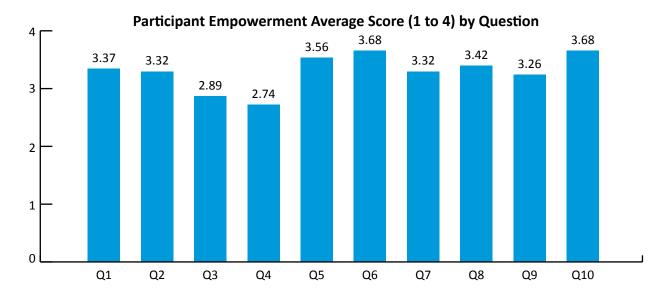


## EMPOWERING PARTICIPANTS

Another way Great Rivers HUB measures success is participant feedback.

In 2023, one of Great Rivers HUB partners, Family & Children's Center, launched a pilot evaluation to measure the level of empowerment participants felt after working with a CHW. This data collection was in coordination with the Common Indicators team and Wisconsin Department of Health Services. Analysis of the response was provided by the Common Indicators team and is detailed below. While this data wasn't collected across the HUB as a whole, the results are promising and demonstrates another area of impact from working with CHWs.

CHWs enabled participants to complete retrospective assessments of participant empowerment for a total of 19 participants from May through July 2023. Participants were asked to respond to 10 statements corresponding to their general level of empowerment over the past three months in relation to their work with a CHW. There were four response options to each statement – Strongly Disagree [1], Disagree [2], Agree [3], Strongly Agree [4] – which were placed on an ordinal 1 to 4 scale with 4 representing the highest level of empowerment.



Average scores were calculated for each statement across the 19 participants. The average scores for each question ranged from 2.74 to 3.68, with a total average score of 3.32. If we assume equal distance between the four options on the ordinal scale, the average scores suggest that the participants generally agreed or strongly agreed to feeling empowered in response to all 10 statements. Not surprisingly, the lowest scores were obtained for the items that inquire about belonging within a community (Q3) and ability to make change at the community level (Q4). These items are likely the least amenable to change within a short period of time based solely on interaction with a CHW.



## CORE COMPETENCY TRAINING

Great Rivers HUB is partnering with United Way of Wisconsin on a three-year HRSA grant to enhance the CHW Workforce in Wisconsin. While there are several objectives, one of the initial focuses was to validate CHW Core Competency trainings for the state. Prior to this funding and collaboration, there was not a training standard for the workforce. United Way of Wisconsin took the initiative to validate the CHW Core Competency training in line with the national C3 Core Competency standards. In 2023, Great Rivers HUB, Milwaukee AHEC, and UniteWI all became validated training locations.

In 2023, Great Rivers HUB trained a total of 27 individuals in CHW Core Competency training. Those trained represent five counties (Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Sauk, Crawford, and Vernon), their ages ranged from 18 to 58, over 18 were from rural backgrounds.

Here is what two participants had to say about their experience with the training and becoming a CHW:

"Since having a training to become a CHW, I learned that it's not just a position at a job, it's a lifestyle. Working as a CHW, I strive for character building and learning so I can be very resourceful for people in our communities. This position is not only building bridges within our community, but also builds up positive people for the community. Offering all the trainings and continued education courses for us CHWs builds powerful characteristics and skills, and I'm proud to be able to say I'm a CHW and a part of a team of people who are working so hard to strengthen our communities and our clients."

"I found the training to be all encompassing. I specifically found great value when the class role played our style of elevator pitch and motivational interviewing. The facilitators came well prepared and kept the class engaged, and encouraged us to ask questions and to collaborate with our cohort."

Great Rivers HUB aims to expand its engagement to additional counties to support CHW Core Competency training and is expecting to train another 30 CHWs in 2024. These efforts are not just building a skilled workforce but supporting positive change for our communities.

If you're interested in learning more about training, apprenticeship, or other support for CHW advancement, please reach out to Workforce Development Manager Aron Newberry at anewberry@grwu.org.



## CARE TRANSITIONS INTERVENTION

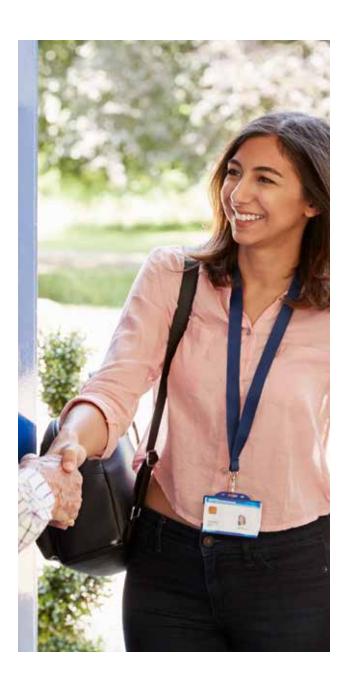
Care Transitions Intervention®, previously the Coleman model, has been researched through random control trails and proven to reduce readmission rates in various populations. This model was based on Dr. Coleman's experience as a primary care provider and therefore started with end user as the focus – complex patients going in and out of the hospital.

This program started in 2022 as a result of a partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. This program ended as of December 2023 due to low referral and engagement numbers. However, those that were served in this program did see success and reported appreciation for the connection to the CHW-CTI Coach.

19 Patients referred in 2023

5 Patients participated

Patients successfully completed the intervention





### **STAFF**

#### **CONTACT US**

Please contact us to learn more about Great Rivers HUB or opportunities to partner.



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## **FUNDERS** & PARTNERS















































United Way of Wisconsin



**Great Rivers United Way** 

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