

# ADVOCACY

A COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE  
ADVOCACY

# ADVOCACY

YOU ARE DEFINITELY ALREADY AN  
ADVOCATE!



- Helped someone make a doctors appointment?
- Spoke up on behalf of a friend, family member or someone in need?
- Explain another person's point of view to someone else?



# WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

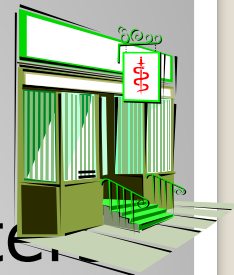
- “The pursuit of influencing outcomes that directly affect people’s lives-including public policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic and social systems” -The Advocacy Institute

In other words-ADVOCACY IS...

“Pleading another’s cause”- supporting and educating -CHW curriculum guide-Skillman

# ROLE OF AN EFFECTIVE ADVOCATE

- **Supporter** : CHW's will always seek to improve their clients ability to survive and to thrive. Some examples of how this could be done include a wide array of things from listening, transportation, to making appointments, addressing supplemental needs, and assisting in any of these matters.
- **Educator**: helping their clients know "where and when" they need to seek medical services. Helping to understand diagnosis/medicines/prescriptions



# ROLE OF AN EFFECTIVE ADVOCATE

- **Spokesperson:** Shares information with health and human services providers on behalf of clients.



- **Intermediary:** Helps resolve problems between the client and the system.

- In order to be an effective **spokesperson** an advocate must have a thorough understanding of an individual's situation, skills, capabilities and limitations.
- Must gather information from the client- what, where, when, how, whom. (Get written documentation whenever possible or appropriate).
- In order to be an effective **intermediary** the advocate must gather information from the system- in addition to what, where, when, how, and whom; you need to know/understand system rules, eligibility requirements, policies, procedures, administrative structure, names and titles of key people.



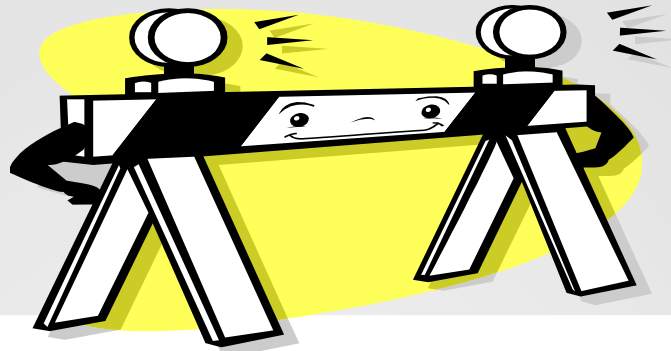
# ROLE OF AN EFFECTIVE ADVOCATE

- **Case-finding:** Because of their close contact with community members, CHW's are in a unique position to recognize as yet undiagnosed symptoms of illness or health needs and connect people to the health care system. Case finding is the first step in assuring that people obtain needed services
- **Making referrals:** CHW's refer clients to a broad range of health and social services, including clinics, hospitals welfare offices, food banks and churches.
- **Providing follow-up:** CHW's promote continuity of care by providing follow-up. Examples include tracking pregnant women to make sure they get prenatal care or physically locating people who need lab results but lack a telephone.

# ROLE OF AN EFFECTIVE ADVOCATE

- **Identify Barriers** to seeking health care:

A barrier is an obstacle, something that stands in the way to stop progress or prevent approach. Could be systemic (insurance, access, accessible, equity) or personal (attitudes, life style, and resources).



# ROLE OF AN EFFECTIVE ADVOCATE

## • CASE STUDY

You have been working with a client who was initially extremely hesitant in allowing you to help them in any way. During your last interaction with the client he reveals that every-time he goes to the doctors office they treat him like he is an alien.

What do you do???

# ROLE OF AN EFFECTIVE ADVOCATE

## Case study discussion (cont.)

- Get a clear understanding of Clients definition of “alien”
  - Ask client what he wants to happen
  - Obtain information from doctors office
    - Determine who need to be involved
- Become the voice (spokesperson) for your client

## **(Discussion continued)**

- Work through the process with your client
  - Accompany client
    - Educate client
  - Prepare the client for what to expect
- **SPEAK ON BEHALF UNTIL CLIENT CAN SPEAK FOR HIMSELF.**

**ADVOCACY IS NOT  
ALWAYS SUCCESSFUL**



# ROLE OF AN EFFECTIVE ADVOCATE

## QUESTIONS



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