



## CHWC 2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

**Mission:** The Chicagoland Healthcare Workforce Collaborative unites employers and industry partners to support an inclusive healthcare workforce, provide accessibility for unemployed and underemployed populations, and develop innovative responses to the evolving needs of the healthcare industry.

**Five-Year Vision (2024-2029):** CHWC is a healthcare workforce development think tank led by exceptional healthcare leaders with experience in health equity, workforce development, community engagement, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. It is recognized locally and nationally as an exemplary model of peer learning and collective problem solving.

*CHWC's Steering Committee will convene at a mid-year in-person retreat to update this vision statement, and explore the possibility of CHWC adopting measurable long-term goals.*

## PRIORITIES

### Facilitate Peer Learning & Foster Connections

- Host at least 6 learning events on hot topics where employers can learn from each other and share best practices. As much as possible, events will include time for brainstorming and collective problem-solving. As directed by the full collaborative at our December 2025 quarterly meeting, and the steering committee, topics will include:
  - Best practices & shared challenges for employer / community college partnerships
  - Best practices & shared challenges for employer / workforce organization partnerships (this could be a working session with specific workforce orgs)
  - Transportation barriers: a brainstorming session on how we can better support participants and employees in tackling transportation barriers
  - Fair Chance Hiring: a showcase & info session featuring work led by Fair Chance Hiring Employer Cohort alumni, and a project to support justice-involved individuals navigate legal barriers to healthcare careers.
- Dedicate our June Quarterly meeting to understanding how federal funding changes will impact the Chicagoland healthcare workforce (voted as top learning topic at Dec 2025 quarterly)
- Explore the possibility of replicating our successful Respiratory Therapy Workforce Summit with a Radiology/ Imaging Workforce Summit; examine the shortage of radiology techs in our region

and the players involved to gauge the appetite for collaborative problem-solving, and to increase awareness of the drivers and impacts of the shortage.

- Host an employer event designed to strengthen 1:1 peer relationships, and allow systems to share their unique expertise while seeking advice and support on challenges from peers
  - Focus an employer peer-learning discussion on calculating & articulating ROI for workforce programs
  - As requested and capacity allows, host mini peer learning sessions and/or facilitate peer learning working groups on specific topics as defined by employer partners
- Provide at least 4 in-person opportunities for networking
- Through regular events, newsletters, website, LinkedIn, and informal networking, connect employers to workforce partners and opportunities

### **Increase CHWC Visibility & Build Reputation**

- Track attendance at meetings and learning events and strive for growth:
  - Target 45+ attendees for quarterly meetings
  - Target 20+ attendees for learning events
- Grow LinkedIn presence: increase unique posts from 15 to 30
- Maintain monthly newsletter reach; scrub subscriber list (it appears to have gained many bot subscribers in late 2025)
- Share our work with broad audiences, both local and national, in at least two forums (conferences, presentations to other groups, articles, etc)

### **Disseminate Regional Workforce Data & Lead Data-Informed Discussions**

- Host a data analysis roundtable with Burning Glass Institute on January 27th, 2026, highlighting changes to the healthcare workforce and gaps in career pipelines
- Share “Jobs EQ” workforce data reports with all partners on a quarterly basis
- Bring occupation- and program-specific data into learning events as appropriate
- Whenever possible, respond to specific data requests for all CHWC members

### **Leverage our Collective Voice**

- Explore policy solutions to healthcare workforce challenges
- As opportunities arise, utilize the collective voice of CHWC to advocate for workforce policy changes

### **Support Efforts to Fund Workforce Projects**

- Share funding opportunities with CHWC members, support grant applications through technical assistance and letters of support, and help coordinate collaborative proposals
- When appropriate, serve as a sub-grantee charged with coordinating employer engagement in projects led by other stakeholders including training providers and nonprofits
- Host peer learning event(s) to discuss workforce funding opportunities and challenges; dedicate June quarterly meeting to unpacking federal funding changes and impacts on the healthcare workforce.

## PROJECTS

### **Chicagoland Respiratory Therapy Workforce Collaborative**

- Convene five working groups, led by Co-Chairs and a Steering Committee, in carrying out seven strategies for increasing the number of respiratory therapists in our region. This work is outlined in a [2026 Action Plan](#), developed through the Chicagoland Respiratory Therapy Workforce Summit on November 4th, 2025.

### **Advancing Equitable Career Pathways Grant**

- Coordinate employer engagement in a learning action lab designed to disrupt the drivers of occupational segregation in postsecondary educational pathways. The action lab is led by the National Fund for Workforce Solutions and includes grantee groups from four regions. Our Chicagoland group is led by the Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance and Malcolm X City College of Chicago. Our project focuses on increasing Black male success in health career pathways.

**Youth Pathways Committee** (shared committee with the Public Health Workforce Collaborative, led by Matt McClintock, [mmclintock@hmprg.org](mailto:mmclintock@hmprg.org)), convenes leaders who are focused on increasing health career awareness and training opportunities for youth.

- Conduct a year-long project focused on strengthening equitable outreach and recruitment for youth programs, and Identifying, refining, and disseminating best practices in mentorship and experiential learning. The project will include a youth survey, subject matter expert interviews, and quarterly partner convenings.

### **Justice-Impacted Individuals & Healthcare Careers in Illinois: An Awareness & Guidance Campaign**

- In partnership with Corporate Coalition, Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance, and Cara Collective, increase the number of justice-impacted individuals entering healthcare careers in Illinois by providing them –and organizations supporting and employing them– with information and guidance needed to navigate legal barriers. Specifically, this entails identifying challenges posed by the Illinois Department of Public Health’s (IDPH) Health Care Worker Registry and the associated Health Care Worker Waiver, and working with IDPH and subject matter experts to create new guidance materials.

### **Career Pathways Resources**

- Support dissemination and awareness of a new health career pathways map resource created by Health & Medicine Policy Research Group (expected launch in mid-March).
- Work with Health & Medicine Policy Research Group and Innovation Nexus, under the direction of an Advisory Committee, to create and launch a virtual career pathways resource that allows users to explore different careers in health (*this project is currently paused due to partner capacity and staffing changes; it is not guaranteed to move forward*).

**PCT to ADN Pathway Program Exploration**

- Coordinate employer engagement in a planning process led by City Colleges of Chicago to design an accessible nursing pathway program for frontline adult employees of CHWC health systems. *(This planning process, launched in 2024, has seen several delays but is expected to resume employer engagement this year.)*