

## **Community health services frequently asked questions**

### **What is a community health unit**

This is a health service delivery structure within a defined geographical area covering a population of approximately 5,000 people. Each unit is assigned 1 Community Health Assistant (CHA) and 10 community health volunteers now known as Community health promoters who offer promotive, preventative and basic curative health services. These are governed by a Community Health Committee (CHC) and each Community Health unit is linked to a specific Health facility.

### **Who are Community Health Promoters**

Community Health Promoters (CHPs) are trained members of the community who work as a link between the community and formal health facilities. CHPs play a crucial role in addressing health inequalities by bringing essential health services closer to the people, especially those in rural and underserved areas. Further they act as link between the community and formal health facility.

### **Can I become a Community health promoter?**

Community health promoters are selected in a public baraza by the community members to serve them in matters health having met the following requirements

1. Must be a citizen of Kenya
2. Must meet the requirements of Chapter Six of the constitution
3. Should be above the age of 18 and of sound mind.
4. (S)he must be a responsible and respected member of the community
5. Is self-supporting and understands that the role of a community health volunteer does not draw a monthly income
6. Is willing and ready to provide services to the community without charging
7. (S)he must be a resident (including overnight stay) of the respective community that is selecting him/her for a continuous period of not less than five years prior to the appointment date
8. Is a form four leaver and literate, unless the situation does not allow
9. Is not disqualified for appointment to office by the above criteria or by any law

### **What do the CHPS do? Why do we need them?**

CHVs are often the first point of contact for people needing health care, especially in underserved and remote areas and are a cost-effective way to deliver health care. Specifically, they:

1. Visit households to deliver key health messages on health promotion and disease prevention
2. Identify signs and symptoms of diseases, dangers and conditions, manage minor ailments like diarrhoea with support from the community health assistants and refer those outside their scope to the health facility
3. Ensure all households have good WASH status which includes a functional latrine/toilet, hand washing facilities, refuse disposal area and have access to safe drinking water
4. Promote healthcare-seeking behaviour and compliance with treatment and advice
5. Promote appropriate home-based care for the sick, supported by CHAs and link facilities
6. Acts as a link between the community and the health facility

### **How many CHPs do we have?**

Currently, there are 104, 000 CHPS in the country distributed across the 47 counties based on the population and geographical characteristics. There are 10 CHPs in every community health unit which has an approximately 5000 persons

### **How do I know my CHP?**

CHPs are divided according to the households they offer services and are expected to register the households as they introduce themselves to the members. If you do not know your CHPs you can ask your community members, local authorities like the chief or village elder or the nearest health facility.

### **Are Community health promoters government personnel?**

CHPs are the primary health care providers in the level one service of the government health system delivery. They are not on payroll however they are facilitated to provide services

