



## Recommendations on the role of community health workers (CHWs) in the COVID-19 response



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for Global Health

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**1** Engaging CHWs who are delivering routine services to conduct COVID-19 case identification and listing is risky, and may further transmission.

### Policymakers should:

- Ask CHWs to **focus on raising awareness and countering social stigma** around COVID-19.
- **Engage a separate, trained cadre** to conduct COVID-19 case identification and listing.



**2** CHWs delivering routine services are at an increased risk of being infected with COVID-19.

### Policymakers should:

- Provide CHWs with personal **protective equipment: gloves, surgical masks and hand sanitisers.**
- Provide **N95 masks and gloves to a separate cadre engaged in COVID-19 case identification.**
- Provide all equipment in adequate quantities and with **training on proper usage at the outset.**



**3** COVID-19 is likely to disrupt supply chains, logistics and supportive supervision of CHWs, which will have an impact on the services they deliver.

### Policymakers should:

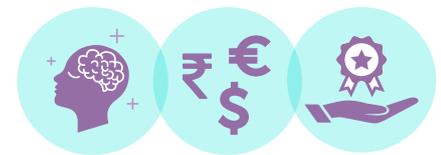
- **Develop clear guidelines** for CHWs on which **services are essential and must continue to be delivered**, and which may be suspended or postponed.
- Provide CHWs with **training and develop protocols for COVID-19-related activities, such as awareness-raising and countering social stigma.**



**4** CHWs may experience stigma, social isolation and increased stress, and may distance themselves from their families to minimise the risk of infection.

### Policymakers should:

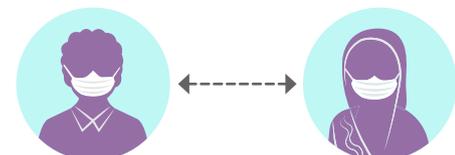
- Ensure CHWs have **access to psycho-social support services, additional transport allowances and childcare support.**
- **Implement reward and recognition programmes** for CHWs to support their motivation and coping strategies.



**5** Prevention measures such as physical distancing may not be practical in many contexts, including in informal settlements, in communities with large extended families, and among the homeless.

### Policymakers together with the World Health Organization should:

- **Develop practical guidance and materials** that can be used by CHWs with groups **for whom physical distancing measures are not possible.**



Recommendations based on the Rapid Evidence Synthesis conducted by The George Institute India. [Read more here.](#)