

BUILDING A STRONGER WORKFORCE FOR ASTHMA CARE: CTC-RI'S CHW TRAINING INITIATIVE



Asthma remains one of Rhode Island's most pressing public health challenges, particularly for children in underserved communities. To help close the gap between clinical care and the families who need it most, CTC-RI partnered with the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) and the Association of Asthma Educators (AAE) to launch a comprehensive Community Health Worker (CHW) Asthma Training Program — and the results speak for themselves.

About the Program

Backed by CDC funding through RIDOH's Asthma Control Program, CTC-RI developed and delivered two interconnected training pathways:

- Asthma Core Training is a two-day, in-person program built on the AAE's nationally recognized curriculum. It covers five modules — from understanding asthma basics and recognizing triggers, to medication management, proper use of inhalers and spacers, and conducting effective patient assessments. Participants complete a hands-on virtual competency exam with a trainer to earn certification.
- Asthma Home Visiting Training builds on the Core Training, equipping CHWs to conduct structured, effective home visits. Drawing from California Department of Public Health resources and Rhode Island's Home Asthma Response Program (HARP), this two-day training includes hands-on use of pulse oximeters and bilingual flipbooks, and prepares CHWs to identify triggers, navigate home environments safely, and support families in making meaningful environmental changes.

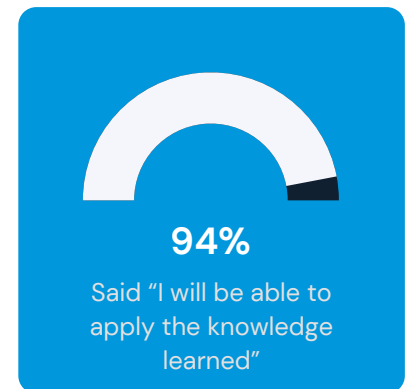
Both trainings emphasize hands-on learning, real-world case scenarios, and practical tools CHWs can put to use immediately.

From the Field: A Story That Says It All

Sometimes, the impact of training is best measured in moments. Wiston Delgado Ortegano, a Certified Community Health Worker at Point32Health (Tufts Health Plan), shared this reflection after completing the Core Training:

"Through this training, I was able to better support a mother who shared that one of her child's main asthma triggers at home is their family cat. She understands that having a pet is not helping her child's asthma and is now exploring options for another family to adopt the cat in order to create a healthier environment for her child. This experience showed me how valuable this training is in helping families identify triggers, make informed decisions, and feel supported in managing their child's asthma."

Wiston's experience reflects exactly what the program is designed to do: equip CHWs to meet families where they are, address social determinants of health, and support them in making informed decisions — even difficult ones.

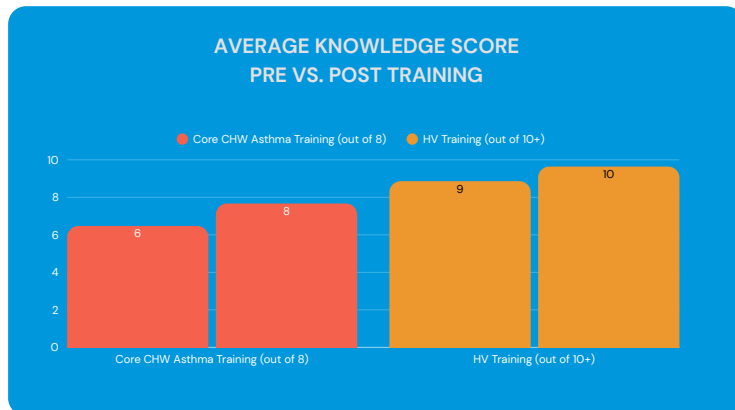
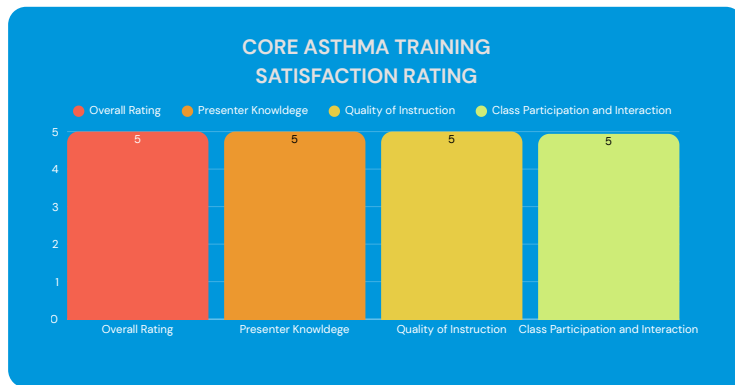


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What's Ahead

Building on the momentum of our first 2 years, CTC-RI launched the Asthma Learning Community in May 2026 — a free virtual peer support series open to all Core Asthma Training graduates. Four sessions are planned through summer 2026, covering topics like medication adherence, navigating conflicting clinical guidance, supporting families with behavioral health needs, and asthma-related school absenteeism. A Motivational Interviewing workshop is planned for the September 2026.

CTC-RI also continues to monitor changes to Rhode Island's Medicaid CHW billing and certification requirements, and will adapt future training models to support CHWs and their employers as the regulatory landscape evolves.



This initiative is made possible through support from the Rhode Island Department of Health, the Rhode Island American Lung Association, and a multi-sector Asthma Planning Committee representing health systems, schools, managed care organizations, and community organizations across Rhode Island.

KEY METRICS

ASTHMA CORE - INDIVIDUALS TRAINED

40

ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED

23

100%
Completed Competency Assessments

[Read the Full Report](#)

CTC-RI's complete Year 1 findings are captured in "Advancing Health Equity in Asthma Control: Asthma Community Health Worker Training White Paper Report" (January 2026), authored by Michelle Mooney, MPA, and Susanne Campbell, RN, MS, PCMH CCE. The report covers program design, evaluation results, lessons learned, and recommendations for future training.

