

## What does a community health worker do?

Community health workers provide a link between the community, health educators and other healthcare workers. They develop and implement strategies to improve the health of individuals, whānau and communities by collecting data and discussing health concerns with members of specific populations and communities that they serve, in which they have an in-depth knowledge. They also provide informal counselling and social support and conduct outreach programs, ensuring that people have access to the healthcare services they need.

## Salary

Community health workers usually earn between \$40,000 to \$75,000 per year.

## What subjects do I need to take in school?

- ❖ English
- ❖ Maths
- ❖ Accounting
- ❖ Te Reo Māori

## How do I get into it?

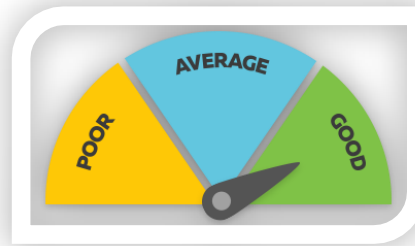
To become a community health worker you need to have relevant paid or voluntary work experience in community engagement or development. Tertiary qualifications in social work or social practice may be useful, particularly with strands in community development or management of non-profit organisations. Project and event management training and experience are also useful. Universities offering relevant courses include:

- ❖ Toi-Ohomai Institute of Technology: Bachelor of Community Health
- ❖ Massey University: Certificate in Public Health
- ❖ Unitec: Social work and community development

### ***Interpersonal skills***

Community workers should also be:

- ❖ outgoing and positive
- ❖ excellent listeners and communicators
- ❖ highly skilled at both leadership and facilitation
- ❖ well-organized
- ❖ able to establish clear professional boundaries between themselves and the community.



## Will I get a job after training?

Demand for community workers is good due to the difficulty of getting staff with the right skill mix and increasing awareness of the importance of building communities and can also respond to emergencies. The Government also has a \$3.5 million community-led development programme, which includes funding for community development workers. Community health workers are employed by a wide variety of employers including social service providers such as Plunket, charitable trusts, faith-based organisations, and city and district councils. Most community work is funded by grants of one to five years, and community workers may have a fixed-term contract for the same term. They may move into team leader or project management roles.

## Where can I found out more?

- **NZ Public Health Workforce Development**  
publichealthworkforce@moh.govt.nz - [www.publichealthworkforce.org.nz](http://www.publichealthworkforce.org.nz)
- **Health Promotion Forum**  
(09) 531 5500 - hpf@hauora.co.nz - [www.hauora.co.nz](http://www.hauora.co.nz)