

Change Agent Fellowship Program Overview

June 2024

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[Program Overview](#)

In 2009, the Change Agent Fellowship (CAF) was established by Contra Costa Health's CEO, Anna Roth, as an opportunity for continuous learning and originally positioned within Contra Costa Regional Medical Center (CCRMC), Health Centers and Detention Health. Since then, the CAF has shifted beyond the scope of CCRMC to encourage involvement from across Contra Costa Health (CCH) and other partners.

The CCH Change Agent Fellowship is an 8-month program geared towards development and support of transformational leaders in improving health and health services based on the values and mission of Contra Costa Health. The Fellowship strives to create and support CCH leadership and staff that respond to the needs of the community, addresses health disparities and works toward equity, and meets the rapidly evolving challenges of today's health landscape. Essential elements of CAF are to enhance knowledge, learn innovative program ideas in health leadership, and further the mission of CCH serving and partnering with the community and other organizations. Fellows will be exposed to improvement science principles and tools, operational management and strategies in which health care is provided, systems thinking, strategies for change management and continuous quality improvement so that Contra Costa County becomes a place where health is created.

[Who Should Apply for the Change Agent Fellowship](#)

Health professionals, people from other organizations, and community members who are interested in leading improvement efforts within and outside the organization and want to deepen their knowledge and enhance their effectiveness in their roles should apply to the Change Agent Fellowship Program. Experienced leaders who want to focus future work on making substantial improvements in the care of individuals, the health of populations, disparity reduction, and other changes would also benefit.

Applications to the 2024-2025 Change Agent Fellowship Program will be accepted from June 26, 2024, to July 26, 2024.

[Change Agent Fellowship Application \(24-25\)](#)

[Session Details](#)

Sessions occur every other Wednesday beginning September 18, 2024.

Meeting Times: 12:30pm – 4:30pm; Location varies with most in-person and some virtual.

[Program Expectations and Objectives](#)

- Learn improvement science and methodology.
- Develop the capacity to improve health through collaborative problem solving, consensus building, negotiation, and strong partnerships within and across the organization and community.

- Advance understanding of how to redefine health and health care in ways that lead to transformation.
- Demonstrate knowledge through presentations to the organizational leaders and staff.
- Collaborate with existing performance improvement teams in the organization to improve patient safety by utilizing the Institute of Medicine (IOM) aims of safe, timely, effective, efficient, equitable, and person- and family-centered care.
- Explore and enrich personal values and purpose, as well as roles as a leader at CCH.
- Address health equity by gaining a deeper understanding of both cultural differences through cultural humility and systemic and institutional barriers to equity.
- Utilize learned knowledge and newfound improvement visions to intentionally and deliberately create change processes that aim to restructure components of health systems in Contra Costa County.

Key Learning Principles

- Improvement Science
 - Approach Contra Costa Health and systems of care in ways that promote transformation by incorporating cycles of field testing, process innovation, and collaborative tools and methods.
- Multisector Collaboration
 - Bridge diverse sectors within Contra Costa County that collectively and successfully provide person-, family- and community centered care.
- Equity
 - Develop actionable strategies that address equity, racial injustices, and disparities in Contra Costa County.
- Liberatory Education
 - What Change Agent Fellows learn from the program and adapt should transfer into influencing our surrounding environments to living freer and more equitable lives.

Program Curriculum

<p>SESSIONS (30%) Fellows receive a series of structured interactive training sessions to enhance their knowledge and skills as change agents.</p>	<p>INDIVIDUAL MENTORED PROJECT (30%) Fellows will apply the skills and knowledge acquired through structured training to develop and implement individual mentored projects with the approval, assistance, and guidance of their Sponsors.</p>
<p>CCH ASSIGNMENTS (30%) Adult learning encourages knowledge to be applied to practical day to day experiences. The project, developed within the first month of the Fellowship, must focus on creating a positive impact on the organization and the community served.</p>	<p>TEAM BUILDING & FOCUSED ACTIVITIES (10%) Fellows will participate in group team building activities to enhance their experience and skills of collaboration with CAF Alumni and staff from various departments of CCH. Individuals enrolled in the fellowship may also participate in off-site conferences, webinars, self-paced online learning modules and other learning programs related to their areas of interest.</p>

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Session Learning

Fellows receive a series of semi-structured interactive training sessions to enhance their knowledge and skills as Change Agents every other week. Through the variety of session presentations, fellows are immersed in current theory and practice pertaining to *Change, Improvement Science and Leadership*.

CAF sessions occur ***every other week on Wednesdays for 4 hours*** and present opportunities for learnings in areas such as, but not limited to:

- Leadership in Times of Change, Change Management and Transformational Change Strategies
- CCH Quality and Measurement (Aim Statement, PDSA, Driver Diagrams)
- Innovative leadership principles and Human Centered Design
- Systematic improvement methodologies
- Improving Equity in at CCH and in Contra Costa County
- Crucial Conversations
- Public speaking and presentations
- Coaching and mentoring

Full Attendance & Participation

CAF faculty expect full attendance and participation for the duration of the program, including attendance at all sessions, workshop/site visit days, exercises, assignments, monthly reporting, and the execution of their identified improvement project.

The CAF Program will require approximately 4 to 6 hours a week for the full duration of the program (8 months).

Participation in the Fellowship is a valuable opportunity for personal transformation and professional growth. As such, the fellowship requires a high degree of personal responsibility and self-motivation to ensure success in the 8-month intensive program of learning.

Upon acceptance into the CAF, Fellows must:

- Complete pre-work in advance of the program kickoff. You will receive an email with pre-work requirements after notification of program acceptance.
- Attend all bi-weekly (4-hour) sessions,
- Attend specifically designated events such as conferences and learning collaborative(s),
- Accept mentorship and coaching from CAF Leadership team and faculty,
- Arrange regular meetings with their Executive Sponsors,

- **Select an improvement project within one month from the start of the Fellowship,**
- Collaborate and co-present one of the selected topics of transformational change,
- Participate in presentations, teaching and learning opportunities at designated events,
- Engage in reflective practice activities such as maintaining a blog or journal,
- Plan additional time for individual and group projects., i.e., while some accommodations to a fellow’s regular job obligations may be made, a significant commitment of personal time will be expected for projects and individual study.
- Participate in additional professional development opportunities.
 - Improvement Academy
 - Rapid Improvement events
 - Equity Action Labs
- Compose a summary of their personal experience to be published as part of the ‘A Fellows Journey’ booklet,
- Write project summary to include work documents and present project results at the Fellowship Completion Ceremony,
- Commit to work with the CAF Leadership Team and CAF alumni after successful completion of the Fellowship.

Role of Change Agent Fellow Sponsor

The CAF Sponsor is the senior leader responsible and accountable to the organization for the specific improvement project that the participant will be working on during the CAF Program.

- Your Sponsor actively supports the project throughout its entire lifecycle by finalizing the charter, providing appropriate resources, maintaining priority of the project in the face of competing events, removing barriers to testing and implementation of changes, and communicating the project story to multiple levels of the organization.

Improvement Project & Selection

An appropriate improvement project meets the following criteria:

1. The project should have an “improvement team” working on it, as opposed to an individual person.
2. Key measures of success that connect directly to the goals for the project, and that can be impacted in the CAF program timeframe, must be identified for the project. It’s desirable for baseline data for at least some of your project measures to be available (project aims are hard to set if you do not have data on the current capability of the system).
3. The systems, processes, products, or organizations where the anticipated changes will be made must be within the control or influence of the project sponsor.
4. Projects focusing on patient centeredness in healthcare or health disparities are particularly appropriate for the CAF Program.

5. Each participant will have an improvement project that will provide an opportunity to apply the theory and methods learned in the program. This project should be strategically important to the organization and scaled so it can be completed within the program time frame.
6. Each participant will devote considerable time to working with their improvement project in their organization. Participants will run many tests of change and implement some of these changes for system and process improvements in their organization.
7. **Each participant will post monthly reports on their project progress, including data related to their project measures.**
8. Each participant will present on their project at periodic intervals during the program.

The following are good examples of useful projects for the CAF Program:

- Increasing change management skills through trainings for Public Health Managers. By having structured coaching, public health managers become more aware of the process of change and can influence how change is implemented.
- Implementing resource support services for patient health centers to link them with internal and community resources. These services provide bridges to housing, food, mental health, employment, and legal services.
- Improving health care delivery by increasing effectiveness of emergency room wait times. By establishing a pivot nurse that can pre-triage patients to determine immediate and effective intervention, we can specifically decrease “left without being seen” by 2%.

The following projects are NOT useful for the CAF Program:

- Developing a measurement system -- such things as Balanced Score Cards, surveys, etc. This work is often necessary, but not sufficient for improvement.
- Huge (“solving world hunger”) projects. Strategic issues, while worthy of work by their very nature, will require multiple improvement projects and more than twelve months.