



Community Health Centers 2018 Federal Policy Agenda

Background:

For more than 50 years, Community Health Centers have provided access to high quality and affordable comprehensive primary and preventive healthcare services to millions of uninsured and medically underserved people. Today, there are almost 1,400 health centers with more than 10,000 sites. Together, they serve over 27 million patients, including eight million children, nearly 1.3 million homeless patients, 330,000 veterans, and more than 1 in 6 Medicaid beneficiaries.

Health centers have a unique role in the health care system. By mission and mandate they are required to:

- Be located in high need areas
- Serve all, regardless of insurance or ability to pay
- Provide a comprehensive set of services
- Be governed by a patient-majority board

Health Centers are an American success story. There is much more that federal policymakers can do to build off those successes to sustain and strengthen health centers' ability to improve access to and delivery of high quality, cost effective health care:



CHC FEDERAL GRANT FUNDING: Health centers rely on federal grants to offset the cost of providing care to uninsured and underinsured patients, to support service expansions, and to expand health center locations into medically underserved areas. *Long-term, stable funding is needed to ensure their ability to continue this vital work.*



MEDICAID: Medicaid is a critical program for health centers and their patients: half of all health center patients are covered by Medicaid, and Medicaid payments represent health centers' largest revenue source. *Congress must preserve a strong Medicaid program including the unique and cost effective health center FQHC PPS payment.*



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER TREATMENT: Health centers are leaders in integrating medical care, dental care, behavioral health, pharmacy, and other services. As communities across America cope with a dramatic increase in the prevalence of substance use disorder, including opioid addiction, *health centers will need targeted and sustainable investments to continue to meet this challenge.*



TELEHEALTH: Telehealth offers great benefits to patients and providers in both rural and urban areas alike, especially when workforce shortages and geography present barriers to access. *Congress should pass the CONNECT for Health Act to bring telehealth to additional communities in need.*



340B DRUG DISCOUNT PROGRAM: Health centers successfully utilize the 340B program, ensuring that patients can buy their medications at affordable prices and enabling health centers to reinvest the savings into improving quality of care, extending hours, hiring additional staff, and expanding services. *Health centers need continued, assured access to 340B to sustain their essential model of care.*