

WISCONSIN PRIMARY HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION

Serving Wisconsin Community Health Centers



Wisconsin Community Health Centers

Updates & Resources
January 2022



WHAT'S IN THIS UPDATE?



STATE UPDATES &
CO-SPONSORSHIP
OPPORTUNITIES



UPDATED HEALTH
CENTER DATA



FEDERAL UPDATES

A Note from our Board Chair

As we begin a new year, Community Health Centers in Wisconsin continue to press forward through the COVID-19 pandemic, forming the backbone for quality, comprehensive health care for underserved communities in our state. From vaccination clinics at local barber shops to on-site medical clinics for farm workers, we are in your neighborhoods providing excellent care so that families can lead healthy lives.

The challenges our communities face in 2022 are not



new, nor are they solved with any single grant or policy solution. We are working every day to connect patients with health insurance, employment, and supportive services. CHCs coordinate patient care, providing wraparound services, like behavioral health care and diabetes management from an integrated team under one roof.

Community Health Centers are strengthening bonds with our patients and increasing access through telehealth, in-person visits in our clinics and schools, and mobile care – meeting the needs of residents from every single Wisconsin county.

Here at Lakeshore, we're offering a paid post-graduate training program for psychotherapists to receive 3,000 hours of supervision required for licensure in the state of Wisconsin. This program helps address a shortage of mental health providers in our area and builds a strong pipeline of mental health professionals for our organization.

We recognize and appreciate the continued partnership with policymakers and local communities that help Community Health Centers thrive. Thank you for being a Community Health Center champion!

Kristin Stearns
Board Chair, WPHCA
CEO, Lakeshore Community Health Care

State Updates

Co-Sponsorship Opportunities

Please consider signing on as a co-sponsor of these critical bipartisan bills.

Wis-MAC Veterans Legislation - AB 720/SB 688

WPHCA is proud to support bipartisan legislation that would create new pathways for veterans to provide care in Wisconsin health care settings, including Community Health Centers.

When medically-trained service members and veterans transition to civilian life, their military healthcare training and hands-on patient care experiences do not easily translate into comparable certifications and licenses required by the civilian healthcare profession. As a result, many veterans and service members are left unemployed, underemployed, or leave the healthcare field altogether.

The Wis-MAC program is modeled after the award winning Virginia MACC Program. It is a pathway for returning veteran clinical care providers, including military medics and corpsmen, to work under supervision in their field while they obtain appropriate education and civilian licensure

in the State of Wisconsin. Enacting Wis-MAC legislation would enable not only Community Health Centers but other health care entities, such as hospitals, to hire a skilled workforce and provide career pathways for veterans as medical professionals.

Hearings have been held in both the Senate Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs and the Assembly Committee on Health.

Oral Health Workforce Legislation

AB 402/SB 392 – Certification of Expanded Function Dental Auxiliaries (EFDAs) and **SB 181/AB 169 – Licensure of Dental Therapists**, would allow members of the dental team, including dentists and dental hygienists, to practice at the top of their license. Passing both bills will contribute to delivering more efficient, high quality patient care not only in clinics but also at other sites, such as school-based clinics. Community Health Centers often see patients whose oral health needs are complex and untreated, and the community need frequently outweighs the available clinical resources. These bills are critical tools to increasing efficiency and addressing oral health access gaps in the state.

WPHCA remains optimistic that state policymakers will take action this session to continue strengthening the oral health workforce and increasing access to necessary dental care. The EFDA bill has received hearings in both chambers. The Dental Therapy bill has received a Senate hearing and has been referred to the Assembly Committee on Organization. Resources in support of Dental Therapy:

- Heartland Institute: **The State Lawmaker’s Case for Legalizing Dental Therapy**
- **National Partnership for Dental Therapy**
- Badger Institute: **Dental Therapy**
- Every Child Thrives: **Dental therapists in the U.S.: Advancing health equity**



Community Health Centers Support the Extension of Medicaid from 60 days to 1 year Post-Partum

Currently, women who qualify for Medicaid because of pregnancy are only covered up to 60 days following the birth of their child or post-partum. The 2021-2023 biennial budget approved an additional 30 days of coverage pending approval of a waiver submitted to CMS, but many mothers need care beyond this coverage window. **SB 562/AB 592, championed this session**



by Senator Ballweg and Representative Loudenbeck, would extend coverage for a full year post-partum.

On October 27, the Senate Committee on Insurance, Licensing, and Forestry held a hearing on the legislation, which is **supported** by over 30 state groups. Community Health Systems, a Community Health Center located in the Beloit area, provided testimony in support of the legislation.



Extend Medicaid from 60 days to 1 year Post-Partum

CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR TELEHEALTH

On December 22, Wisconsin's Medicaid agency released **permanent policy** for telehealth coverage. WPHCA has been actively engaging with agency staff to ensure that coverage, aligned with **2019 Wisconsin Act 56**, delivers on the promise to increase access to comprehensive care for all Wisconsinites, regardless of their ability to access in-person services. Community Health Centers have consistently indicated that covering service through audio-only (phone) is critical to ensuring access to care, in light of high speed internet limitations and other barriers that residents face using full video technology. The permanent policy released in December affirms the Department of Health Services' commitment to audio-only coverage beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. WPHCA appreciates the ongoing perseverance of policymakers, lawmakers, and partners in continued telehealth flexibilities, and remains determined to ensure that all payers understand the important benefits of telehealth for Community Health Center patients.

Telebehavioral Health

Teledentistry

UPDATED WISCONSIN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER DATA

Each year, Community Health Centers are required to report a core set of information, including data on patient characteristics, services provided, clinical processes and health outcomes, patients' use of services, staffing,

SNAPSHOT: COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER DATA

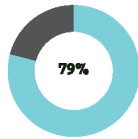
Wisconsin Community Health Centers

Community Health Centers serve everyone regardless of ability to pay or insurance status, including nearly 300,000 Wisconsin residents in 2020.¹



Nearly
1 in 5
Wisconsin
Community Health
Center patients are
uninsured.²

That's nearly 20%, compared to Wisconsin's uninsured rate of 5.7%.



79%
79% of Community Health Center patients live below 200% of the Federal Poverty Line.³

The Federal Poverty Line in 2020 is \$26,200 for a family of four.⁴

Community Health Centers are non-profit health care facilities that provide comprehensive and primary care for Wisconsin's most under-resourced communities, filling gaps in traditional health systems.

Wisconsin Community Health Center patients served in 2020 include:



6,454
Individual Experiencing Homelessness



2,195
School-Based Patients



3,331
Veterans



3,557
Seasonal Agricultural Workers

Community Health Centers increase access to affordable health care and provide integrated services including primary medical, dental, and behavioral health, based on the unique needs of local communities.

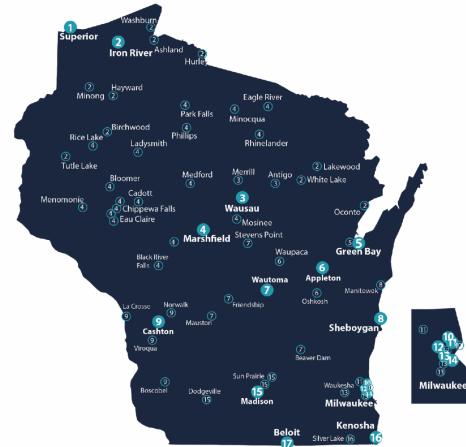


Community Health Centers serve every
1 in 9
Medicaid recipients in Wisconsin.⁵

The Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association (WPHCA) is the member association for the 17 Community Health Centers in Wisconsin. WPHCA provides training, technical assistance, and advocacy support to its members.

For more information about Community Health Centers, visit wphca.org

Wisconsin Community Health Centers



17
Community Health Centers



197
Service Delivery Sites



2,568
Employee (FTE)

1. Lake Superior Community Health Center
2. NorthLakes Community Clinic
3. Bridge Community Health Clinic
4. Family Health Center of Marshfield
5. N.E.W. Community Clinic
6. Partnership Community Health Center
7. Family Health La Clinica
8. Lakeshore Community Health Care
9. Scenic Bluffs Community Health Centers
10. Outreach Community Health Centers
11. Milwaukee Health Services, Inc.
12. Progressive Community Health Centers
13. Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers
14. Gerald L. Ignace Indian Community Health Center
15. Access Community Health Centers
16. Kenosha Community Health Center
17. Community Health Systems

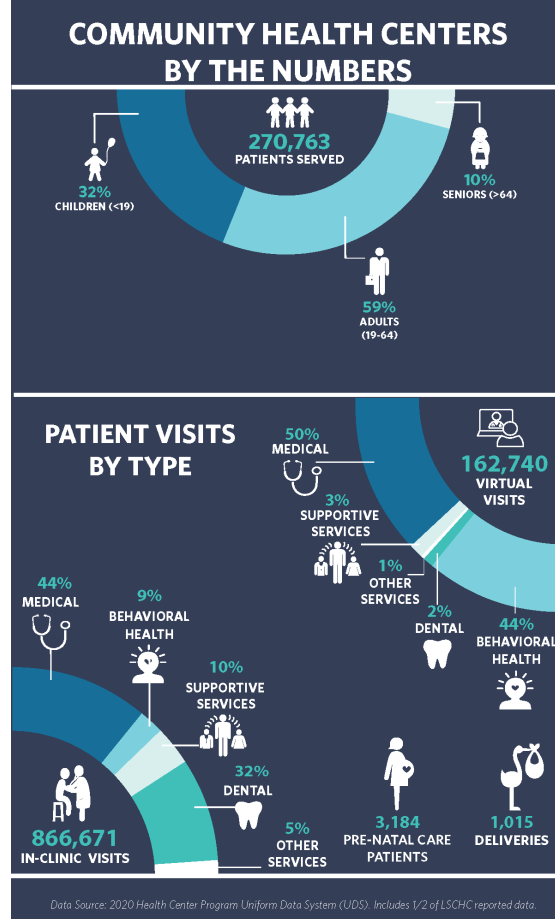
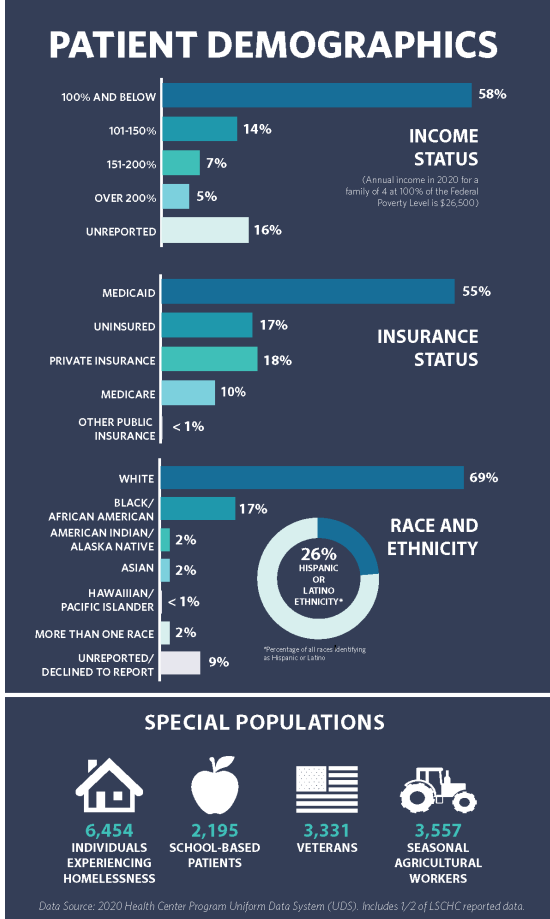
References

1. Uniformed Data System (UDS), 2020.
2. WPHCA analysis of 2020 UDS data, 2020 American Community Survey Data Wisconsin Population, 2022.
3. American Health Rankings, Wisconsin Uninsured 2020.
4. Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 2021 Poverty Guidelines, 2021.

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Updated Health Center Data Brochure



[View WPHCA Issue Briefs](#)

Federal Updates

Wisconsin Community Health Centers continue to monitor federal legislation that would expand access to care, including provisions from the Build Back Better Act. The BBB includes capital funding for Community Health Centers to support continued investment in the physical infrastructure that clinics need to reach the nation’s most historically underserved patients.

WPHCA also continues to advocate for the following legislation:

- **CONNECT for Health Act (S 1512 / HR 2903):** Permanent coverage for Medicare telehealth services
- **PROTECT 340B (HR 4390):** Establishing protections for the 340B Drug Pricing Program, which provides entities such as Community Health Centers access to affordable medications
- **Immunization Infrastructure Modernization Act (HR 550):** Updating the nation’s data systems to support efficient exchange of information across states

- **Mental Health Access Improvement Act (S 828 / HR 432):** Expanding the mental health workforce by allowing counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists to bill services for Medicare enrollees

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS IN THE NEWS



Scenic Bluffs' Medical Director, Dr. Bade, discusses the importance of getting vaccinated. Scenic Bluffs is currently holding vaccine clinics.



Esmeralda Villalobos, CNA, gives an injection of Moderna at the Kenosha Community Health Center, Inc. earlier this year.



Milwaukee Neighborhood News Service: Where To Find Mental Health Resources This Winter

WPHCA is proud to serve Wisconsin's 17 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) also known as Community Health Centers (CHCs). Community Health Centers around the state have been deploying every tool available to continue providing care to patients throughout the pandemic. This newsletter includes information on Community Health Centers' priorities, resources, and stories from patients and clinics.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to [WPHCA](#) with any questions or to request additional information and constituent support to identify primary care providers. Find your local clinic [here](#).

[Visit WPHCA Website](#)

THANK YOU!

Contact WPHCA's Government Relations Specialist:
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Did you miss our last Quarterly Update? Find the [October 2021 Lawmaker Update here](#) and all [Quarterly Newsletters](#) and [Press Releases here](#).



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