

NORTH AND SOUTH DAKOTA: MOBILE HEALTH CARE PCA& HCCN CONFERENCE GALLERY WALK (2023)



PROJECT AIM

The Community HealthCare Association of the Dakotas (CHAD) proposed to provide training and technical assistance to support mobile unit growth and development at health centers in North Dakota and South Dakota. Health centers expressed interest in learning more about how to operationalize and integrate mobile units to deliver existing health center services, including primary, dental and behavioral health care. CHAD will identify existing health centers with mobile units to participate in best practice sharing sessions. Training and technical assistance will be delivered on topics such as:

- Mobile unit best practices;
- Return on investment calculations;
- Regulatory considerations and constraints; and
- Mobile unit logistics and supply management.

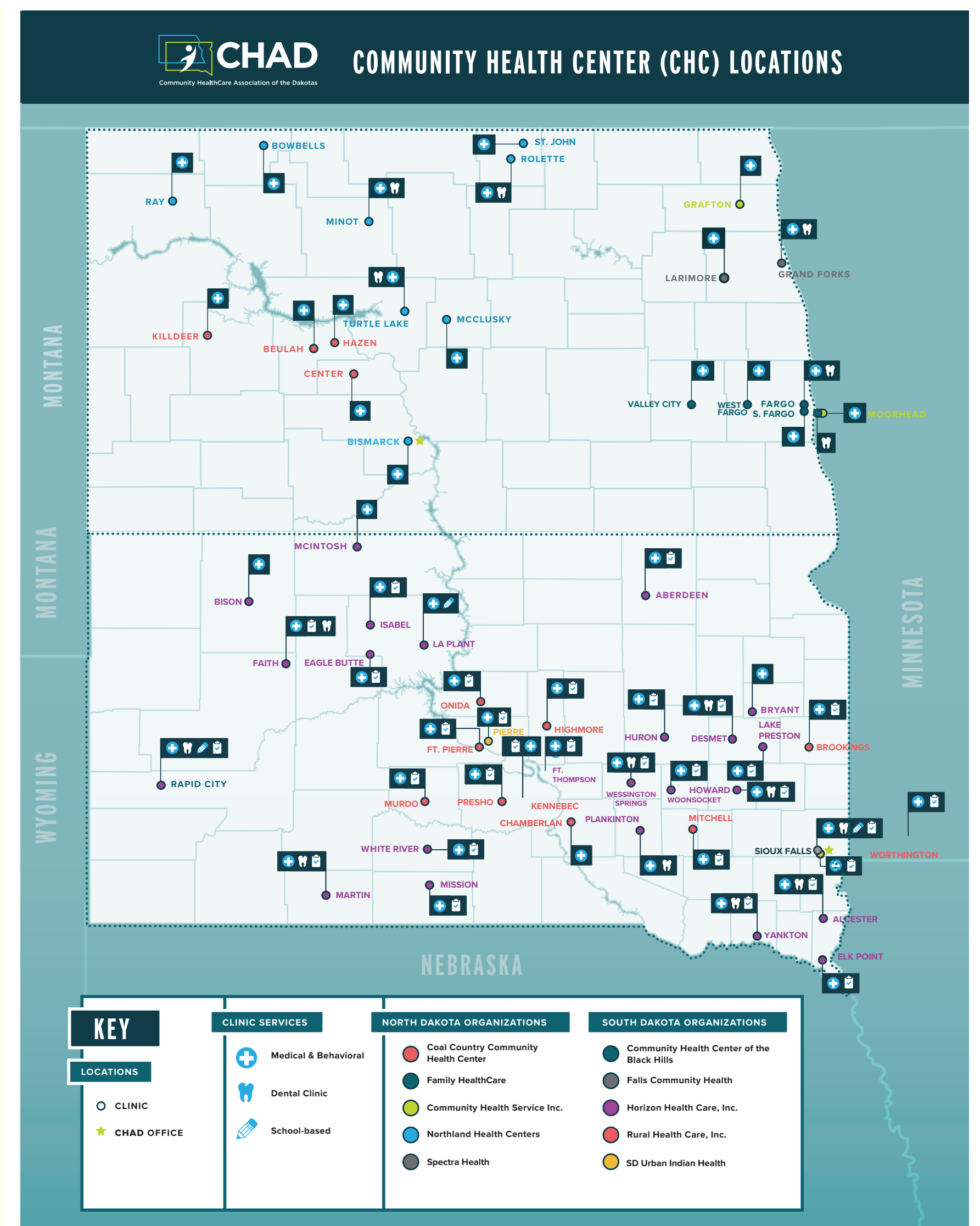
CHAD also aimed to conduct an environmental scan of health centers with mobile units who are willing to share information and best practices. This information will be provided to health centers across North and South Dakota to reference as they consider and pursue growth of mobile units.

CHAD actively collaborates with health centers across leads, HCCN staff and PCA CEOs. At the start of this grant, CHAD aimed to promote the training series to all health centers in Region 8 through distribution in state and regional PCA newsletters. Best practices and resources will be shared as appropriate with PCA staff and interested health centers.

CURRENT STATE OF MOBILE

Health centers in North Dakota and South Dakota serve some of the most rural and frontier areas in the nation. As health care continues to evolve, health centers recognize that the delivery model will need to adapt to ensure continued delivery of health care services in these challenging environments. This project will help health centers determine if mobile units are a viable solution to address challenges such as declining rural populations, workforce shortages and access to transportation.

Health centers in North Dakota and South Dakota have expressed interest in evaluating use of mobile units to extend care to patients who currently lack access to health care due to distance from a health center site or difficulty accessing reliable transportation. **Family HealthCare** (Fargo, ND) is currently utilizing a mobile unit to provide both medical and dental care. The mobile unit routinely visits local public schools to provide vaccination and preventative dental care services. Utilization of the mobile unit is limited due to staff availability, as the mobile unit does not have dedicated staff at this time. **Horizon Health Care**, which provides care in 21 communities across South Dakota, has identified the use of mobile units as a potential option to sustain healthcare services in very rural and frontier communities. **Community Health Center of the Black Hills** (Rapid City, SD) has indicated they are interested in the use of mobile units to improve access to care at outreach sites around the community.



SURVEY RESULTS

Environmental scan results indicated that health centers in North Dakota and South Dakota were most interested in training and technical assistance related to funding the purchase and equipment for a mobile health unit, identifying a manufacturer and designing a unit and types of services best offered with a mobile unit.

Top concerns of health centers included hiring and training staff, the cost of acquiring and equipping the mobile health unit and scheduling staff time.

IMPACT SO FAR

CHAD contributed questions to develop the environmental scan/survey that was supported by NACHC. The survey was distributed to health centers in North Dakota and South Dakota and was also shared with PCA throughout Region 8. The survey was completed by 6 of the 8 health centers in the Dakotas.

Program Outcome:

CHAD hosted a virtual summit titled "Making the Most of Mobile Care" on October 17, 2023. The summit included presentations from Dr. Mollie Williams (Mobile Health Map and The Family Van, Boston MA), Jeri Andrews (CareSouth Carolina, Hartsville SC) and featured a panel discussion with Vickie Cranford-Lonquich (Tsehootsooi Medical Center, Fort Defiance, AZ), Michelle Derr (Community Health Programs, Great Barrington, MA), Lisa Dettling (Nevada Health Centers, Carson City NV) and Kory Wolden (Family HealthCare, Fargo ND).

80 health center and primary care association staff registered for the virtual summit with a total of 56 attending live. 16 participants were from health centers in North Dakota and South Dakota while the remaining participants represented health centers and primary care associations throughout Region 8. 100% of attendees indicated that they found the tools, ideas or resources offered in the training useful to their work and/or organization.

Want to learn more? Mobile health virtual summit recordings and presentations can be found on CHAD's website at <https://communityhealthcare.net/chad-events/#past-event-resources>.