

Innovating for Healthy Communities

Community Health Centers Changing Health Care to Better Serve Their Communities

Our Goal:

Preserve and Strengthen the Community Health Center Model to Drive Innovation at the Patient, Community and System Level

Background

Community health centers are the **largest primary care network in the U.S.**, serving more than **24 million patients in over 9,000 communities**. Each health center adheres to the **same core model**: located in high-need areas, community-governed, open to all regardless of ability to pay, with a full range of preventive and primary care services.

Through innovations taking place in communities nationwide, health centers are collectively leading the way toward a **more integrated, patient-centered, prevention-focused** health care system. Other health care systems, health researchers, foundations and agencies from all levels of government have praised the community health center model as an example of **public-private partnership driving innovation** in health care.

The Facts

- Because all health centers are designed to be **responsive to the needs of their communities** through their **patient-majority governing boards**, they must continually meet community challenges with innovative solutions.
- Health center clinical teams are developing new approaches to integrating **behavioral health, oral health, nutrition and other services** together with primary medical care.
- By developing and participating in **alternative payment models**, health centers are incentivizing prevention and value-based improvements in quality of care.
- Health centers are serving as the **training grounds for the future clinical workforce**, bringing training and education into the community where care is most needed.
- More than 98% of health centers have implemented **electronic health records** and many are using **telehealth and remote patient monitoring technology** to improve care.
- The health center model needs **ongoing support from policymakers** to continue.

Our Request

To demonstrate their support for the community health center model of care, health centers ask that Members:

1. **Join the Bipartisan Caucus on Community Health Centers.** Please contact Senate co-chairs **Senators Blunt, Carper, Cornyn or Cardin**, or House co-chairs **Representatives Granger, Davis (IL), or Capuano** to join.
2. **Visit a community health center** during an upcoming district work period, or during **National Health Center Week (August 7th-13th)**.

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