

PENNSYLVANIA: MOBILE HEALTH CARE PCA & HCCN CONFERENCE GALLERY WALK (2023)



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
Community Health Centers®

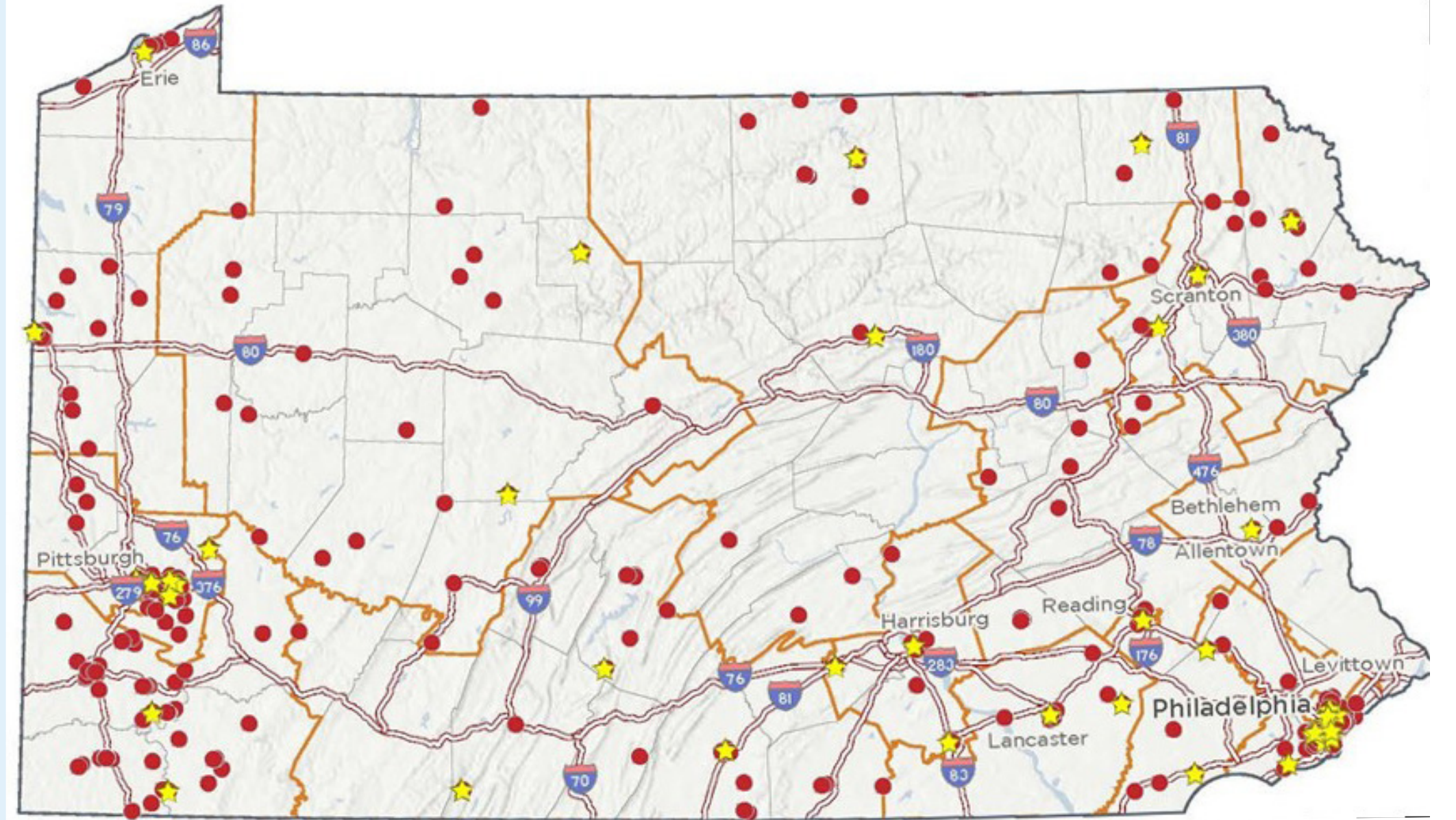


PROJECT AIM

The initial aim of this project was to provide education and a network of support for health centers interested in developing or sustaining a mobile unit and initiating community-based programs. This would allow the Pennsylvania Association of Community Health Centers (PACHC) to better understand the mobile unit landscape across the state and help us develop tools needed to implement or expand mobile unit programs.

This project is important as we constantly monitor the needs of our members and mobile units have repeatedly been part of peer group discussions. Due to this feedback, two annual conference sessions in 2022 were focused on mobile unit function within our health centers. It was and remains clear that our members have identified a need for mobile units to increase patient access, reduce barriers to care, and begin new initiatives (school-based programs, outreach to people experiencing homelessness).

At the start of this project, PACHC aimed to survey health centers statewide to determine mobile unit use. This information was summarized in a report and shared with health centers and other PCAs. We presented the survey results during a session titled "Driving Better Health, Operations and Clinical Workflow of a Dental Mobile Unit" at the PACHC Annual Conference and allowed for networking and discussion during the session. We have provided information to our members about the Mobile Healthcare Association through our weekly newsletter which has a readership of greater than 1,500 people. Additionally, we are working with the leadership at Mobile Health Map to provide a session on financial sustainability as this was an area of need identified by the survey.



CURRENT STATE OF MOBILE

- **Berks Community Health Center:** Use their mobile unit for medical and dental exams, dental x-rays, vaccinations, and lab draws.
- **Community Health and Dental:** Using their mobile unit for dental recalls, school dental exams, sealants, fillings, and simple extraction.
- **Cornerstone Community Care:** Using their mobile unit to provide a variety of services including, physicals, lab and testing services, birth control, treatment of minor injuries and illnesses. Screenings include breast and cervical cancer, mammogram referrals/vouchers, vision, hearing, and lead.
- **The Wright Center for Community Health:** Using their mobile unit (named "Driving Better Health") during the school day to provide dental services to students. They also use their mobile unit for COVID-19 vaccination and testing.
- **North Penn Comprehensive Services:** Using their mobile unit for COVID-19 testing and vaccination.
- The clinics listed above were those we were aware of prior to the survey. The following clinics also have mobile units: Centerville Clinics, Hyndman Area Health Center, Primary Health Network, River Valley Health & Dental, Sadler Health Center, The Sayre Health Center, Sto-Rox Family Health Center, Squirrel Hill Health Center, and Valley Health Partners.



SURVEY RESULTS

The survey results indicated that Pennsylvania (PA) was closely aligned with national trends regarding mobile unit landscape. For example, the top three sites visited by mobile units nationally and in PA were: community events, school, and health fairs. Additionally, the greatest challenge to operations noted by mobile units in PA and nationally is hiring and training staff. In both PA and nationally, half of community health centers surveyed offer preventive services, primary care, enabling services, outreach and enrollment, immunizations, dental, and pediatrics directly through their mobile unit. At the national level, half of mobile units also offered chronic disease management. The most notable difference between PA results and national results was the average per unit per month cost. In PA the average per unit per month cost is \$82,936.29, whereas nationally the average per unit per month cost is \$107,725.09. It is also notable that staff time is almost independently driving the difference in those values.

IMPACT SO FAR

At the start of this project, we conducted a mobile unit survey with support from NACHC and had 40% of health centers respond to the survey. We monitored the initiation of new mobile units. Also, we identified a successful and longstanding mobile unit through the results of the survey and asked leadership from that health center to speak at the PACHC 2023 Annual Conference titled "Driving Better Health, Operations and Clinical Workflow of a Dental Mobile Unit". PACHC presented the results of the survey at the beginning of the session. We tracked attendance at our mobile unit session and had 46 attendees.

Working with NACHC, PACHC developed a better connection with Mobile Healthcare Association and met with Elizabeth Wallace (Executive Director, MHA) to discuss opportunities for collaboration. This resulted in purchasing an organizational membership to the Mobile Healthcare Association and an opportunity for PACHC staff to attend the Mobile Healthcare Association Conference in Pittsburgh. Additionally, we shared webinar sessions available through the Mobile Healthcare Association, with our membership. PACHC registered for the Mobile Healthcare Association newsletter to continue to receive up to date information. PACHC also met with Mobile Health Maps and intends to engage them for a webinar on mobile unit sustainability for PACHC membership.