

# What is a Community Health Center?

Community Health Centers are the nation's largest network of primary health care providers, increasing access to care for all, regardless of ability to pay, on a sliding scale fee. They are:

- patient and community directed
- not-for-profit or public organizations
- small businesses
- local employers
- public health partners

## What do Community Health Centers do?

Community Health Centers provide access to high quality, affordable, comprehensive, culturally competent health care. Health services offered at Community Health Centers include:

- Primary Care
- Preventive Care
- Behavioral Health
- Dental
- Pharmacy
- Vision
- Enabling Services

## Who Do Community Health Centers Serve?

Everyone. Community Health Centers are open to everyone regardless of insurance status or ability to pay. Nationally, Community Health Centers serve 30 million patients, including:

- **1 in 8** Children
- **1 in 5** Medicaid Beneficiaries
- **1 in 5** Uninsured Persons
- **1 in 3** People in Poverty
- **1.4** Million Homeless Patients
- More than **398,000+** Veterans

## Where are Community Health Centers Located?

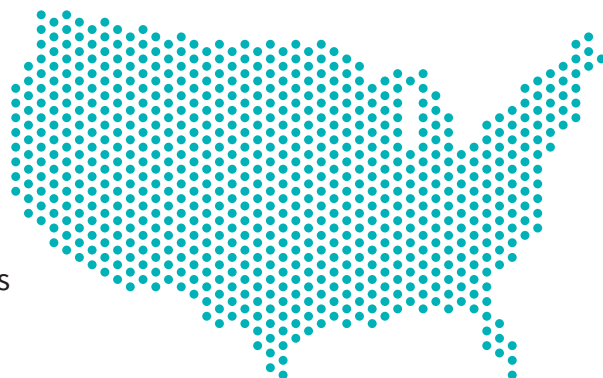
**EVERYWHERE.** Community Health Centers can be found across the United States in medically underserved communities. There are over **1,400** Community Health Center organizations in over **13,000** rural, urban, and suburban communities. **45%** of Community Health Centers are rural.

### Patient & Community Directed

At least 51% of a Community Health Center's board members must be patients served by the health center. These health center patient board members must, as a group, represent the individuals who are served by the health center.

### Enabling Services

These are non-clinical services that increase access to care and help foster stronger, healthier communities. Enabling services vary from community to community, but can include translation and interpretation, food pantries and community gardens, transportation, fitness programs, housing programs, and other social services.





## Why are Community Health Centers Important?

- Community Health Centers increase access to health care for many who might otherwise go without.
- They increase access to timely primary care, helping to reduce costly, avoidable emergency department (ED) visits.
- They improve health outcomes and reduce health disparities among vulnerable populations.
- During public health crises, emergencies, and man made or natural disasters--Community Health Centers are often found on the front lines providing care.

## How do Community Health Centers Help the Economy?

Community Health Centers employ over **236,000** people. They are efficient and save the health care system over \$24 billion every year by reducing the need for more expensive care such as hospitalizations and emergency room use. Every **\$1** in federal investments generates **\$5.73** in economic activity across the U.S. In total, Community Health Centers generate **\$54.6** billion in economic activity.

## How Does Government Funding Support Community Health Centers?

Long-term, stable federal investment is essential to ensuring Community Health Centers meet operational needs, recruit and retain staff and expand needed services for patients.

## FQHC, Community Health Center, what does it all mean?

While most Community Health Centers focus on serving their entire community, a few focus on specific populations, such as persons experiencing homelessness, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, and residents of public housing. Community Health Centers are often called Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), and many of them receive grant funding from the Federal government to help support their efforts.