



TODD NOVAK

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 51ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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Toll-Free: (888) 534-0051
Rep.Novak@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708-8953

DATE: February 9th, 2021
RE: Testimony on Senate Bill 59
TO: The Senate Committee on Health
FROM: State Representative Todd Novak

Thank you, Chairman Testin, and members of the Committee on Health for holding this public hearing on Senate Bill 59 (SB59), which increases funding for Community Health Centers by \$2 million annually.

Currently, Wisconsin has 17 community health centers around the state. These facilities provide primary care as well as urgent care, medical screenings, dental care, voluntary family planning, well child services (immunizations), gynecological and obstetrics care, prenatal and perinatal services, in house laboratory and radiology services, and medication assisted care. Throughout the pandemic these facilities have adapted to provide for telehealth visits and have assisted with COVID testing, treatment, and vaccination. These facilities fill a niche where access to primary care is limited; frequently these facilities serve those who are uninsured.

Under current law, the state gives community health centers \$5.49 million, which is only 4% of their general operating budget. This amount was determined in fiscal year 2009, and has remained the same. Since the most recent increase (FY 09), the number of patients seen by community health centers per year has increased by more than 100,000. Moreover, the number of locations where health centers serve patients has increased from 73 to nearly 200. These increases have occurred all the while the level of state funding has not changed.

Access Community Health Center (Access) operates in my district and in several other communities throughout south central Wisconsin. Each year, Access provides over 120,000 visits to more than 30,000 people. Under the current funding rate, Access alone receives \$465,460 from the \$5.49 million allocated in the state grant. The state grant is used to pay for provider and staff salaries and, in particular, helps uninsured and under-insured patients receive care at the same level as those with more comprehensive health care coverage. An increase in funding would help them greatly.

This bill increases the amount of the state grant from \$5.49 million to \$7.49 million. An increase in funding would allow for greater patient access to care services. There are services such as dental and behavioral health that are not covered by many insurance plans; yet, these services are needed to optimize an individual's health. A funding increase could mean 32,000 dental visits for low income residents, and behavioral health and substance abuse disorder care for another 3,000 patients. This proposal would give Access Community Health Centers an increase of \$172,000 for a total state funding level of over \$637,000. The additional funding will be instrumental in helping Access develop even greater capacity to provide comprehensive primary care services which helps my constituents achieve better health outcomes.

Thank you for your consideration of SB59.

SB 59: Increase to the State Community Health Center Grant

THE ISSUE

Community Health Centers have increased the number of patients, the amount of services provided, and service locations, but the Community Health Center State Grant has remained the same since 2008.

THE WHY

Health Centers use flexible state grant funds to make significant impacts in every community they serve. These improvements include increasing access to oral health care, particularly for vulnerable populations, continuously reinvesting in innovative quality improvement activities, broadening access to substance use disorder treatment and mental health services, and improving access to preventive care and chronic disease management. Community Health Centers are also able to use this grant to address social determinants of health, which improves the potential for patients to move from Medicaid to private insurance.



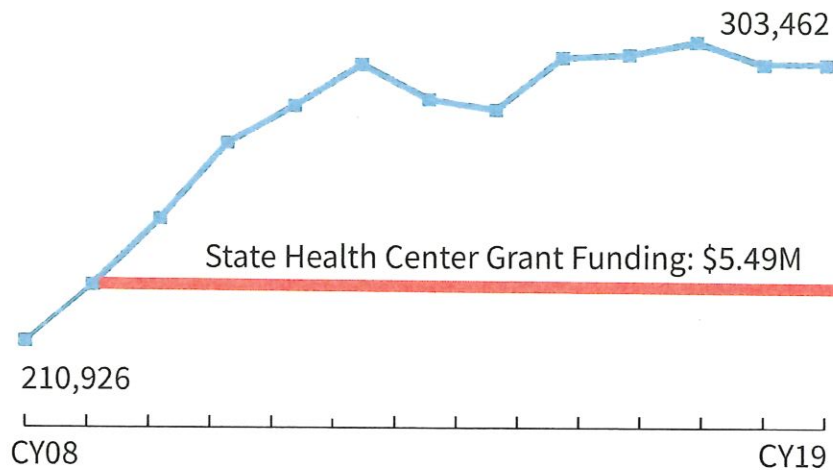
THE DATA

- Total patients served increased by 44% from 210,926 in 2008 to 303,462 in 2019.^{1,2}
- The number of dental patients more than doubled from 61,575 in 2008 to 172,487 in 2019.^{1,2}
- Health Centers continue to expand services and hire providers for mental health and substance use disorder services.
- Since 2008, Community Health Centers have hired 133 additional Behavioral Health providers.^{1,2}

THE SOLUTION

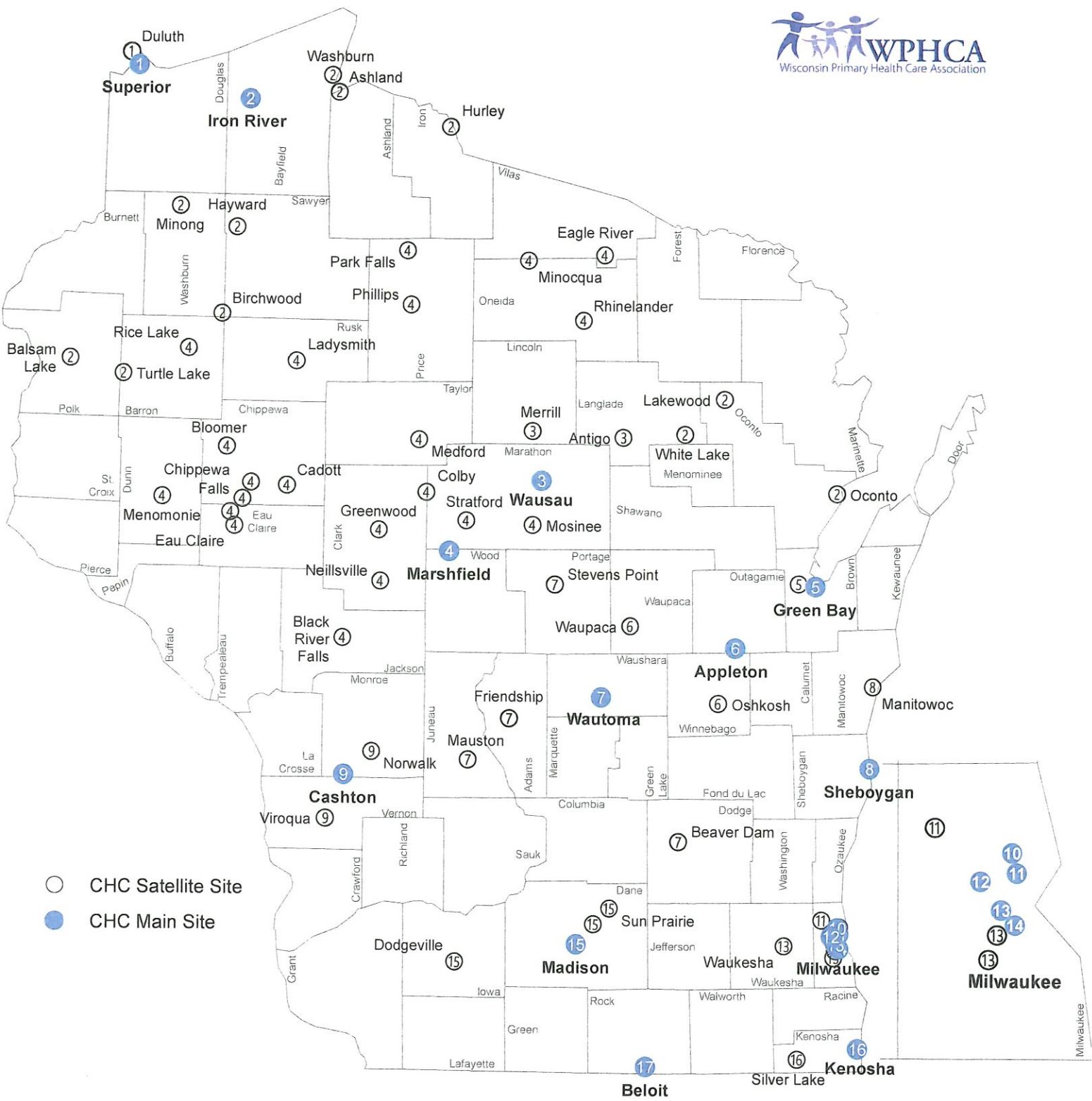
The Wisconsin State Legislature passes SB 59: An Increase to the Wisconsin Community Health Center State Grant. This legislation would increase the State Grant by \$2M annually and would allow Health Centers to reach even deeper into the communities they serve while adapting to address state health priorities.

Total patients served increased by 44% from 210,926 in 2008 to 303,462 in 2019.^{1,2}



1. Health Center Program Uniform Data System (UDS). 2008.
2. Health Center Program Uniform Data System (UDS). 2019.

Wisconsin Community Health Centers 2020



○ CHC Satellite Site
● CHC Main Site

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



February 9, 2021

TO: Chairman Testin
Members of the Senate Committee on Health

RE: Senate Bill 59: Community health center grants and making an appropriation

Chairman Testin and Members of the Senate Committee on Health, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association (WPHCA) in support of Senate Bill 59 (SB 59). I would especially like to thank Chairman Testin for his leadership in sponsoring the bill, along with Senator Ballweg and Representatives Novak and Magnafici. I would also like to thank the additional 20 legislators who co-sponsored SB 59.

I'm Richelle Andrae, the Government Relations Specialist for WPHCA. WPHCA is the membership organization for the 17 federally qualified health centers (FQHCs or Health Centers) in Wisconsin. Health Centers are non-profit, community-directed medical, dental, and behavioral health clinics. In Wisconsin, Health Centers annually served over 300,000 patients in 2019, providing care for residents from every single county.

Today I'm pleased to be joined virtually by leaders from four of those Health Centers who will also address the Committee. Health Centers provide care to all patients, regardless of their ability to pay. If you do not have insurance, you are still able to get primary care at a Health Center. On Medicaid, or have employer-sponsored insurance? You may be able to see both a dentist and a primary care provider at your local Health Center. Health Centers also help folks apply for insurance and find programs to help families connect with vital resources like food or employment.

Throughout 2020, Health Centers have deployed every tool they have and created many new ones to address the COVID-19 pandemic. If you visit Health Centers, you may see mobile units to meet the needs of farm workers or new tents for socially distanced testing. The Health Center response to COVID-19 is a great example of the adaptive way our clinics across the state are meeting unique community needs, as there is no one-size-fits all approach to providing care.

The state Health Center grant funding has remained level at \$5.49 million since 2009 and is an incredible tool that Health Centers can use to meet distinct community needs. Most of the funding Health Centers receive is specifically tied to federal programs, leaving them with limited room to rapidly advance pilots or invest in needed infrastructure improvements and additions. The State Grant allows Health Centers to make investments based on local community priorities.

As you can see in our testimony packet, the number of patients receiving care at Health Centers has grown considerably over the last 10 years. Funding through the State Grant, however, has not. Current funding is distributed proportionately according to the Health Center federal 330 grant and helps Health Centers flexibly meet emerging patient needs. That includes expanding service lines, especially behavioral health, Substance Use Disorder treatment, and oral health care for both children and adults.

An additional \$1 million annual investment could support nearly 32,000 dental visits to low-income residents. An additional \$2 million investment could support those dental visits, plus provide Behavioral Health or SUD care to 3,000 patients, supporting 18 new clinicians.

The Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association greatly appreciates the bipartisan support for an increased state investment in Health Centers and the communities they serve. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of our members, I will be happy to answer any questions now, or address them after our Health Centers speak with the Committee. Thank you.

ABOUT WPHCA:

WPHCA is the membership association for Wisconsin's 17 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) also known as Community Health Centers (CHCs). Community Health Centers work to create healthier communities by improving access, providing quality health care and reducing health disparities for Wisconsin's underserved and low-income populations. Our aim is to ensure that all Wisconsinites achieve their highest health potential. We execute our mission and focus our aim through providing training and technical assistance to Wisconsin's Community Health Centers and advocating on their behalf.

CONTACT:

Richelle Andrae
Government Relations Specialist
Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association
randrae@wphca.org
P: (608) 443-2953



February 9, 2021

To: Chairman Testin
Members of the Senate Committee on Health

Re: Supporting 2021 Senate Bill 59: Community health center grants and making an appropriation

We, the undersigned, recognize the important role that Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs or Community Health Centers) play in Wisconsin. Serving over 300,000 patients annually, Community Health Centers serve a vital role in expanding access to medical, dental, and behavioral health care to the most underserved populations in our state, including the uninsured or underinsured. The majority of patients have incomes below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level and 1 in 5 Community Health Center patients lack insurance.

Community Health Centers have always understood that social determinants of health affect their patients and communities. Over 50% of Community Health Center patients in Wisconsin live in poverty and face multiple social and environmental factors that affect both their need and access to health care services. These factors include residing in federally designated health professional shortage areas (HPSAs) and communities with limited access to care. Patients also reside in areas that have been devastated by the opioid epidemic, lacking the resources to address needed Substance Use Disorder and behavioral health treatment. Additionally, many patients struggle with obtaining and maintaining health coverage.

We support WPHCA's policy priority, *SB 59: An Increase to the Community Health Center State Grant*, because we recognize the significant impact that Community Health Centers have on the communities that they serve. Community Health Centers have proven not only to be great stewards of the money they receive, but innovators in quality care and integral community partners.

A \$2 million annual increase in the State Grant, bringing the total to be distributed among Health Centers to \$7.49 million, allows Community Health Centers to continue to expand upon current state grant programs and activities. In addition, increased investment through the State Grant gives Community Health Centers the opportunity to develop services and programs to help address legislative and executive priorities such as combatting COVID-19, workforce readiness and development, and expanding access to health services for rural and agricultural areas.

We look forward to continuing to work with WPHCA and Community Health Centers as they work to meet the needs of their patients and their communities. Thank you for the opportunity to share our support.

Mark Grapentine
Chief Policy & Advocacy Officer
Wisconsin Medical Society

Douglas Ballweg
President/Chief Executive Officer
Delta Dental of Wisconsin

Matt Crespin
Associate Director
Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin
Wisconsin Oral Health Coalition

Dennis Skrajewski
Executive Director
Wisconsin Association of Free and Charitable
Clinics

Linda Conlon
Public Affairs Committee Co-Chair
Wisconsin Association of Local Health
Departments and Boards

Maureen Busalacchi
Public Affairs Committee Co-Chair
Wisconsin Public Health Association

Ruth Wood
Chair, Pierce County Board of Health
Member, Wisconsin Public Health Association

NorthLakes COMMUNITY CLINIC

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February 9, 2021

TO: Chairman Testin

Members of the Senate Committee on Health

RE: 2021 Senate Bill 59: Community health center grants and making an appropriation

On behalf of NorthLakes Community Clinic, I am writing to provide additional information for the consideration of this Committee, regarding Senate Bill 59.

NorthLakes is a rural health center with 14 clinic locations serving over 24,000 patients across Northern Wisconsin. We also have school-based oral and behavioral health programs serving over 17,000 students in nearly 60 school districts in our service area.

NorthLakes appreciates the Wisconsin legislature's investment in the state's Community Health Centers. The Community Health Center State Grant allows our health center to flexibly address unique community needs and support the best health outcomes for patients. However, State Grant funding has remained frozen for the past 12 years. Meanwhile, NorthLakes continues to find creative ways to meet patient needs. Since 2016, we have increased our patient panel by 7,000 Wisconsinites and added new services such as our Recovery Program helping state residents with opiate and other addictions. In 2020, we adapted quickly to meet the needs of patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. We:

- Implemented safety protocols to allow our staff and patients be safe to continue their care with in-clinic visits,
- Very importantly, worked with the new telehealth standards allowed by WI Medicaid to continue behavioral health, medical, occupational & speech therapy services.
- Also, we are a vaccination site at our medical clinics in Ashland, Bayfield Oconto, Sawyer and Washburn counties.

The state grant allows us to adapt to evolving patient and community needs. Currently the State Grant supports:

- Our school-based oral health program and expansion to WIC offices, nursing homes, and childcare centers. This program supports nearly 17,000 mostly children with their oral health needs and education.

With your support, this increase to the State Grant could allow us to:

- Minimize the large travel times our patients have to endure in our Northern service area by improving access to additional oral health providers such as Pediatric dentists and/or oral surgeons,
- Broaden access of our Recovery Program to new communities in our service area.

NorthLakes

COMMUNITY CLINIC

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NorthLakes greatly appreciates the bipartisan support for an increased state investment in Community Health Centers and the communities we serve. Thank you for the opportunity to share information regarding the innovative programs at our Community Health Center, and the need for further flexible funding.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:



C62A1645490A4CA...
Brian D Ahlgren

Chief Financial Officer

NorthLakes Community Clinic

bahlgren@nlccwi.org



February 9, 2021

TO: Chairman Testin
Members of the Senate Committee on Health

RE: 2021 Senate Bill 59: Community health center grants and making an appropriation

On behalf of Progressive Community Health Centers, I am writing to provide additional information for the consideration of this Committee, regarding Senate Bill 59. Our agency operates three clinic locations on the city of Milwaukee's near northwest side and serves more than 13,000 low-income patients annually.

The Community Health Center State Grant allows our health center to flexibly address unique community needs and support the best health outcomes for patients. We appreciate the Wisconsin legislature's investment in Community Health Centers. However, State Grant funding has remained frozen for the past 12 years.

Meanwhile, Progressive Community Health Centers continues to find creative ways to meet patient needs. Over the past decade, our patient population has more than doubled and we have launched several new service lines including pediatrics, podiatry, urgent care, diagnostic radiology and mammography. We also employ more than 125 staff, which further supports the local economy and workforce development efforts.

In 2020, we adapted quickly to meet the needs of patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. Within the past year, we have:

- Provided drive-thru COVID-19 testing to more than 2,000 people and recently began administering COVID-19 vaccine to priority populations.
- Implemented telehealth services for behavioral health and medical consult appointments.
- Expanded our emergency dental walk-in clinic to operate five days per week.

We would not be able to adapt to evolving patient and community needs without the State Grant. At Progressive Community Health Centers, the State Grant currently supports:

- Pediatric oral health programs. In lieu of being able to offer our school-based Seal-A-Smile program due to COVID-19, we pivoted State Grant resources to help launch a medical dental integration (MDI) program. A dental hygienist works with our pediatric care team to conduct oral health exams and fluoride treatments during routine medical visits. Children with urgent oral health needs are referred to our pediatric dentist for timely follow-up care. Within the first three months of program launch we served more than 200 patients via MDI.
- Improved access to chronic disease management programming. We employ a clinical pharmacist and clinical care coordinator that provide personalized support and care management plans to patients suffering from uncontrolled diabetes and hypertension. Many of these visits are not reimbursable via insurance, so State Grant funding helps offset costs of the program which serves more than 600 patients annually.

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3522 W. Lisbon Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53208
(414) 344-3350 fax

Lisbon Avenue Health Center
3522 W. Lisbon Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53208
(414) 344-3045 fax

Hillside Family Health Center
1452 N. 7th Street, 2nd Floor
Milwaukee, WI 53205
(414) 287-0907 fax

12th Street Urgent Care
945 N. 12th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53233
(414) 219-7769 fax

progressivechc.org
(414) 935-8000 main phone

With your support, this proposed increase to the State Grant via Senate Bill 59 would allow us to accomplish even more, such as:

- Expand our innovative Transitions Clinic Network (TCN) program that links citizens returning from incarceration with peer-support case management and immediate access to critical health care services. The TCN program could have the capacity to serve up to 200 patients per year.
- Pilot a self-monitored blood pressure (SMBP) program that would utilize Bluetooth enabled devices to allow care teams and patients to remotely monitor hypertension control. We aim to serve roughly 275 patients per year as part of a SMBP program.

Progressive Community Health Centers greatly appreciates the bipartisan support for an increased state investment in Community Health Centers and the communities we serve. Thank you for the opportunity to share information regarding the innovative programs at our Community Health Center. This flexibility in funding is imperative so we can continue to address unique community needs and support the best health outcomes for patients.

Sincerely,



Sarah Francois
Director of Fund Development & Marketing
Progressive Community Health Centers



February 9, 2021

TO: Chairman Testin
Members of the Senate Committee on Health
RE: 2021 Senate Bill 59: Community health center grants and making an appropriation

On behalf of Family Health La Clinica, I am writing to provide additional information for the consideration of this Committee, regarding Senate Bill 59.

Family Health La Clinica (FHLC) is Wisconsin's only federally funded Migrant Health Center and serves Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Workers across Wisconsin. FHLC is also a community health center with its main location in rural Wautoma that serves ten counties in Central Wisconsin. The Wautoma clinic provides primary medical, dental, behavioral health and substance abuse services, and WIC services. FHLC also provides behavioral health and substance abuse services at its Roche-A-Cri clinic in Friendship. Dental services are also provided in Mauston, Beaver Dam and Stevens Point and school-based dental services are growing. 18,964 patients were served in 2020 and the majority of these patients are uninsured or on Medicaid.

The Community Health Center State Grant allows our Community Health Center to flexibly address unique community needs and support the best health outcomes for patients. Family Health La Clinica appreciates the Wisconsin legislature's investment in Community Health Centers. However, State Grant funding has remained stagnant for the past 12 years. Meanwhile, Family Health La Clinica continues to find creative ways to meet patient needs. Since 2017, we have increased our patient panel by 7,089 patients and have added new services such as substance abuse services and additional school-based dental services. In the past several years we have added three dental sites in rural communities as well as a site for behavioral health and substance abuse services. In 2020, we adapted quickly to meet the needs of patients during the COVID-19 pandemic by:

- Implementing a COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Project that served over 46 Wisconsin agricultural employer locations in 23 counties and tested over 3,000 Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Workers.
- Working with hospitals to divert dental patients from emergency departments and provided emergency dental services and services via telemedicine.
- Implementing COVID-19 vaccination services for vulnerable rural patients and farmworkers.



We would not be able to adapt to evolving patient and community needs without the State Grant.

Currently the State Grant supports:

- Expanded Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder (SUD) services, allowing us to serve 1,323 Behavioral Health and Recovery patients through 11,392 visits, and provide Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) to 215 patients.

With your support, this increase to the State Grant would allow us to:

- Expand services to Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Workers and enhance services and provide them for an expanded length of time beyond the current three-month program.
- Add dental staff to better meet the significant need for dental services for Medicaid and uninsured patients.
- Improve access to preventative care and chronic disease management services and pilot remote monitoring services for patients with chronic diseases.

Family Health La Clinica greatly appreciates the bipartisan support for an increased state investment in Community Health Centers and the communities we serve. Thank you for the opportunity to share information regarding the innovative programs at our Community Health Center, and the need for further flexible funding.

Sincerely,

Lisa Kilawee

Lisa Kilawee
Director of Strategic Community Engagement
Family Health La Clinica
920-787-5514
lisa.kilawee@famhealth.com



February 9, 2021

TO: Chairman Testin
Members of the Senate Committee on Health

RE: 2021 Senate Bill 59: Community health center grants and making an appropriation

On behalf of Access Community Health Centers (Access), I am writing to provide additional information for the consideration of this Committee, regarding Senate Bill 59.

Each year, Access serves more than 30,000 people who live and work in south central and south west Wisconsin, including the counties of Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Grant, Green, Iowa, Lafayette, Richland, and Sauk. Our patient services include behavioral health, medical, dental, and pharmacy.

The Community Health Center State Grant allows our Community Health Center to flexibly address unique community needs and support the best health outcomes for patients.

Access appreciates the Wisconsin legislature's investment in Community Health Centers. However, State Grant funding has remained frozen for the past 12 years. Meanwhile, Access continues to find creative ways to meet patient needs. Since 2010, we have increased our patient panel by 10,000 Wisconsinites – an increase of 50 percent - and added new dental clinics in Dodgeville and Sun Prairie. We also began offering a school-based dental program that serves more than 3,000 children each year.

In 2020, we adapted quickly to meet the needs of patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. At Access, we:

- Deployed telehealth services including dental triage, nurse consultations, and medical and behavioral health appointments;
- Maintained continuous access to care for our patients, without interruption to the employment of our 250 employees, by adapting our clinics for care and investing in PPE;
- Implemented COVID-19 vaccination services. To date, we have vaccinated our staff and provided the initial vaccine dose to over 33 percent of our patients who are 65 years and older.

We would not be able to adapt to evolving patient and community needs without the State Grant. As primary care providers, our work helps keep people from using the emergency room for care that is best delivered through an established health care home. Currently the State Grant supports:

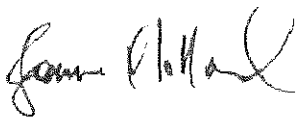
- Expanded behavioral health and Substance Use Disorder (SUD) services, allowing us to serve 1,000 additional patients per year with acute behavioral health needs. These services are made more accessible through telemedicine, including care for patients who are receiving MAT (medication assisted treatment).
- Continued oral health services, such as dental cleanings, for more than 7,000 children and 10,000 adults each year.

With your support, this increase to the State Grant would allow us to:

- Increase access to oral health care in Dodgeville and southwestern Wisconsin for 2,000 people, specifically for vulnerable rural populations
- Invest in care management services to stay in closer communication with our patients, especially those experiencing more difficulty through the pandemic who have more acute behavioral health needs.
- Broaden access to SUD treatment and develop additional pathways for patients to receive more intensive mental health services.

Access greatly appreciates the bipartisan support for an increased state investment in Community Health Centers and the communities we serve. Thank you for the opportunity to share information regarding the innovative programs at our Community Health Center, and the need for further flexible funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joanne L. Holland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "H".

Joanne L. Holland, CPA, MHA
Chief Financial Officer



February 9, 2021

TO: Chairman Testin
Members of the Senate Committee on Health

RE: 2021 Senate Bill 59: Community Health Center grants and making an appropriation

Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers writes to share our enthusiastic support for Senate Bill 59 related to Community Health Center (CHC) grants and making an appropriation. The bipartisan bill is critical to ensuring CHCs can carry out their mission to serve the residents of Wisconsin.

Sixteenth Street cares for more than 43,000 unique patients every year with clinics in Waukesha and Milwaukee. Nearly half of Sixteenth Street's patients are children, and of the adults nearly two-thirds are women making our CHC a critical medical home for children, women, and families. Sixteenth Street provides medical, behavioral health, and oral health care with 55 medical providers, 54 behavioral health providers, and dental hygienists all of whom Sixteenth Street employs.

In addition, we have been extraordinarily nimble and responsive to the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Sixteenth Street alone has performed nearly 23,000 COVID-19 tests making us one of the largest agencies in our service area providing COVID-19 tests.

Sixteenth Street appreciates the Wisconsin Legislature's investment in CHCs with the annual grant of \$5.49 million. The state has been a good partner, and CHCs have been good stewards of those funds. Sixteenth Street's grant has supported our ability to care for the 58 percent of our patients who are on Medicaid, and the nearly 25 percent our patients who are uninsured. However, while the number of patients we serve continues to grow, the state grant funding has remained frozen for the past 12 years.

Even when new CHCs are incorporated into the state grant, however, the total amount of the grant does not increase; it is just divided among more CHCs. So, expanding access for patients in new areas of the state actually decreases the grant levels for other CHCs in the already established communities. Sixteenth Street has seen its state grant decrease due in-part to this factor.

Sixteenth Street is requesting an increase of \$2 million per year in the state grant for CHCs. We estimate such a solution would increase the grant we receive by the range per year referenced above and would effectively bring us closer to our 2013-14 baseline level.

Sixteenth Street greatly appreciates the bipartisan support for an increased state investment in health centers and the communities we serve. Thank you for the opportunity to share information regarding the critical programs at our health center, and the need for continued state funding.

Sincerely,
Julie Schuller, MD
President and CEO
Sixteenth Street

Cc: Chris Rasch at Christopher.rasch@sschc.org



February 9th, 2021

TO: Chairman Testin
Members of the Senate Committee on Health

RE: 2021 Senate Bill 59: Community health center grants and making an appropriation

On behalf of Partnership Community Health Center, I am writing to provide additional information for the consideration of this Committee, regarding Senate Bill 59.

Partnership Community Health Center (PCHC) has been providing high quality care to our community's most vulnerable populations for over twenty years and currently serves over 16,000 patients annually across our sites in Appleton, Oshkosh, and Waupaca. This includes primary medical, dental, integrated behavioral health, and comprehensive health insurance enrollment services. PCHC also has an imbedded clinic at a local transitional living facility to meet the health care needs of people experiencing homelessness. The vast majority of our patients – approximately 75 percent – live at or below the federal poverty level.

The Community Health Center State Grant allows our Community Health Center to flexibly address unique community needs and support the best health outcomes for patients.

Partnership appreciates the Wisconsin legislature's continued investment in Community Health Centers. These funds are critical to our bottom line. This direct funding supports existing programs and services that impact individual and community health. However, State Grant funding has remained frozen for the past 12 years. The stagnation of these funds has limited our ability as an organization and a health center movement across the state, to address new and emerging needs.

Even with the level funding, we continue to find innovative and response strategies to meet patient and community needs. Our strategic plan focuses on approaches to increase the number of visits and new patients we serve annually in the greater Tri-County region. PCHC added new services, such as dental centers in Oshkosh and Waupaca, over the past five year and continues to work on many new primary care, integrated behavioral health, and substance use disorder and enrollment service delivery.

In March of 2020, our operations were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We needed to adapt quickly to meet the needs of our patients and community by:

- Modifying and improving physical plant space to protect patients and staff for safe care delivery.
- Administering COVID-19 tests and vaccination to our patients and staff.



- Rapidly deploying telehealth services including primary care and behavioral health appointments, as well as dental triage.
- Leading the Community Solutions Team around community based strategies for access to medications, health care, health insurance enrollment and transportation.

Without the State Grant, we would be unable to adapt to ever-evolving patient and community needs. Currently, it supports:

- Integrated behavioral health and Substance Use Disorder (SUD) services, allowing us to serve 300 patients a month with acute behavioral health needs.
- Health insurance enrollment services provided at no cost, which, last year, connected over 750 of our patients and community members to coverage through Medicaid and the Health Insurance Marketplace.
- Nurse care management for our high-need patients with chronic disease particularly those with diabetes and hypertension.

With your support, this increase to the State Grant would allow us to:

- Sustain our outreach and enrollment services, while placing a greater focus on more at-risk populations, such as those experiencing homelessness and those with an SUD.
- Invest in innovative quality improvement work to improve operational efficiencies and support better access to care.
- Expand our preventative care and chronic disease care management efforts.

Partnership greatly appreciates the bipartisan support for an increased state investment in Community Health Centers like ours and the communities we serve. Thank you for the opportunity to share information about the innovative programs and the need for further flexible funding that invests in this vital work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristene Stacker", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Kristene Stacker
CEO, Partnership Community Health Center



February 9, 2021

TO: Chairman Testin
Members of the Senate Committee on Health

RE: 2021 Senate Bill 59: Community health center grants and making an appropriation

On behalf of Family Health Center of Marshfield, I am writing to provide additional information for the consideration of this Committee, regarding Senate Bill 59.

Family Health Center has been providing health care services to underserved populations in northcentral and northwestern Wisconsin since 1974. One of our major initiatives grew out of the desperate need to address difficulties BadgerCare and other uninsured patients had in accessing oral health care. We observed a growing trend of individuals seeking relief from oral pain and infection in our State's emergency room departments. Emergency room care centered around prescribing opioids for pain relief and antibiotics for infection without ever addressing the underlying disease process resulting in additional trips to the ER and a further wasting of resources. The State CHC Grant fund provided the flexibility we needed to create a dental infrastructure that serves 50,000-60,000 patients annually. The State CHC Grant allowed us to leverage additional federal dollars and to respond to requests from State legislators who received calls from constituents who were on BadgerCare but could not find anyone to treat them. The State CHC Grant uniquely helped us to establish a dental clinic in Neillsville after conferring with then Representative Scott Suder, on the need for such a facility in that community.

The attached map demonstrates our current service area and the 189,814 people who have been served since the start of our dental initiative. It remains amazing to me that we receive patients from every county on an annual basis. This is due in part because of our desire to maximize value for the taxpayers who invest in us. Two examples of our efforts in this regard include:

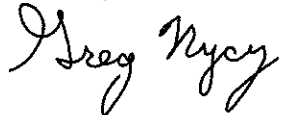
- Maintaining a policy to accept patients with emergency dental needs from throughout the State (thus reducing expensive ER visits from across the State).
- Working with agencies involved in job placement to eliminate dental health related barriers to work, improving individuals' ability to acquire jobs or to acquire promotions within their current work environment.

Looking forward, a State CHC Grant increase could, among other uses, help us to better address Wisconsin's veterans in need of dental care. Unfortunately, the VA program only covers 6%-8% of veterans, the vast majority having no dental benefit. We are currently in discussions with representatives from the VA Innovation Center on a national pilot to improve access to oral health services for our nation's veterans. An increase in the State CHC Grant fund could greatly improve our success if we are chosen to participate in the pilot.

State CHC Grant funds have also allowed us to bring on care coordination resources to assist over 6,500 patients who are uninsured or underinsured in order to foster improved clinical preventive service provision and overall health outcomes. We receive strong positive feedback from patients who are grateful for the assistance in accessing necessary health care, managing chronic conditions, COVID prevention, testing and vaccination, emotional support, as well as assistance in addressing material need deficits and other social drivers of health. We have found that care coordination improves the patient experience of care and aids in improving health outcomes and reducing health care costs.

Family Health Center greatly appreciates the bipartisan support for an increased state investment in Community Health Centers and the communities we serve. Thank you for the opportunity to share information regarding the innovative programs at our Community Health Center, and the need for further flexible funding.

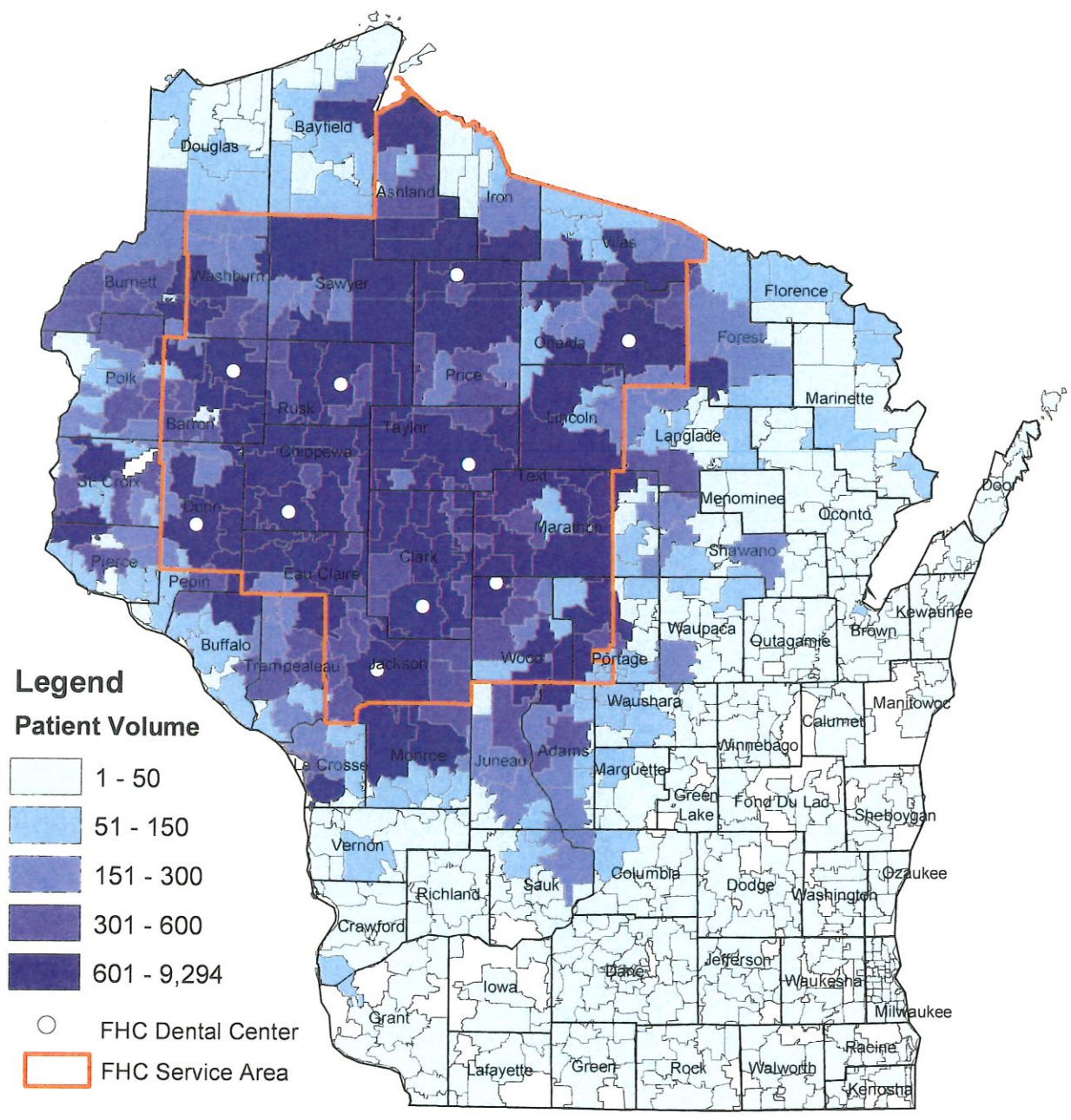
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Nycz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Greg Nycz, Executive Director
Family Health Center of Marshfield, Inc.
1000 North Oak Avenue, Marshfield, WI 54449
nycz.greg@marshfieldclinic.org

189,814 Patients Served Family Health Center Dental Operations

November 2002 - December 31, 2020



- Legend**
- Patient Volume**
- 1 - 50
 - 51 - 150
 - 151 - 300
 - 301 - 600
 - 601 - 9,294
- FHC Dental Center
 - FHC Service Area

0 20 40 80 Miles



N.E.W. Community Clinic

622 Bodart, Green Bay, Wisconsin 54301-4923
Telephone: (920) 437-9773 • Fax: (920) 437-0984
E-mail: newcomm@netnet.net • Website: <http://www.newcommunityclinic.org>

February 8, 2021

TO: Chairman Testin

Members of the Senate Committee on Health

RE: 2021 Senate Bill 59: Community health center grants and making an appropriation

On behalf of N.E.W. Community Clinic, I am writing to provide additional information for the consideration of this Committee, regarding Senate Bill 59.

N.E.W. Community Clinic has been providing health care for local uninsured and homeless patients in Green Bay for 50 years. In 2020, 45% of our medical patients stated that coming to our clinics prevented them from going to the emergency room and 81% stated that we were able to meet their immediate health care needs by having a clinic visit. In 2020, we served 3,654 unduplicated medical/dental patients and almost 8,400 duplicated patient visits.

The Community Health Center State Grant allows our Community Health Center to flexibly address unique community needs and support the best health outcomes for patients.

N.E.W. Community Clinic appreciates the Wisconsin legislature's investment in Community Health Centers. However, State Grant funding has remained frozen for the past 12 years. Meanwhile, N.E.W. Community Clinic continues to find creative ways to meet patient needs. Over the past years we have been able to increase the number of patients that we have can see. In 2020, we adapted quickly to meet the needs of patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. We:

- Rapidly deployed telehealth services within our health clinics
- Created access to repertory clinics due to Covid illnesses

We would not be able to adapt to evolving patient and community needs without the State Grant. Currently the State Grant supports:

- A pediatrician doctor who serves at risk, uninsured children within our community
- The purchase of more medications for our diabetic and heart disease patients
- Keeping patients out of the emergency room

With your support, this increase to the State Grant would allow us to:

- Increase the capability to see more uninsured patients

- Continue to support positive outcomes related to diabetes or hyper tension
- Enhance access to mental healthcare

N.E.W. Community Clinic greatly appreciates the bipartisan support for an increased state investment in Community Health Centers and the communities we serve. Thank you for the opportunity to share information regarding the innovative programs at our Community Health Center, and the need for further flexible funding.

Sincerely,

Kim Franzen

Kim Franzen, *MSN, RN*

Chief Executive Officer
N.E.W. Community Clinic



February 9, 2021

TO: Chairman Testin

Members of the Senate Committee on Health

RE: 2021 Senate Bill 59: Community health center grants and making an appropriation

On behalf of Lakeshore Community Health Care (LCHC), I am writing to provide additional information for the consideration of this Committee, regarding Senate Bill 59.

Lakeshore Community Health Care (LCHC) is a federally qualified community health center with clinics located in Sheboygan and Manitowoc. LCHC provides primary and preventive medical, behavioral (mental) health, dental care and pharmacy services. Our mission is to provide access to comprehensive, integrated health care, regardless of insurance status or the ability to pay, thus eliminating health disparities among the underserved.

Focusing on eliminating barriers to care, LCHC has a long-running mobile dental program that provides dental services at nearly every public school in Sheboygan and Manitowoc counties. Three years ago, in partnership with the United Way of Sheboygan County, LCHC began providing mental health services to students in the Sheboygan Area School District. LCHC recently began its first school-based medical clinic, providing care to elementary school students and their family members.

The Community Health Center State Grant allows LCHC to flexibly address unique community needs and support the best health outcomes for patients.

LCHC appreciates the Wisconsin legislature's investment in Community Health Centers. However, State Grant funding has remained frozen for the past 12 years, while health centers have continued to grow in size and scope. In 2012, the first year of being open, LCHC served 1,249 patients. We now serve over 12,000 patients annually. During this time, LCHC has opened a clinic in Manitowoc, added an in-house pharmacy, chiropractic services, substance use disorder (SUD) programming and additional team members to meet our community needs.

In 2020, we adapted quickly to meet the needs of our patients and community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Even with the pandemic, LCHC was able to serve 10,493 patients by transitioning to telehealth for the majority of services provided, focusing on providing face-to-face visits to those with urgent and emergent needs.

Playing a key role in our counties' early response, LCHC was able to provide COVID testing to our patients and those in the community without a regular doctor. LCHC continues to work closely with our Public Health Department, health care systems and other community partners as we distribute the vaccine.

SHEBOYGAN
920-783-6633
1721 Saemann Ave.
Sheboygan, WI 53081

MANITOWOC
920-686-2333
2719 Calumet Ave.
Manitowoc, WI 54220

MAILING ADDRESS:
PO Box 959
Sheboygan, WI 53082
lakeshorechc.org



- In 2020, LCHC administered 1,471 COVID-19 tests to patients and community members at both locations.
- Rapidly deployed telehealth services including dental triage, primary care visits, and behavioral health appointments.
- Implemented COVID-19 vaccinations. Since receiving the vaccines, LCHC has been able to deliver 328 first doses and 142 second doses.

We would not be able to adapt to evolving patient and community needs without the State Grant. Currently the State Grant supports:

- Investing in innovative quality improvement activities that improve quality of care and health outcomes.
- Behavioral Health Case Managers who collaborate with local partners to provide coordinated referrals which address patient barriers to care including transportation, housing, and domestic violence.

With your support, this increase to the State Grant would allow us to:

- Broaden access to substance use disorder treatment and services by adding a recovery coach/peer support specialist.
- Improve access to preventive care and chronic disease management.
- Increase access to oral health care by embedding a dental hygienist into our medical practice.

LCHC greatly appreciates the bipartisan support for an increased state investment in Community Health Centers and the communities we serve. Thank you for the opportunity to share information regarding the innovative programs at our Lakeshore Community Health Care and the need for further flexible funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kristin Blanchard Stearns".

Kristin Blanchard Stearns
Chief Executive Officer
Lakeshore Community Health Care

SHEBOYGAN
920-783-6633
1721 Saemann Ave.
Sheboygan, WI 53081

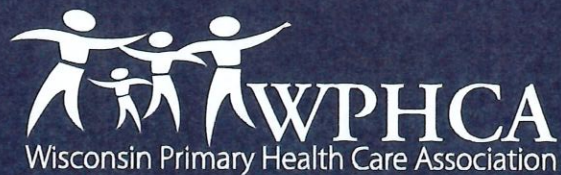
MANITOWOC
920-686-2333
2719 Calumet Ave.
Manitowoc, WI 54220

MAILING ADDRESS:
PO Box 959
Sheboygan, WI 53082
lakeshorechc.org

WISCONSIN'S COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS 2019



*Gerald L. Ignace Indian Health Center
Milwaukee, WI*





*Gerald L. Ignace Indian Health Center
Milwaukee, WI*

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER PROGRAM BACKGROUND

For over 50 years, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)-supported Community Health Centers have provided comprehensive primary and preventive health care services, including medical, dental, behavioral health, and substance use care, plus connections to social services. Community Health Centers are:

- Private or public not-for-profit organizations
- Located in or serving high need communities
- Governed by a patient-majority Board of Directors
- Providers of supportive services that promote access to health care
- Providers of services to everyone regardless of insurance status, with fees adjusted based on a patient's ability to pay
- Responsible for meeting performance and accountability requirements and publicly reporting clinical and financial data



WISCONSIN'S COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

1 ACCESS COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS
Madison | Sun Prairie | Dodgeville
www.accesscommunityhealthcenters.org

2 BRIDGE COMMUNITY HEALTH CLINIC
Wausau | Antigo | Merrill
www.bridgeclinic.org

3 COMMUNITY HEALTH SYSTEMS, INC
Beloit
www.chsofwi.org

4 FAMILY HEALTH CENTER OF MARSHFIELD, INC
Black River Falls | Chippewa Falls | Ladysmith | Marshfield | Medford | Menomonie | Neilsville | Park Falls | Rhinelander | Rice Lake | Minocqua
www.familyhealthcenter.org

5 FAMILY HEALTH/LA CLINICA
Wautoma | Mauston | Beaver Dam | Friendship | Stevens Point
www.famhealth.com

6 GERALD L. IGNACE INDIAN HEALTH CENTER, INC
Milwaukee
www.gliihc.net

7 KENOSHA COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER, INC
Kenosha | Silver Lake
www.kenoshahc.org

8 LAKE SUPERIOR COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER
Superior | Duluth, MN
www.lschc.org

9 LAKESHORE COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE
Sheboygan | Manitowoc
www.lakeshorecommunityhc.org

10 MILWAUKEE HEALTH SERVICES, INC
Milwaukee
www.mhsl.org

11 N.E.W. COMMUNITY CLINIC
Green Bay
www.newcommunityclinic.org

12 NORTHLAKES COMMUNITY CLINIC
Ashland | Hayward | Iron River | Minong | Turtle Lake | Balsam Lake | Washburn | Birchwood | Park Falls | Lakewood | Oconto | White Lake | Hurley
www.northlakesclinic.org

13 OUTREACH COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS
Milwaukee
www.orchc-milw.org

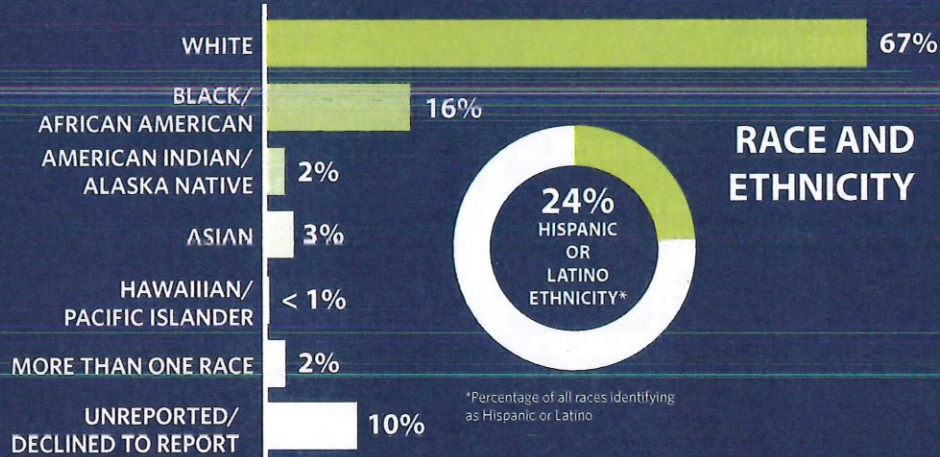
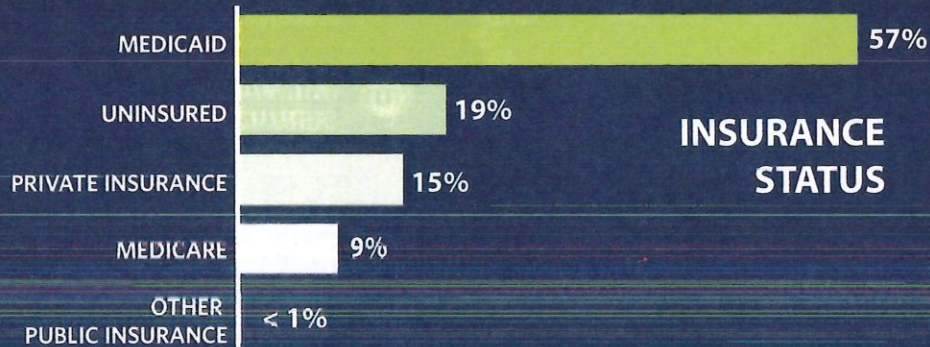
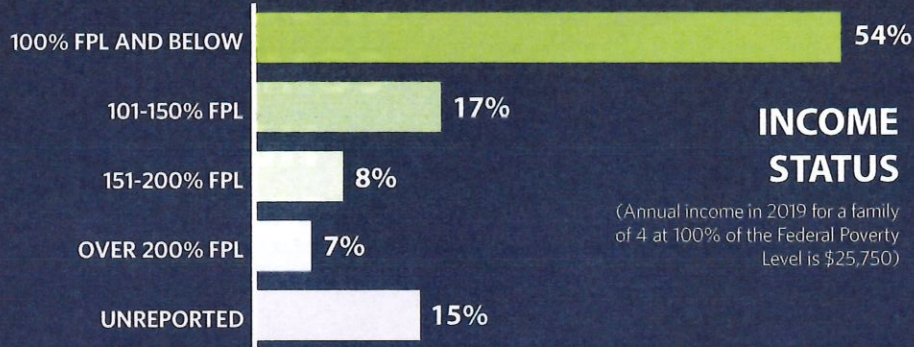
14 PARTNERSHIP COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER
Appleton | Oshkosh | Waupaca
www.partnershipchc.org

15 PROGRESSIVE COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS
Milwaukee
www.progressivechc.org

16 SCENIC BLUFFS COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS
Cashton | Norwalk | Viroqua | Sparta | La Crosse
www.scenicbluffs.org

17 SIXTEENTH STREET COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER
Milwaukee | Waukesha
www.sschc.org

PATIENT DEMOGRAPHICS



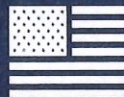
SPECIAL POPULATIONS



6,929
INDIVIDUALS
EXPERIENCING
HOMELESSNESS



4,325
SCHOOL-BASED
PATIENTS



3,656
VETERANS

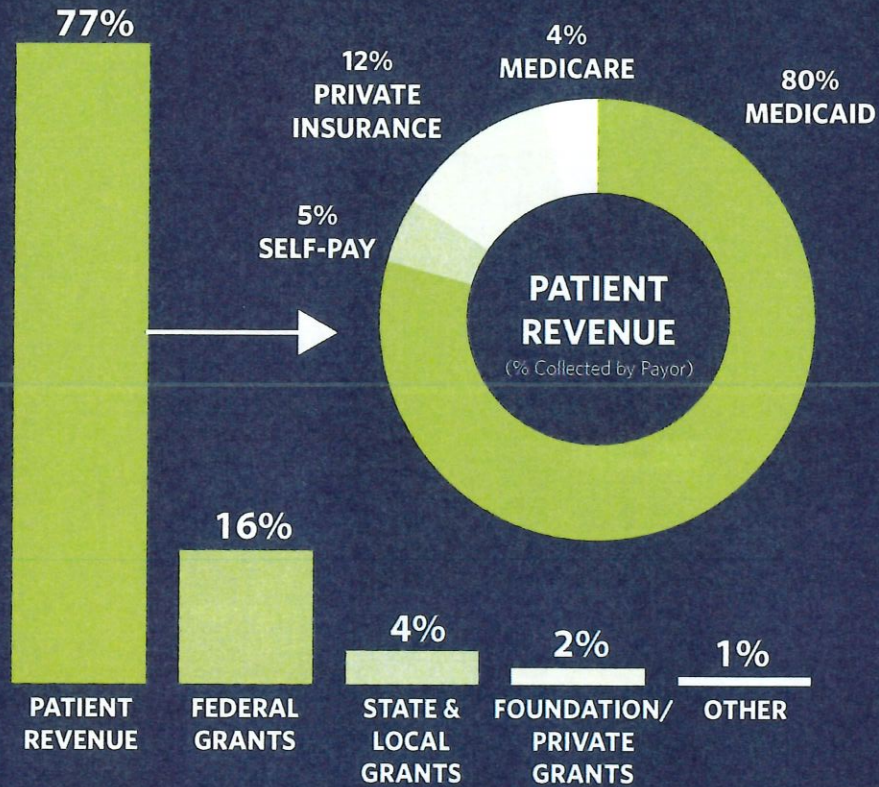


1,282
SEASONAL
AGRICULTURAL
WORKERS

Data Source: 2019 Health Center Program Uniform Data System (UDS). Includes 1/2 of LSCHC reported data.

REVENUE

Community Health Centers receive grant funding from HRSA, a division of the US Department of Health and Human Services, to support operations and provide sliding fee discounts to low-income, uninsured, and under-insured patients. In addition to grant revenue, Community Health Centers receive revenue from patients including self-pay, Medicaid, Medicare, and private insurance.



QUALITY OF CARE

13

Wisconsin Health Centers, in 2020, were recognized as Patient-Centered Medical Homes (9 through NCQA, 2 through the Joint Commission, 2 through AAAHC, and 1 through the state of Minnesota)

100%

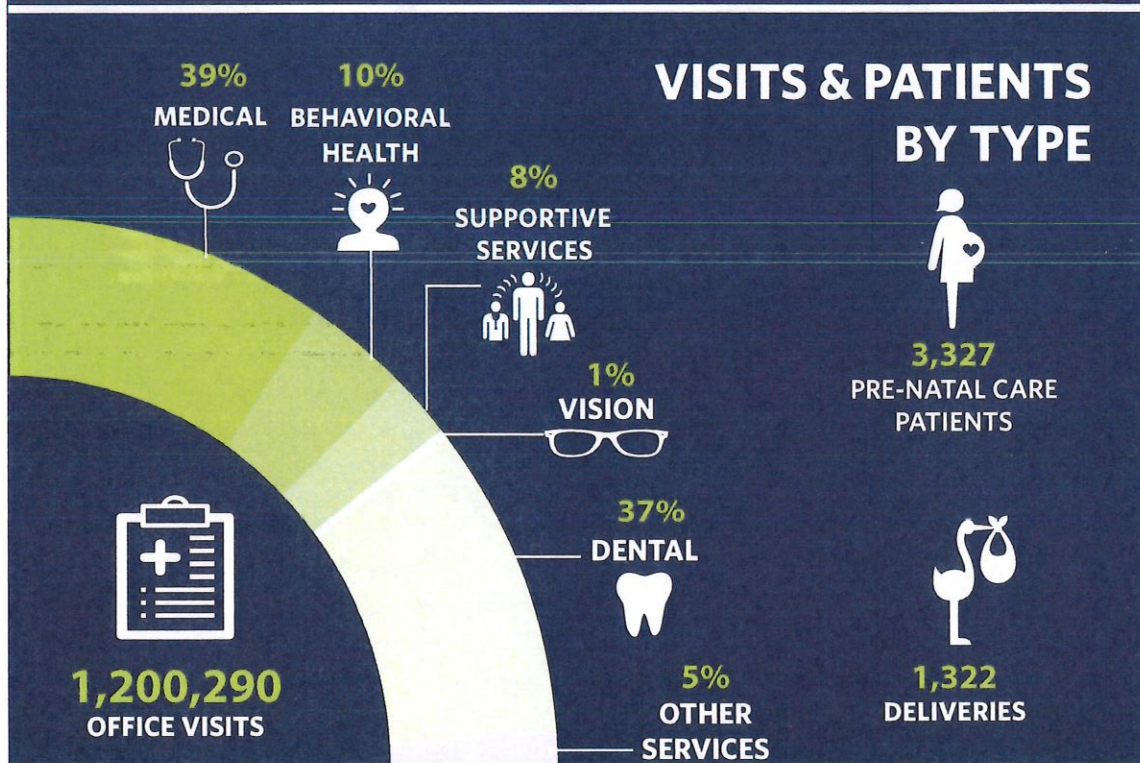
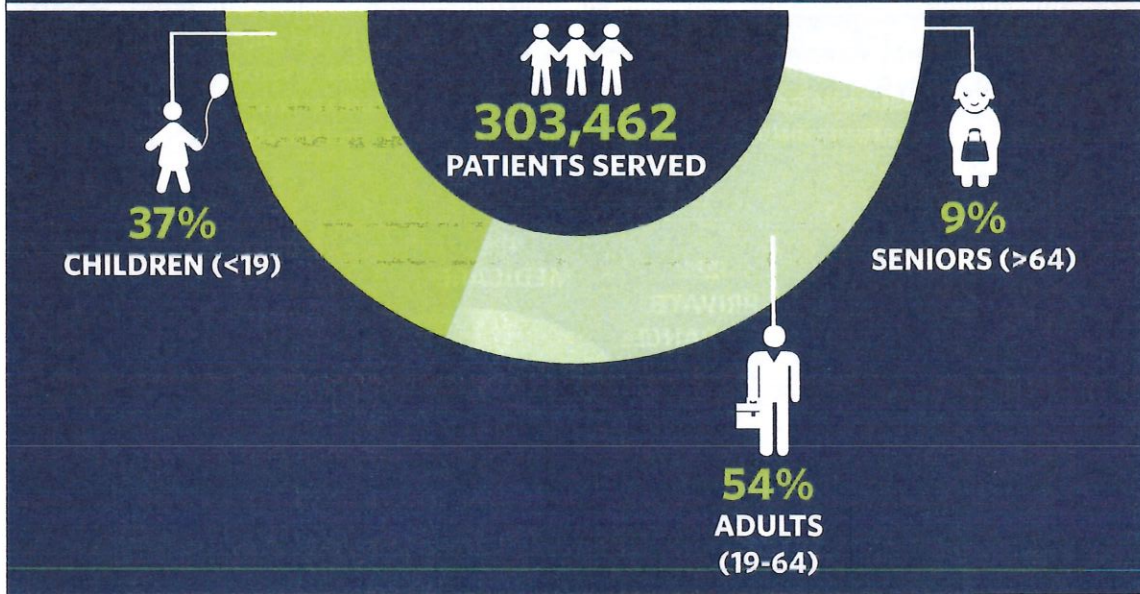
of Wisconsin Community Health Centers use an Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology-Certified Electronic Health Record (EHR)

100%

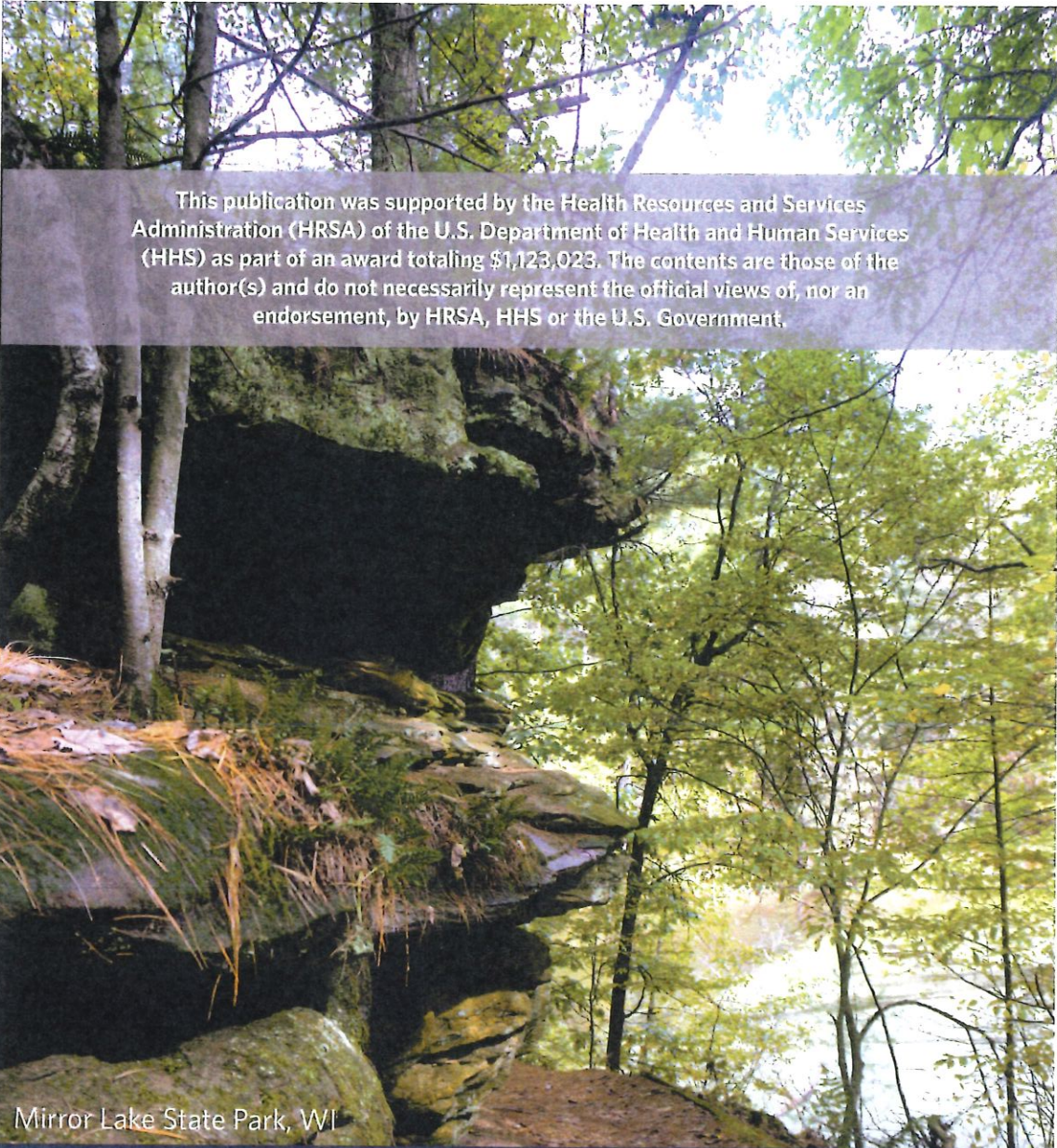
of Wisconsin Community Health Centers met or exceeded at least 2 established quality improvement goals

Data Source: 2019 Health Center Program Uniform Data System (UDS). Includes 1/2 of LSCHC reported data.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS BY THE NUMBERS



Data Source: 2019 Health Center Program Uniform Data System (UDS). Includes 1/2 of LSCHC reported data.



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Mirror Lake State Park, WI

The Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association

The mission of the Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association is to improve health through the work of Community Health Centers and their partners.

We envision a future where all individuals and communities in Wisconsin achieve their highest potential.



5202 Eastpark Blvd, Suite 109, Madison, WI 53718

www.wphca.org | 608.277.7477