

Community Health Center 2023 Legislative Priority Snapshot

88TH TEXAS LEGISLATIVE SESSION



Federally qualified health centers (FQHCs or health centers) provide comprehensive medical, dental, and behavioral health services to more than **1.7 million Texans** of all ages regardless of insurance coverage or ability to pay. Almost **40% of health center patients** are uninsured and about **two out of three are living in poverty**.

FUND THE FQHC INCUBATOR PROGRAM



Health centers are experiencing a growing demand for services across the state. Over the past 10 years, health center patients have grown by almost 80%. In just the last five years, health centers have increased behavioral health services by 65%. To keep up with this growing demand, health centers need investments to add new providers and increase capacity to serve new patients.

- ✓ **Invest in the FQHC Incubator Program to increase health center capacity to provide comprehensive, cost-saving primary and preventive care.**

INVEST IN COVERAGE FOR MOMS AND KIDS



Almost 90% of pregnancy related deaths in Texas are preventable. Women need comprehensive postpartum coverage to support healthy outcomes for mom and baby. Extending postpartum Medicaid coverage, expanding women's health programs, and ensuring eligible families are enrolled will support healthy Texas families.

- ✓ **Provide 12 months of comprehensive and continuous Medicaid coverage to women after pregnancy.**
- ✓ **Increase funding for women's health programs including Healthy Texas Women, Family Planning, and Breast and Cervical Cancer Services.**
- ✓ **Support funding for the Community Partner Program to get more eligible moms and kids enrolled in state programs.**

STRENGTHEN THE PRIMARY CARE AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE



Texas has historically had a primary care provider shortage and health centers struggle to recruit and retain primary care physicians. With the onset of the COVID pandemic, workforce challenges have grown to include all types of providers and staff like medical assistants, behavioral health providers, and other front-line staff, as well as doctors and nurses.

- ✓ **Increase funding for provider loan repayment programs.**
- ✓ **Allow behavioral health providers in training to be reimbursed by Medicaid.**
- ✓ **Increase funding for graduate medical education in primary care and incentivize academic institutions to partner with health centers to train the primary care workforce.**