



TACHC
Texas Association of Community Health Centers

WEEKLY WRAP-UP

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NEWS

Bipartisan Budget Package with Health Center Funding: A Closer Look

Last week Congress passed a [bipartisan spending package](#) that included an additional two years of funding for Community Health Centers, the National Health Service Corps (NHSC), and the Teaching Health Centers Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) Program. To add to the good news, we're also happy to report that health center funding will increase by \$600 million over the two year period; specifically, the Community Health Center Fund will increase from \$3.6 billion per year to \$3.8 billion in FY18 and \$4.0 billion in FY19. For a more in-depth look at what was included in the spending package, please click [here](#).

Advocacy Efforts Highly Effective in Push for Funding

The week of February 5th, TACHC staff along with community health center CEOs from critical districts headed to Washington DC. Additionally, TACHC convened a series of press conferences across the state, hosted by **Hope Clinic in Houston; CommuniCare in San Antonio; Centro San Vicente in El Paso; Foremost Family Health Centers in Dallas; CommUnityCare in Austin; Brownsville Community Health Center in Brownsville; and South Plains Rural Health Services in Levelland.** "Advocacy efforts at a local level on behalf of all our members and staff had a tremendous impact, commented TACHC Executive Director, José E. Camacho.

Media stories generated by the press conferences included:

- [Houston](#)
- [San Antonio](#)
- [El Paso](#)
- [Dallas](#)
- [Austin](#)
- [Levelland](#)
- [Brownsville](#)



L-r: Elmo Lopez, Jr. CEO, Gateway Board Member Klaraluz Velazco, Congressman Henry Cuellar, Board Chairman Lauro Garcia, Board Member Oralía Garcia, Board Member Gerardo Sanchez

Gateway Community Health Center Holds Press Conference on CHC Funding, Recognizes Rep. Henry Cuellar for his Support

Congressman Henry Cuellar (TX-28), a member of the U.S. House Appropriations Committee, hosted a press conference at Gateway Community Center in Laredo to discuss the authorization of federal funding for community health centers throughout Texas and the United States. Congressman Cuellar has been a longtime supporter of Community Health Centers across his district.

"Communities along the border face a unique set of challenges in providing health care to their citizens," said Congressman Cuellar. "Today, cities along the border are among the most underserved in the nation with one of the lowest rates of physicians per capita. By providing this essential funding, community health centers

across my district will get the funding that they need in order to continue providing families with essential health care.”

In Laredo, CEO of Gateway Community Health Center Inc., Elmo Lopez, also remarked on the benefits of community health centers by saying, “Our 25 million patients and all of our clinicians and employees who provide care for our patients thank Congressman Henry Cuellar and his colleagues in Congress for voting in favor of accessible, affordable healthcare for those most in need. Preventive healthcare and access to a primary care medical home will keep families healthier longer. Community Health Centers across the country care for all patients regardless of their ability to pay for services. Congressman Cuellar’s leadership in getting this important funding bill passed will give millions of patients continued access to quality, safe, and affordable healthcare.”

Congressman Cuellar added, “I will continue to work hard in Congress on bipartisan agreements that result in essential healthcare funding. These centers focus on fostering healthy lifestyles through various public health programs and are a clear investment in the future of our communities.” [Watch KGNS TV coverage Here.](#)
[Read TACHC Executive Director José E. Camacho's statement here.](#)

Podcast: José E. Camacho, Dr. Carlos E. Moreno, and Marissa Evans on Community Health Center Funding

Texas Public Radio Podcast featuring José E. Camacho, executive director and general counsel for TACHC; Dr. Carlos E. Moreno, vice president & chief of clinical affairs for CommuniCare Health Centers and Marissa Evans, health and human services reporter for the Texas Tribune.

Congress' [most recent spending bill](#) last week allowed for a two-year extension, granting \$3.8 billion for the 2018 fiscal year and \$4 billion in 2019 to the [Community Health Center Fund](#). Where does this money go and how is it being spent? [Click here or below to listen to the podcast.](#)



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We Want to Tell Your Success Stories!

It's more important than ever that we tell your patient success stories! Stories resonate with people, and are one of the most compelling ways to communicate. We are seeking anecdotes and success stories that highlight the quality care that you provide every day. We want to hear your success stories that highlight integrated services, care coordination, and excellent clinical outcomes. Stories that include patient names and pictures are the best, but make sure to get patient consent before sending personal information. However, we would love to hear anonymous stories as well. Please help TACHC to educate policymakers about the outstanding work that you are doing and email [Brom Hoban](#) with your best stories!

Happy TACHCiversary to the Following:

We would like to wish a very happy TACHCiversary to Anita Mitchell, 02/07/2000; Nancy Gilliam, 02/02/2013;

Britt Kushner, 02/24/2014; and Paul Christie, 02/01/2016. Thank you for your hard work and dedication!

TACHC LGBT Collaborative

If your health center is interested in furthering their training to better serve, screen and outreach to their LGBT patients, please contact [Sonia Lara](#). The training, which will be dictated by the collaborative, will be provided by the National LGBT Health Education Center at the Fenway Institute, the HRSA NCA grantee for this special population.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

TACHC OC³ CPI Webcast: FQHCs and Social Media Part 1

The webcast takes place on March 23 from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. . [Register Here](#).

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GROUP PURCHASING

Mandatory Recertification Period is Feb. 7 – March 7, 2018

Your help is needed to ensure no one loses 340B eligibility: As you know, health centers are required to recertify the accuracy and completeness of their information on the HRSA 340B database (OPAIS) annually; failure to recertify by the deadline will cause you to lose 340B eligibility for at least 3 months. For 2018, health centers must recertify between Feb. 7 and March 7. Authorizing Officials (AO) and primary contacts must set up user accounts in the new 340B Office of Pharmacy Affairs Information System (340B OPAIS) prior to recertification. Failure to set up user accounts will prevent participants from viewing accounts or re-certifying, resulting in removal from the 340B Program. Although the look and feel of the OPAIS will be different, the recertification process remains the same. As the start date gets closer, HRSA and/or NACHC and/or TACHC will follow up with specific information – but *in the meantime, put this on your calendar!* Information and tutorials are available on the [HRSA website](#).

POLICY

FQHC Participation in MACRA/MIPS Reporting

Under the MACRA final rule, FQHC services that are billed under the all-inclusive rate are not subject to MIPS or the payment adjustment. FQHC services billed under Medicare Part B are subject to MACRA/MIPS unless the FQHC meets one of the regulatory exceptions:

- Providers with a Type 2 NPI (Organizational NPI) are NOT required to participate in MIPS reporting during the 2017 Transition Year
- Clinicians who enrolled in Medicare for the first time during a MIPS performance period are excluded from having to report until the next performance period.
- If an FQHC bills less than \$30,000 a year to Medicare Part B or has less than 100 patients for which services were billed to Medicare Part B, then they are exempt from participating due to a “low volume threshold.” If an FQHC as a whole does not meet the “low volume threshold,” it may still apply to their individual clinicians.

CMS maintains a [searchable list](#) where providers may check their eligibility and exemption status. For more information, please see [NACHC’s brief on the implementation of MACRA](#).

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GOVERNANCE & FINANCE

2018 TACHC Membership Dues Deadline: March 1, 2018

The notice for the 2018 TACHC membership dues was emailed to each Executive Director in early January. Full or partial payment (as per Payment Policy), must be received by TACHC by 3/1/18; postmarked not acceptable. If you have any questions about the dues payment process, please contact [Lynn Ford](#) or

[Danielle Ramos](#)

Funding Opportunity: Rural Health Network Development Planning Program

Under the Rural Health Network Development Planning Program, up to 20 rural public and nonprofit entities forming a consortium of three or more organizations will be awarded total funding of \$2 million to assist in the planning and development of an integrated health care network at the local level. By emphasizing the role of networks, the program creates a platform for medical care providers, social service providers, and community organizations to coalesce key elements of a rural health care delivery system for the purpose of improving local capacity and coordination of care. [View the grant opportunity here](#). Applications are due by February 23. For any questions, please contact [Sara Afayee](#) at (301)945-4169.

What Happens to Your Patients When Your Center is Closed?

If a concerned mom calls about a child with a fever and your center is closed, what happens after that call? How many of our after-hours callers are going to the ER unnecessarily? How many times is the continuity of care disrupted because your doors are closed? With a Nurse Advice Line, you can rest assured that your patients are being taken care of and are being triaged appropriately. This service, offered under TACHC's group purchasing program, has grown significantly since launching early last year and it's not too late to sign on! The number of calls is unlimited and translation services are also offered at no additional cost. If you would like additional information, please contact [Nancy Gilliam](#).

Health Centers That Receive An Inquiry From Kalderos Should Respond Promptly

Health centers across the country are being contacted by an organization called Kalderos, asking about potential duplicate discounts. NACHC encourages health centers to respond promptly to these requests, as Kalderos is acting on behalf of multiple drug manufacturers, and failure to respond promptly can significantly increase the chances of being subject to a full-scale manufacturer auditor.

Do You Need to Update Your Strategic Plan?

If it's been a while since your organization reviewed and updated its strategic plan, now is the time to do it and the TACHC Community Development team can help! In today's changing environment, assessing and adjusting the organization's roadmap is more important than ever to ensure long term sustainability and provide continued access to quality care to its community members. The TACHC Community Development team offers a fun and interactive strategic planning session that will identify where the organization is going, action steps for progress and determine whether the organization has been successful in operationalizing its strategic efforts. This service is free of charge to TACHC members. For more information or to schedule your strategic planning session, contact [Erika Canales](#) or [Nancy Gilliam](#)

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CLINICAL

It's American Heart Month

These resources may help health care providers looking to boost their knowledge and skills related to cardiovascular care: [NIH's The Heart Truth Professional Education Website](#) and [CDC's Hypertension Control Change Package for Clinicians](#). Talking to patients about heart health? These resources can help reinforce important messages: The HHS Office of Women's Health offers a [Heart Disease and Women Fact Sheet](#) and NIH offers tools and tips for [healthy eating](#) and [staying active](#).

Million Hearts Hypertension Control Change Package for Clinicians

According to the CDC, 90 percent of Americans consume too much sodium, increasing their risk for high blood pressure, a major contributor to heart disease and stroke. To help clinicians combat this risk, the CDC's Million Hearts initiative developed the [Hypertension Control Change Package for Clinicians](#). This resource provides clinicians in ambulatory clinical settings with evidence and practice-based tools and resources to support hypertension control. The action guide is built around three major concepts: key foundations, population health management, and individual patient supports. To learn more about Million Hearts, attend CDC's Public Health Grand Rounds: Million Hearts 2022: A Compelling Call to Action, Tuesday, February 20, 2018 12:00-1:00 p.m. CST, [View the webcast the day of the session](#)

CDC Emergency Partners- Emergency Communication and Limited English Proficiency

Effective communication during an emergency can sometimes mean the difference between life and death. This is true whether communicating with those whose primary language is English or with people who have **limited English proficiency**. People who are limited English proficient (LEP) are those who “do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English.” For more information on how to carry out these recommendations and where to find tools to help take action, see [Tips and Tools for Reaching Limited English Proficient Communities in Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery](#).

Achieving Health Equity and Improving Health Behaviors by Addressing the Social Determinants of Health

This webinar is hosted by HRSA and is on Thursday, February 22, 2018 from 1:00-2:30 p.m. CST, [Register here](#)

Clinician Consultation Center Substance Use Warmline—Expert Online Clinical Technical Assistance Available for Health Center Providers

The [National Clinician Consultation Center Substance Use Warmline](#) provides free up-to-date expert clinical advice on substance use to health center providers managing complex patients with addiction, chronic pain, and behavioral health issues. [Submit your questions online](#) or call toll-free at: 855-300-3595 (Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. CST).

Region VI Opioid Summit: Key Strategies to Address the Opioid Epidemic

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Region VI Office will join UT Southwestern Medical Center in hosting a **U.S. Department Of Health And Human Services Region Vi Opioid Summit on Tuesday, February 20, 2018 at UT Southwestern**. The event will engage subject matter experts, federal, state, tribal and local stakeholders to discuss opioid prevention-treatment-recovery strategies while identifying resources and opportunities for technical assistance related to the epidemic. **Registration is now open** and can be found [here](#).

Connecting Oral and Heart Health: Blood Pressure Screening and Smoking Cessation in the Dental Setting

HRSA will present a webinar on Wednesday, February 21, 11:00-12:00 p.m. CST highlighting the connection between cardiovascular disease and oral health and the importance of integrating oral and primary health care. Participants will learn about promising practices that promote both cardiovascular and oral health within health centers and how to incorporate cardiovascular disease prevention strategies, such as blood pressure screening and tobacco cessation services, into the dental setting. [View the webcast the day of the session](#).

Workforce Grand Rounds Webinar Series: Successful Models and Examples of Inter-Professional Oral Health and Primary Care Training Programs

Please join the Bureau of Health Workforce (BHW) **on Monday, February 26, 2018 1:00 PM CST - 2:30 PM CST** webcast that will highlight efforts to combat health disparities through the integration of primary care and oral health training. BHW programs provide financial support to institutions and individuals to enhance training programs and support practice in underserved communities. [Click Here to Register](#)

The Centering Healthcare Institute (CHI) Implementation Grant

CHI launched a plan to expand access to the Centering model of group health care in the communities where group care can have the greatest impact. With this expansion, CHI developed a program offering technical assistance and implementation services to 130 eligible sites—primarily in health centers—addressing the financial barrier to those in resource-limited communities. CHI will award these grants in several waves over 2018-2019. Applications for the second and final wave of 2018 grants are due March 15. [Click Here to Learn More and to Apply](#).

TACHC and Henry Schein Dental Contract Continues

The TACHC and Henry Schein Dental purchasing program contract has been extended for an additional three (3) years. TACHC has had a dental purchasing program in place for members since 2003. The dental

purchasing program includes supplies, equipment, maintenance, and repair. TACHC looks forward to continuing the collaboration with Henry Schein Dental to bring beneficial service and products to the dental programs of the TACHC members. If there are any questions, please contact [Lynn Ford](#).

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RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

Recruitment & Retention: 2017 Review

TACHC's R & R Department would like to thank all of the TACHC member centers who utilized the R & R program in 2017, helping the department complete a total of 15 placements for the year! We look forward to assisting you with your Recruitment & Retention needs in 2018! Does your center have openings for clinical providers or executive management that you would like us to help you recruit for? [Complete the TACHC online position profile](#). Contact [Danielle Ramos, TACHC Recruitment Dept. Program Assistant](#) for more information.

Assessment of Health Professionals

With the support of HRSA's Bureau of Primary Health Care, the Association of Clinicians for the Underserved is fielding a short assessment to gather information on health centers' current experiences with health professions training activities in order to identify potential areas for resources, training, and technical assistance. This assessment takes approximately 15 minutes to complete and should be completed by all health centers regardless of whether or not they are currently training health professions students or residents. Please preview the questions and complete the [assessment online](#). Contact [Allison Abayasekara VP, Training & Programs](#). Phone: 703-562-8820

Would You Like Us to Help You Recruit?

Does your center have openings for clinical providers or executive management that you would like us to help recruit for? [Complete the TACHC online position profile](#). Contact [Danielle Ramos, TACHC Recruitment Dept. Program Assistant](#) for more information.

Did you know that the TACHC Weekly Wrap-Up is available to ALL TACHC members and ALL your staff? [Share this link with your health center staff to sign up for the Wrap!](#)

Don't miss out. Follow TACHC on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Send **NEWS** about your health center to be considered for inclusion in the TACHC Weekly Wrap-Up to TACHC Wrap Editor [Brom Hoban](#).

Sign up to receive the [TACHC Weekly Wrap Up!](#)

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