

340B IMPROVES HEALTH ACCESS IN WISCONSIN

THE PROGRAM IS UNDER THREAT

August 2023

Established in 1992, the 340B Drug Pricing Program enables Community Health Centers and other covered entities to purchase outpatient drugs at reduced prices, allowing them to ensure that all low-income patients have access to affordable prescription drugs. Savings from the program are also reinvested into operations such as subsidizing sliding fee scales, chronic disease education, and dental and behavioral health programs.

THE PROBLEM

In 2020, in the heart of the COVID-19 pandemic, drug manufacturers began curtailing access to affordable medications for patients across the U.S. by restricting access to contract pharmacies. To date, nine manufacturers have added restrictions to Community Health Centers. This poses a significant threat to Wisconsin Community Health Center patients as approximately **half of clinics rely on contract pharmacies** to provide access to affordable medications. **Without the use of contract pharmacies, patients may need to drive hours to a single central pharmacy, which is a significant access barrier.**

WI Community Health Centers Rely on the 340B Program

- “Using the 340B Program, we provide assistance up to 100% of patient cost share for medications. We saved patients (underinsured and uninsured) a total of \$3,197,189 out of pocket costs in 2022.”
- “The 340B Program helps expand access to care via 2 Medication Access Specialists who ensure patients have access to affordable medications and assist over 1,400 patients per year.”
- “We use 340B to provide testing supplies to diabetic patients and also discounted patient copayments for Medication Assisted Treatment such as Suboxone to \$1 per patient per prescription.”

DID YOU KNOW?

- Community Health Centers are required to reinvest all 340B savings into activities that further their mission of expanding access to care for the medically underserved.
- Due to drug manufacturer restrictions, Wisconsin clinics report that up to **one quarter of 340B-eligible patients have lost access to medication discounts**, and that up to **20% of 340B-eligible patients are going without needed medications** due to cost or other barriers after losing access to 340B discounts.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Congress should enact legislation to ensure that 340B is working as intended, “to stretch scarce Federal resources as far as possible, reaching more eligible patients and providing more comprehensive services.” Contract pharmacy protections, transparency requirements, and program integrity measures such as establishing a national claims clearinghouse are needed to ensure long-term sustainability.