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For Immediate Release

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**WPHCA Applauds Governor Evers for Recognition of Health Care Workforce Challenges in Biennial Budget Proposal**

Madison, WI – The Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association (WPHCA) applauds Gov. Tony Evers for including significant health care workforce investments in his 2023 – 2025 state budget proposal. Gov. Evers' declaration of 2023 as "The Year of Mental Health" also matches the experience of Community Health Centers in the state who are on the frontlines addressing the needs of children and families in every one of Wisconsin's 72 counties. Whether it's through Medication Assisted Treatment, outpatient counseling, or community education, Community Health Centers recognize that staffing limitations are the primary factor restricting their ability to reach more patients with robust care.

The biennial budget forwarded by Gov. Evers also includes key funding opportunities championed by Community Health Centers in Wisconsin, including:

- Improving access to school-based behavioral health services;
- Funding to create and expand health care apprenticeship pathways;
- Supporting access to health insurance Navigator resources to implement a smooth unwinding of Medicaid continuous eligibility requirements and facilitate enrollment in commercial Marketplace plans;
- Approving new resources to accelerate processing of state health professions licenses; and
- Expanding state loan assistance options for primary care providers to improve distribution of clinicians across under-resourced communities.

Gov. Evers' proposal also strengthens Medicaid programs by extending Medicaid coverage to one year post-partum (also introduced as bipartisan legislation this session); authorizing licensure of Dental Therapists, and allowing Community Health Workers to bill Medicaid. WPHCA appreciates the continued commitment from the Evers Administration to Community Health Centers and improving access to comprehensive primary care services for both rural and urban residents in Wisconsin. WPHCA looks forward to collaboration with the Joint Committee on Finance and all members of the legislature throughout the budget process on shared priorities.

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WPHCA is the member association for Wisconsin's 19 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs, or Community Health Centers), including 2 new Look-Alike clinics. Community Health Centers are non-profit, community-directed medical, dental, and behavioral health clinics. Please visit [wphca.org](http://wphca.org) to learn more about Community Health Centers and Look-Alikes.