



August 10, 2022
For Immediate Release

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Community Health Centers Call for Policymaker and Partner Collaborations to Address Health Care Workforce Shortages in New Issue Brief

Madison, WI – Today, the Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association published a new [Workforce Issue Brief](#) as part of National Health Center week celebrations. The brief details both the workforce-related pressures Community Health Centers are facing as well as Community Health Center initiatives to boost and diversify their workforce.

Community Health Centers are not immune to the staffing pressures faced across the health care industry resulting from retirements and the rising demand for care driven by an aging population. Coupled with pandemic-related impacts, Community Health Centers are calling for an “all-hands-on-deck” approach to addressing workforce challenges.

Entry-level professions such as Medical Assistants (MAs) are in high demand, with an average vacancy rate of 10.4% for MAs. Community Health Centers statewide have vacancies for over 100 dental team members and are unable to fill more than one in four oral health provider positions. Community Health Centers are also well-positioned to continue building robust behavioral health and substance use recovery teams. However, they are facing shortages for all team members within behavioral health departments, such as Licensed Professional Counselors and Clinical Social Workers.

Given the high need for providers, Community Health Centers are doubling down on efforts to recruit and retain a robust, diverse workforce to meet patient needs. The Issue Brief highlights effective initiatives such as clinic-based Dental Assistant training programs, partnerships with local schools, and the impact of national programs like National Health Service Corps. The publication also provides 10 considerations for policymakers and partners for the next legislative session and biennial budget.

Please visit wphca.org to learn more about our upcoming policy priorities, issue briefs, and to find a Community Health Center near you.

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WPHCA is the member association for Wisconsin’s 17 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs, or Community Health Centers). Community Health Centers are non-profit, community-directed medical, dental, and behavioral health clinics.