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For Immediate Release

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**Legislature Passes Long-Awaited Dental Therapy Legislation, Addressing Oral Health Access Gaps and Improving Workforce Efficiency**

Madison, WI – The Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association (WPHCA) celebrates the passage of [Assembly Bill 668 and Senate Bill 689](#), authorizing licensure of Dental Therapists in Wisconsin. The bill passed both the Assembly and Senate yesterday. WPHCA is the member association for Wisconsin's 19 Community Health Centers which provided oral health, primary care, and behavioral health services to nearly 300,000 Wisconsinites in 2022. Over one-third of the visits at Community Health Centers last year were dental visits. Clinics around the state are dedicated to addressing oral health access gaps and improving oral health for both children and adults. Community Health Centers report alarming vacancy rates for all members of the dental team, including Dental Assistants, Hygienists, and Dentists.

WPHCA sees Dental Therapists as a key tool in the toolkit to reducing oral health access gaps in the state and helping each member of the oral health team best deploy their skills to meet the demand for care. The bill passed along with several others aimed at improving oral health care, including a new interstate licensure compact and funding for Wisconsin Technical Colleges to expand oral health training programs.

Dental Therapists are already authorized to practice in at least some settings in 13 states, including Minnesota, and several others are currently considering the legislation. They will practice in under-resourced areas or serve high-need populations such as those who are uninsured or low-income. Practice will be team-based, under an agreement with a Dentist. See WPHCA's [issue brief on Dental Therapy](#) for additional details.

WPHCA shares appreciation with bill authors Sen. Felzkowski and Rep. Plumer, long-time champions on Dental Therapy, which is supported by over [30 organizations in Wisconsin](#). WPHCA urges Governor Evers to take expedient action and enact the legislation.

Community Health Centers provide high-quality oral health care to patients regardless of insurance status or ability to pay. 70% of Community Health Center patients live at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, which is \$30,000 for a family of four. Please visit [wphca.org](http://wphca.org) to find a Community Health Center near you.

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*WPHCA is the member association for Wisconsin's 19 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs, or Community Health Centers). Community Health Centers are non-profit, community-directed medical, dental, and behavioral health clinics.*