



ILLINOIS PRIMARY HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION

HEALTH SOURCE™

Winter 2024



IPHCA

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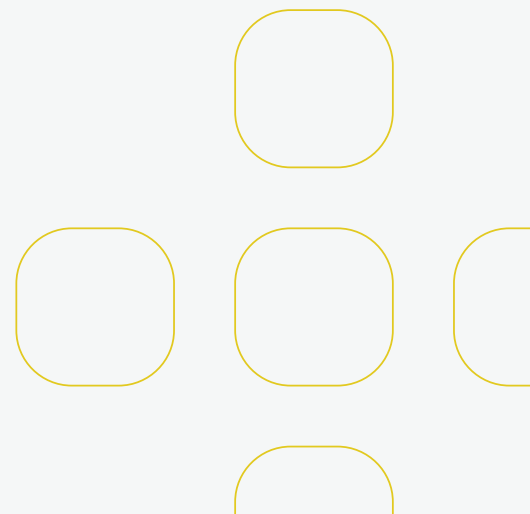
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The Illinois Primary Health Care Association is a non-profit trade association that serves as the voice of and champion for Illinois' community health centers. Our members include health centers from across the state, businesses, non-profits and an array of allied organizations. These members form vital connections, working together to provide cutting edge care for all our communities.

IPHCA Health Source™ is an e-newsletter dedicated to showcasing Illinois' 54 community health centers and the nearly 1.5 million patients they serve.



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From the President's Desk



I recently attended the NACHC Winter Strategy Meeting where we worked to position health centers as providers, employers, and partners of choice. This new messaging is a good reminder that there is always work to be done to position our industry in the best light possible. We know what we provide, but how well do people in the community know?

As always, there are changes happening in our healthcare community. We see it with the constant fight for the 340B Program, and with the Migrant Response in Chicago. Our health centers are pushed to the max each day. I suppose you're asking, "So what else is new? My health center has always been up to the task of working in the toughest environments and thriving!" What the Winter Strategy Meeting got me to thinking about is that yes, we meet these challenges head-on all the time. And, we're the provider of choice for 1.5 million Illinoisians. So, let's talk about it and show the rest of the state.

I'm working with my team to put together new messaging and a campaign to help promote this incredible work throughout the state. Each one of our members should be recognized as the Provider, Employer and Partner of choice in its community. Keep up the good work because here at IPHCA we want to let everyone know about it.

-Ollie





2024

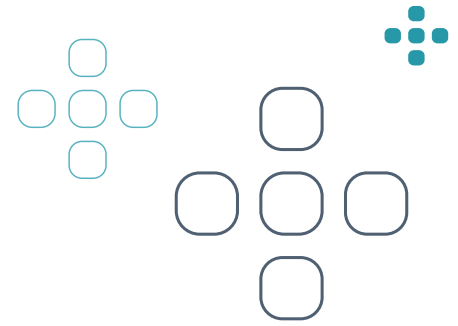
ANNUAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

CALL FOR PRESENTERS

SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS
APRIL 1, 2024

[2024 Submission Form](#)

IPHCA



IPHCA News

El-CBO at IPHCA

Arkeitha Monroe May, Senior Director of Claims + Billings, Illinois Primary Health Care Association

IPHCA has partnered with the State of Illinois to provide Early Intervention Centralized Billing Services for the Illinois Early Intervention (EI) program to offset the administrative responsibilities associated with claim adjudication processing of both paper and electronic claims. Serving as a third-party administrator, the IPHCA Central Billing Office (CBO) team manages all aspects of claims processing including coordination of benefits with private insurance carriers, verification of pre-authorized services; printing and distribution of Explanation of Benefits (EOB) for providers and participating families. More than 1.5 million claims are processed and vouchered annually.

An insurance billing service is available through the CBO for enrolled EI providers who elect to utilize the service. After services are rendered, providers provide the Insurance Billing Unit with an encounter note. A claim is coded and billed; based on the encounter note details, to a private insurance carrier. On the providers behalf, a secondary claim is billed to the CBO after an insurance EOB document from the primary insurance is received.

To aid the EI program with funding, the IPHCA CBO bills Medicaid for program reimbursement and administers the family fee program. Family fee accounts are reconciled monthly and family fee statements, invoices and delinquency notices are generated and distributed to qualifying participants.

CBO help desk services provide program support to EI providers, families, local agency staff and partners. In 2023, the help desk support team handled 15,716 calls.





Dental Training Invaluable for Patients

Julie Ryan, Senior Vice President of External Affairs, Pillars Community Health

In April 2023, Dr. Berenice Lopez, Chief Dental Officer at Pillars Community Health (PCH) and the PCH Dental Team were invited by Delta Dental Foundation of Illinois (DDILF) to go to New York University (NYU) College of Dentistry Oral Health Center for People with Disabilities for an immersive educational experience.

Dr. Lopez and her staff were able to shadow NYU dental students and take classes alongside them for a three-day experience in seminars and dental clinics. Many of the seminars were given by pediatric dentists associated with the university. DDILF provided this opportunity as part of their efforts to improve access to oral health services for individuals with physical and developmental disabilities who may experience barriers to accessing care. DDILF has supported PCH pediatric dental services since 2013.

Dr. Lopez appreciated this opportunity to build on the limited training provided in dental school in how to best serve patients who may have both physical and mental disabilities. In her experience at PCH's Dental Center,

Dr. Lopez encounters many patients, especially in pediatrics, who require some accommodation for a disability. She also believes the number has increased over the last several years, so she felt this was the perfect time for the team to attend this seminar.

For patients with disabilities, visiting the dentist's office can have many potential triggers, such as equipment noises, exam chair movement, water, air, and other textures. These triggers can make the dental experience scary and cause the patient to avoid the dentist. Patients who avoid preventative treatments will more likely experience severe dental problems requiring surgery or sedation. These procedures become costly and often involve multiple trips to the dental office or a referral to a specialist.

"My goal is to always have the highest level of patient satisfaction and with pediatric patients that means their happiness as well as their parents," Dr. Lopez shared.



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Dental Training Invaluable for Patients

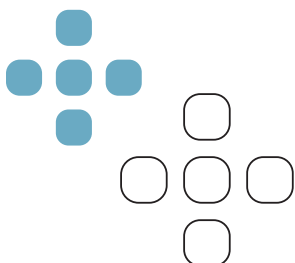
(continued)

Dr. Lopez learned that the challenges can often be met with inexpensive techniques that one would not consider, but the NYU Dental School has creatively developed. For instance, weighted blankets make patients feel more secure; a dimmer switch can lower lighting to a comfortable level; fidget toys can provide a needed distraction; or a quiet waiting room can help calm them down before entering an exam room and provide a better patient experience. Investment in some of these gadgets and staff training is a small financial commitment but can yield positive results. In addition to these inexpensive fixes, Dr. Lopez has developed a “wish list” for more expensive pieces of equipment to purchase down the road as the footprint of the dental center expands and provides more space for patients. First and foremost, she would like each patient to have a private exam room instead of the open space currently offered in the dental center and implement trauma-informed design features for developmentally delayed patients. With more space available, the Dental Center could accommodate patients in wheelchairs, so the wish list includes purchase of a wheelchair lift.

Dr. Lopez strives to build trust between the pediatric patient and their parents. If the parents know and understand the procedures and methods used to achieve them, they can work with her on explaining it to the child to make them feel reassured and more comfortable. During the NYU training, Dr. Lopez and her staff learned the importance of communication skills to meet the patients where they are. She will physically lower herself to their level, have them both sit in chairs at the same heights, and follow their cues. If a patient is nonverbal, she will use other ways to communicate with them.

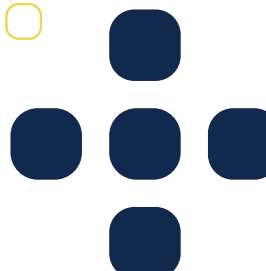
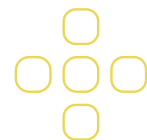
In relating what Dr. Lopez feels are her goals for her patients, she said, “It’s really about autonomy. The more patients feel in control of themselves and their surroundings, the easier the experience will be in the chair receiving dental care.”

She’s grateful to have received this opportunity from Delta Dental Foundation of Illinois to enable her team to provide the highest quality care, and apply their newly acquired skills in their practice with PCH dental patients.



Pillars Community Health

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Near North Health Clinics Become Pivotal Destinations for New Arrivals In Chicago

Ryan Yarrell, Director, External Affairs and Community Partnerships, Near North Health

Near North Health has played a crucial role in responding to the influx of New Arrivals in Chicago, leveraging our strategic locations and the designation as a Federally Qualified Health Center. Our health centers have become pivotal destinations for New Arrivals seeking both medical attention and benefit coverage.

Notably, the Near North Health Women, Infants, and Children's Program (WIC) has emerged as a driving force behind the increased demand. Since September 2023, its WIC program has successfully served more than 650 participants, facilitated their certification appointments and initiated their enrollment in the WIC program. Simultaneously, Near North Clinical has extended its services to accommodate more than 400 new patients during this period of increased demand.

However, the fluctuating and unpredictable nature of the New Arrival population has presented Near North Health with several challenges in maintaining seamless service delivery. The unique healthcare needs and cultural considerations of New Arrivals necessitate a dynamic and responsive approach, further complicating its staffing strategy.

One of the primary challenges is the variability in the volume of New Arrivals seeking services. The surge in demand, particularly evident since September 2023, has strained resources and made it difficult to accurately predict staffing requirements. This unpredictability has, at times, resulted in either an overstaffing situation, leading to underutilized resources, or an understaffing scenario, causing strain on the existing workforce.

Additionally, the diverse healthcare needs of New Arrivals require a specialized and culturally sensitive approach, which adds another layer of complexity to staffing considerations. Ensuring that staff is adequately trained and proficient in providing linguistically and culturally competent care is essential, but it also poses a challenge in terms of ongoing training and resource allocation.

In response to these challenges, Near North Health is actively exploring strategies to enhance its adaptive capacity. This includes implementing flexible staffing models, investing in ongoing training and cultural competency programs for healthcare professionals, and optimizing administrative processes to streamline the certification and enrollment procedures.

As Near North Health continues to navigate these challenges, its commitment to providing high-quality healthcare services to the New Arrival population remains unwavering. Near North is actively seeking collaborative solutions and partnerships to ensure that its healthcare delivery model aligns with the unique needs of this dynamic and diverse community.

Near North Health has recently been profiled on Chicago news stations, including ABC and NBC.

Links to Media:

[Watch ABC Story](#)

[Watch NBC Story](#)





PrimeCare Health's Annual Awards

Ricardo Rinconeno, Development and Community Engagement Manager, PrimeCare Health

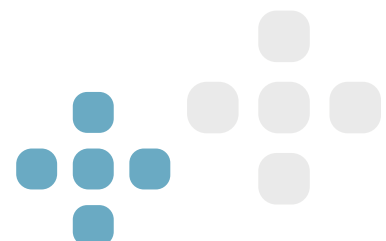
Every year, PrimeCare Health recognizes exceptional staff who embody the values and qualities of the organization. We call these the Reyes Nonato and Kitty Gohs Awards. For the first time this year, we also presented awards for Years of Service and staff who've proven their dedication to our vision and mission in a short amount of time.

PrimeCare presented the Reyes Nonato Award to the staff member who goes out of their way to care for and support staff and the patients that we serve. This year, we presented the award to **Guadalupe Salgado**, our Care Coordination Manager, for her compassion and devotion to helping all patients and families she comes across.

PrimeCare presented the Kitty Gohs Award to the staff member who embodies the values of advocacy for those most in need. This award went to **Samantha Kurnik, PA-C**, the Health Center Medical Director for our Medication-Assisted Treatment Program, for advocating for patients battling Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and helping fellow staff demonstrate empathy as the disease affects almost every aspect of patients' lives.

In addition, we gave recognition for Years of Service. The Years of Service Awards are given to staff who have served our community for 5+ years. Over 65 staff members received Years of Service Awards, with eight receiving awards for 20+ years of serving the community.

Last but certainly not least, we presented the Rising Star award. This award is given to staff who have been with PrimeCare for less than three years and demonstrate their commitment to our mission to promote wellness and provide accessible, compassionate, and culturally respectful healthcare in partnership with our patients and community. We presented the Rising Star award to **Dr. Dagni Chuki Naguanagua**, **Gabriela Zaragoza**, Behavioral Health Provider, **Guadalupe Paniagua**, Clinical Operations Nurse, Mariela Garcia, SUD Care Coordinator, and **Silvia Sanchez**, Perinatal Case Manager. We are thankful to all our awardees who have dedicated themselves to the continued work of providing care and understanding to the communities we serve.





PrimeCare Health's Annual Awards (continued)

A PrimeCare Christmas Story

Since first partnering amid the pandemic, PrimeCare and Hora Del Café have worked together every holiday season to support families in need. Hora Del Café is a Starbucks employee-led group that pools resources to donate Christmas gifts to families in the local community. The employee group works to ensure that all families have gifts to open during the holiday season, whether it's toys, childcare items, or things to help folks stay warm during the winter months. Beyond providing gifts, Hora del Café ensures parents have a hand in their children's Christmas excitement by providing wrapping paper to wrap the gifts themselves to maintain the Christmas spirit for their children.

Our dedicated Case Management Team assists these efforts by nominating families who can benefit from this program. This year, the team identified **15 patient families** needing assistance. Each of our seven sites managed to identify at least one community member to nominate for the event.

Our Case Managers are dedicated to helping patients in all areas of their lives, and the holiday season is no exception. We are grateful to our Case Management Team and Hora del Café for impacting the lives of so many families this holiday season.



health talks

EST. 2021



an IPHCA podcast

with Raj Savalia



Tune in for conversations about improving the quality of community healthcare in Illinois.





New Planned Clinic Furthers VNA Health Care's Commitment to the Aurora Community

Sylvia Marten, Vice President of Marketing and Communications, VNA Health Care

Founded in 1918 in Aurora, VNA Health Care has worked to provide accessible, affordable care to patients for more than 100 years. With a dedicated focus on removing barriers to care for those who often face them, VNA continues to grow its service offerings and increase the number of patients served.

VNA signed a lease agreement to open a new location in Aurora, a significant milestone in their deep, longstanding commitment to the community. The new clinic, located at 323 Weston within the transformed Copley Hospital, is ideally located to serve vulnerable populations on the east side of Aurora.

This \$7 million project to build out over 26,000 square feet of clinic space will occur in 2024. The clinic will have 30 medical exam rooms, procedure rooms, mental health counseling rooms, a pharmacy, a wellness center and kitchen, and a laboratory.

At the new facility, VNA will provide family practice and internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, psychiatry and counseling, podiatry, nutrition services, lab tests and vaccinations, doula

support, health and wellness education, and more. VNA will also offer services that are in high demand in Aurora, including immediate and urgent care for injuries that don't require a specialist or emergency room visit.

At a ceremonial lease-signing event on September 27, 2023, VNA leadership was joined by Aurora Mayor Richard Irvin, Aurora School District 131 Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Norrell, VNA staff, and other community and business leaders to mark the occasion.

VNA is an integral part of the fabric of the Aurora community, currently operating three large, multi-service clinics as well as a school-based health center at East Aurora High School and a school-linked health center for West Aurora students that will open in February 2024.

This new Aurora clinic is part of VNA's comprehensive "Growing for Tomorrow" campaign, which was launched in March of 2023. The three-year campaign will support VNA's expansion to serve more patients across its service area.





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Future of Federal Funding for Community Health Centers Remains Uncertain

Amber Kirchhoff, Associate Vice President, Public Policy + Government Affairs,
Illinois Primary Health Care Association

Fiscal year 2023 (FY23) ended more than three months ago on September 30, 2023. Traditionally, this is the deadline for Congress to pass a spending package for the new fiscal year. Unfortunately, negotiations reached an impasse and, ultimately, Congress instead advanced a continuing resolution (CR) or temporary extension.

Under this initial deal, passed on September 30, both discretionary and mandatory funding for community health centers (CHCs), the National Health Service Corps (NHSC), and Teaching Health Center - Graduate Medical Education (THC-GME) program were extended at FY23 levels until the Friday before Thanksgiving – November 17. While a government shutdown was avoided, because of the compromise to put a CR in place as a stopgap, divisions within the majority party erupted and eventually led to the ouster of Speaker McCarthy. After weeks of infighting, Representative Mike Johnson was chosen as the House's new speaker.

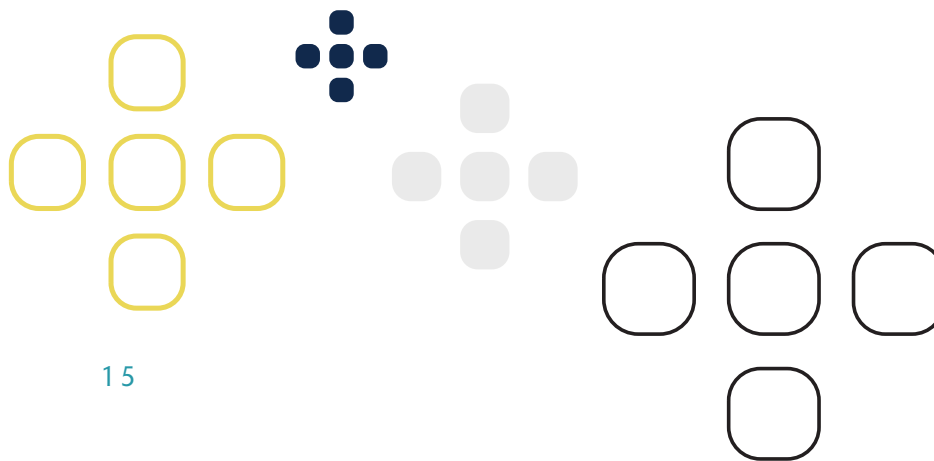
As November 17 approached, another continuing resolution was passed. This time a staggered extension was put into place. Under the plan, about 20% of the federal spending, including community health center mandatory funding, was extended until January 19. Most of the federal budget, including CHC discretionary funding, was extended until February 2. With decisions on major items such as support for Ukraine and border security to be made, the additional time was intended to enable negotiators to continue to work through details and settle on a plan for FY24.

At the time of drafting this update¹, Congressional leaders have passed a third continuing resolution in the form of another ladder extension of existing funding levels. The new deadlines for mandatory funding and discretionary appropriations are March 1 and March 8, respectively.

Despite multiple continuing resolutions, the future of federal funding for health centers and related programs remains uncertain. The instability of federal funding for community health centers and related workforce programs hampers health centers' ability to plan for the future and incurs decisions on hiring, capital projects, and programmatic changes among other operational and financial matters.

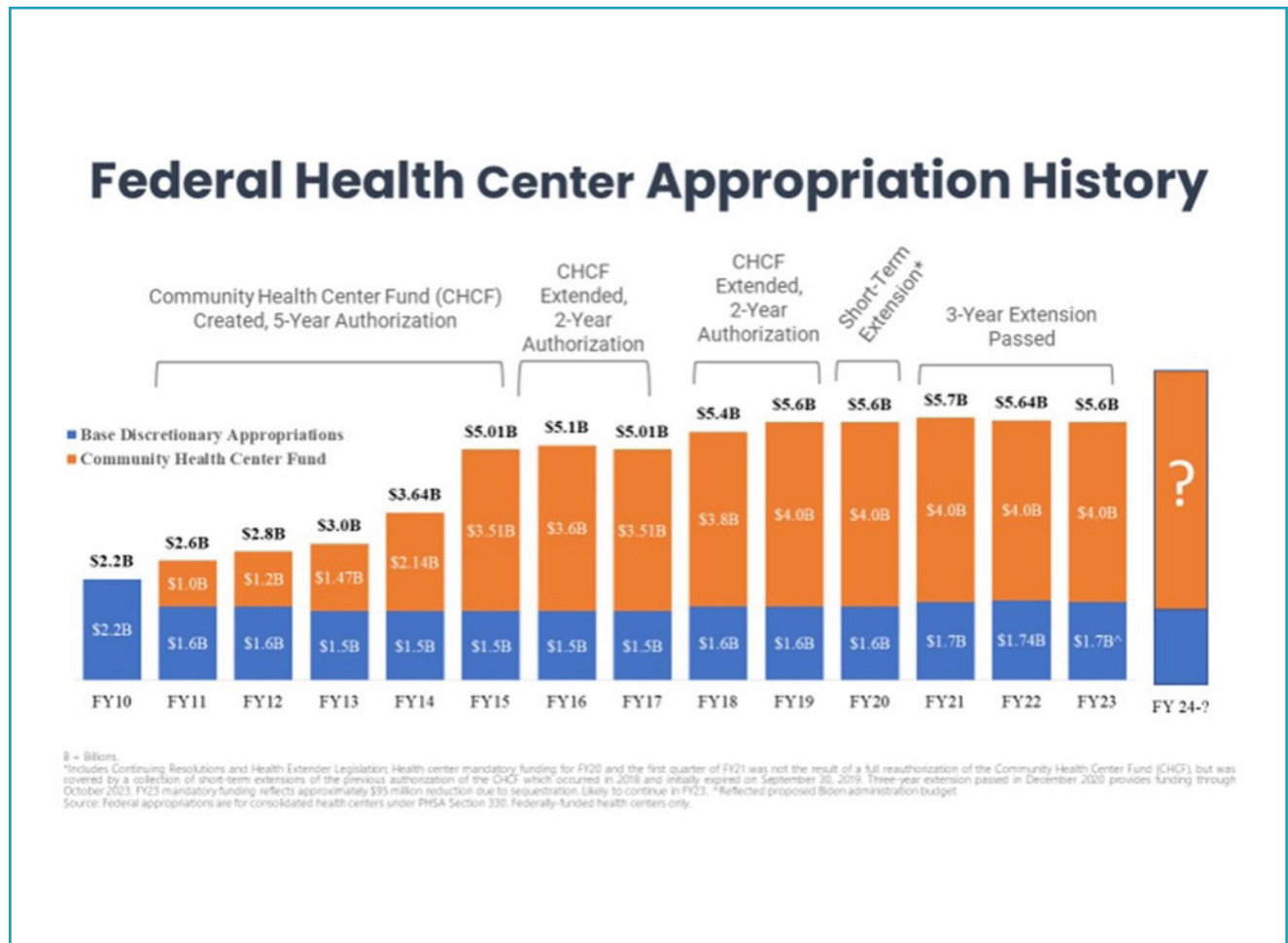
While community health centers have been on the brink of the federal funding cliff in years past, this time is different. Health center funding has not seen a meaningful increase since FY15. Meanwhile, health centers are facing challenges that make long-term, robust funding even more critical. As COVID-era funds wind down, historic inflation has raised the cost of doing business at the same time that health care providers are facing unprecedented competition for labor.

¹ Update drafted January 16, 2024



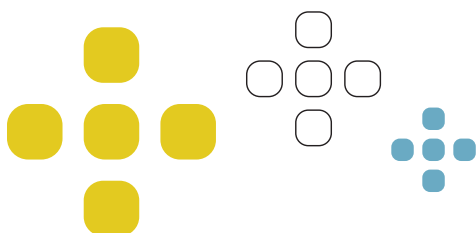


Future of Federal Funding for Community Health Centers Remains Uncertain (continued)



Luckily, with the passage of the bipartisan [Lower Cost, More Transparency Act \(H.R. 5378\)](#) in December, most members of the Illinois House delegation are now on record as supporting increased funding for health centers. And, in the Senate, Chairman Bernie Sanders steered a bipartisan bill through the HELP Committee which also contained significant increases in resources for health centers and workforce programs. While the path forward remains unclear, the prospects for community health centers, which are valued in rural and urban communities alike, are promising.

In partnership with NACHC, IPHCA continues [mobilizing health center advocates](#) to urge their United States representatives and senators to come together on a multi-year spending plan that increases investment in both health centers and primary care workforce development programs to maximal levels. These funds are critical to putting health centers on solid ground so that they can expand access to care and deepen services for the more than 30 million patients they serve across the nation annually.





IPHCA Workforce Development Team Reflects on 2023

Ashley Colwell, Vice President of Clinical Services and Workforce Development,
Illinois Primary Health Care Association

For many, the holidays are a time for rest, reflection, and recharging. This aligns with the theme of many of the Illinois Primary Healthcare Association (IPHCA) Workforce Development Team's 2023 activities and projects. This past year, IPHCA continued to choose projects to support health center workplace wellness, burnout prevention, and employee engagement to ultimately impact employee retention.

Even as we emphasize engagement and retention, IPHCA continues to work to help health centers overcome challenges with recruiting clinicians, allied health professionals, and other employees.

Building Blocks for an Engaged Workforce

IPHCA continues to build upon "Building Blocks for an Engaged Workforce", a resource toolbox, including employee engagement measurement tools, sample employee wellness policies, trainings, best practice manuals, and more, which health centers can use to address employee wellbeing and engagement issues. IPHCA recorded new, original episodes of the IPHCA Health Talks podcast with health center subject matter experts and continuously sourced new relevant resources for the toolbox.

"Building Blocks for an Engaged Workforce" can be accessed at

[Building Blocks for an Engaged Workforce.](#)

Pathway Program Expansion

Since 2013, IPHCA has hosted a formal pipeline building program, "Understanding and Serving America's Underserved: An Introduction to Community Health Centers." The program teaches students about why patients are underserved and programs designed to provide high quality care to these patients, specifically Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). The goal of the program is to inspire and encourage health professions students to choose a career with an

FQHC. Pivoting to a virtual, self-paced platform in 2021 has allowed IPHCA to expand the program's reach significantly by eliminating travel time and expenses for participants.

In 2023, 121 students completed the student program. Of these, 62 students were from a minority background. As IPHCA continues to try to reach younger students to establish pathways to careers with Community Health Centers (CHC), 27 students who completed this year's program were undergraduate or community college students and six were high school students. Additionally, 11 of these students have received career assistance through the IPHCA Recruitment Service.

What did students have to say about the 2023 program?

"I LOVED learning in depth about what FQHCs have to offer patients and especially how the providers there feel about their job."

"I liked the trauma-informed care section of the module because I often feel that I go to appointments where I am unseen or unheard by the staff. I feel it is important to have such care methods implemented throughout Illinois and the nation because no patient/client wants to be overlooked by someone they are trusting with their lives/health."

"I liked the format of introduction to FQHCs, establishing what it means to describe a community as underserved, the holistic care given at CHCs, and then opportunities making more schooling possible in order to then give back to our underserved communities."



IPHCA Workforce Development Team Reflects on 2023 (continued)

Health Professions Program Outreach

IPHCA staff regularly connect with health professions training programs through classroom lectures, virtual presentations, and fairs. IPHCA continues to share the importance of CHC with health professionals early in their educational careers. The IPHCA team can also assist health centers seeking to begin or expand health professions training by connecting health centers with institutions, many of which contact IPHCA regularly to express interest in connecting with CHCs for teaching or hosting opportunities.

FQHC Immersion Program

IPHCA and Shawnee Health collaborated to host an FQHC Immersion Program for southern Illinois high school students. This was a 4-week program during which students learned about the CHC model of care and explored a variety of healthcare careers in the CHC setting. After the program, the students had a greater understanding of why patients may be underserved, how poor health impacts other areas of these patients' lives, and the services that CHC provide to serve these patients. Many of the students expressed that they would be interested in exploring a career with an FQHC.

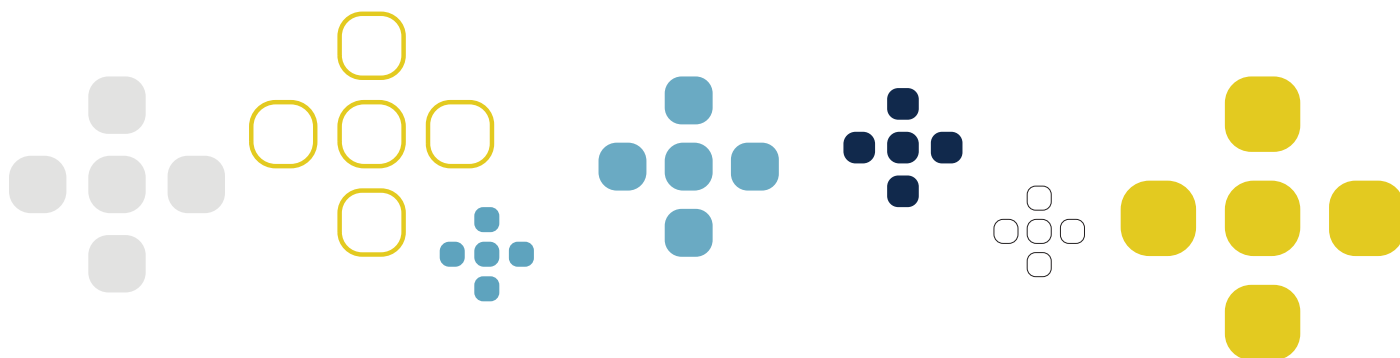
IPHCA Recruitment Service

IPHCA continues to assist our members with recruiting excellent clinicians so every person and community across Illinois can access the cutting-edge, compassionate care they need to thrive. We constantly conduct sourcing activities such as posting on third party job boards, emailing students and clinicians, attending conferences and job fairs, regularly communicating with schools and programs, and others. In 2023, we assisted 18 clinicians with finding a position with one of our member health centers. IPHCA encourages members to take advantage of this complimentary service.

Looking to 2024

IPHCA will continue to listen to the needs of members and develop resources, plan trainings, and choose projects that will meet those needs. IPHCA members' continued willingness to participate in surveys, attend peer group meetings, and provide feedback helps us do this and is greatly appreciated. IPHCA's goal remains to assist members in recruiting and retaining top talent in order to carry out their missions and position health centers as the highest standard of care.

For more information on IPHCA's workforce development services, contact Ashley Colwell, acolwell@iphca.org.



1. Amanda Brooks, LCSW, CADC. (2022). Healthcare Burnout: What it is, and how to treat it. IPHCA Blog. <https://www.iphca.org/blogs/healthcare-burnout-what-it-is-and-how-to-treat-it/>



American Heart Month Resources

Megan Williams, MS, Public Health Initiatives Manager, Illinois Primary Health Care Association

In honor of American Heart Month, IPHCA has compiled some great resources available to you.

IPHCA has a five-part “Self-Management Blood Pressure Series” available on demand, located [here](#). This train the trainer series is set up to help community health workers and/or patient educators learn best practices on teaching their patients about hypertension as well as how to take their blood pressure at home. The series touches upon many topics including maternal hypertension, basic hypertension education and specifically how to take your blood pressure at home.

IPHCA also recently developed three maternal health resource guides. One of the guides is dedicated to [Maternal Health + Hypertension](#). The guide includes links to numerous resources around maternal health including information on the [State of Illinois’ Maternal Health Innovation Program through the University of Illinois Chicago](#).

If your organization is interested in promoting American Heart Month on your social media platforms the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NIH) has created a great toolkit. In their toolkit you can find social media posts, fact sheets, flyers, graphics and much more. [View the Resources](#)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has created a “Heart Disease Communications” kit. This kit includes patient education materials on recognizing heart attack and stroke, how to best take your blood pressure, and also social media information around heart disease. You can find the toolkit [here](#).

The American Heart Association is celebrating “100 Years Bold Hearts” in honor of entering their second century as an organization. Learn about how their organization came to be as well as all of the great work they have done over the last 100 years [here](#). AHA also has a wonderful “Blood Pressure Toolkit” to provide patients with easy to read, health literate information to help them learn about their blood pressure and take it properly at home. You can find that toolkit [here](#).





Celebrate Children's Dental Health Month by Expanding Your Oral Health Knowledge

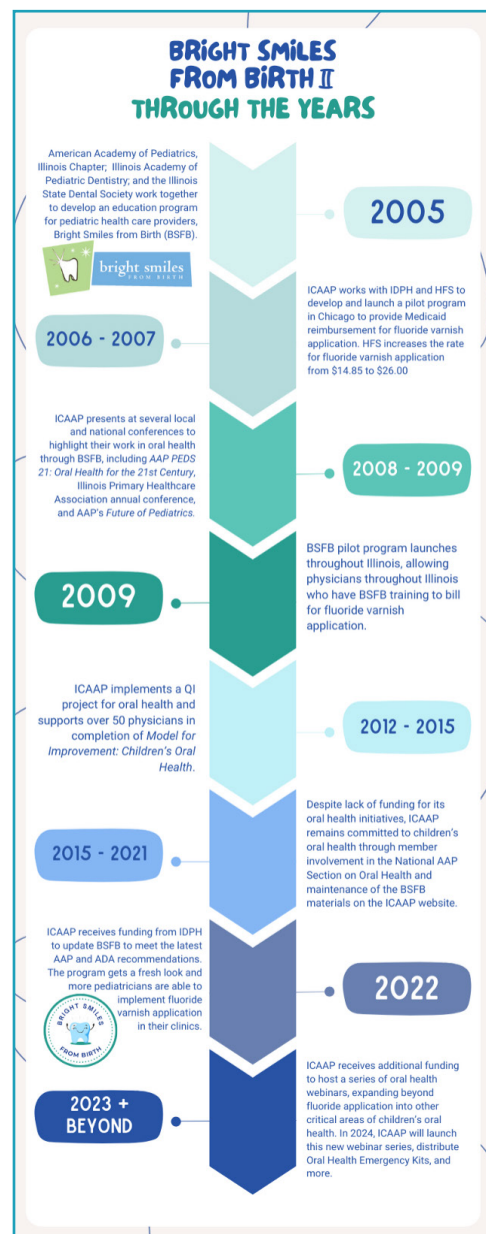
Lauren Erbach Barnfield, Program Director, Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

While dental caries (cavities) are a common childhood occurrence, if left untreated, the consequences can be serious. Tooth decay can cause problems with eating, speaking, and learning. Illinois data from 2020 suggests that the involvement of pediatric primary health care providers in children's oral health is critical -- 70% of Illinois children on Medicaid had well-child visits in their third, fourth, fifth, and sixth years of life, but only 35% received preventative dental services.

At the Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (ICAAP), we know that maintaining a healthy mouth and teeth is an important component of the overall health and well-being of children. In 2005, ICAAP worked with the Illinois Academy of Pediatric Dentistry and Illinois State Dental Society to develop an education program for pediatric health care providers, Bright Smiles From Birth (BSFB). In partnership with the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services, ICAAP launched several pilot programs throughout Chicago and Illinois from 2006 – 2009 which allowed health care providers to receive Medicaid reimbursement for fluoride varnish application.

Fluoride varnish is a dental treatment that can help prevent tooth decay, slow it down, or stop it from getting worse. It is quick and easy to apply. A health care provider simply paints the fluoride varnish on the top and sides of each tooth with a small brush. The varnish hardens once it comes in contact with saliva. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that fluoride varnish is applied according to the periodicity schedule. It is a proven tool in early childhood caries prevention.

In 2023, ICAAP relaunched BSFB as Bright Smiles from Birth II. This program supports and equips pediatric primary health care providers with the essential tools to assess oral health risks, perform oral health screenings, apply fluoride varnish, and provide anticipatory guidance in oral health.



¹ Source: Georgetown University Center for Children and Families analysis of the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services' (CMS) FFY 2020 Child Health Quality Measures Dataset. <https://kidshealthcarereport.ccf.georgetown.edu/states/illinois/>

² Source: Fluoride Use in Caries Prevention in the Primary Care Setting, Pediatrics: Official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Volume 146, Issue 6, December 2020. <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/146/6/e2020034637/33536/Fluoride-Use-in-Caries-Prevention-in-the-Primary>



Celebrate Children's Dental Health Month by Expanding Your Oral Health Knowledge (continued)

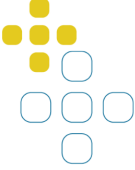
Since BSFB II launched, over 200 pediatric health care providers have learned how to play a more active role in the oral health of Illinois children. When surveyed six weeks after attending BSFB, 75% of respondents report that they have implemented fluoride varnish application with eligible patients.

In 2024, ICAAP is excited to continue to expand BSFBII beyond fluoride varnish application training to include other critical topics in children's oral health. We will launch a Quality Improvement program focused on practice change related to the integration of oral health services in primary care settings, including caries risk assessment, oral health screening, anticipatory guidance, fluoride varnish application, and more. This year, ICAAP will distribute Oral Health Emergency Kits to pediatric, OB/GYN, and WIC offices. We will expand our oral health outreach, especially to rural pediatricians and pediatric primary care providers in training.

We will also be offering an oral health webinar series. You can expect to hear information on everything from Silver Diamine Fluoride in the medical setting to how to help patients during oral health emergencies.

More information on Bright Smiles From Birth II and additional oral health resources can be found at <https://illinoisaaap.org/oral-health/>.

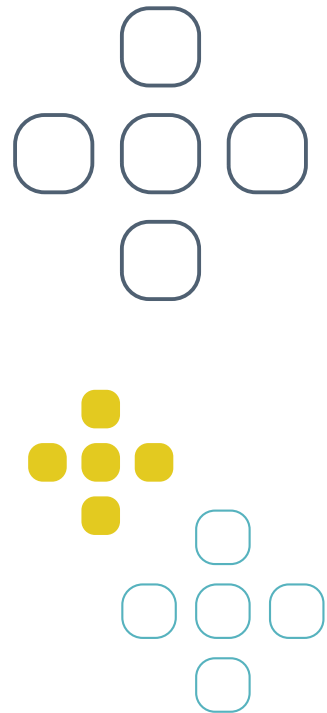
We hope you'll join us in 2024!



ILLINOIS ORAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

July 24 - 25, 2024
Location: BOS Center,
Springfield, IL
Credits available for attendees.

[Register Now](#)





Celebrating Record Breaking Open Enrollment

Paula Campbell, Director of Health Equity + Emergency Preparedness, Illinois Primary Health Care Association

Open Enrollment for the Affordable Care Act Health Insurance Marketplace ran from November 1, 2023 through January 16, 2024. The Biden-Harris Administration has continued its commitment to making health insurance available and affordable to everyone. The Inflation Reduction Act and the American Rescue Plan continue to keep Marketplace coverage more affordable. For this past enrollment cycle, the administration issued almost \$100 million in Navigator Awards, allowing organizations to hire staff who are trained to help consumers find affordable, comprehensive health coverage. Navigators, as they are known, have been key to helping consumers enroll in quality health insurance plans in every Marketplace state. Illinois Primary Health Care Association (IPHCA) received for the 2023 grant award year \$3,940,570. Under the CMS Health Insurance Navigator Program, IPHCA has engaged and trained 144 Health Insurance Navigators at 42 subcontracted partner FQHCs and partner organizations, with more than 80 rural and urban locations across Illinois.

Alongside the Navigator workforce FQHCs also have Certified Application Counselors (CACs) providing support across the state to patients and community members to ensure they maintain or apply for health coverage through Medicaid, Medicare, and Marketplace.

The 2024 historic open enrollment closed with 21.3 million choosing marketplace coverage! This year brings a 30 percent increase over last year and is the fourth consecutive year of record for ACA marketplace enrollment. Federal CMS data reports 398,814 Illinoisans enrolled in ACA Marketplace plans, which is a 16% increase over last year for Illinois!

Although Open Enrollment has ended, Health Insurance Navigators are busy ensuring that consumers know how to use their new insurance and will continue to enroll those Illinoisans that may have a life change and become eligible for a Special Enrollment Period (SEP). Due to the COVID unwinding process for Medicaid, this year's SEP is more important than ever. Many Medicaid consumers are facing redeterminations for the first time in three years. For Medicaid consumers who no longer qualify to maintain their coverage, they will be able to use an SEP to enroll in a Marketplace coverage. To learn more about SEPs, visit Get covered Illinois, the official ACA Health Insurance Marketplace for the State of Illinois www.getcoveredillinois.gov

Highlights from Open Enrollment 11

"Shawnee Health Clinical Case Managers/ Navigators provided 888 ACA Assists, which HRSA defines as customizable education sessions about third-party primary care health insurance coverage options, for 761 unique individuals. This work is in addition to their primary role of assisting patients with other various Social Determinants of Health, such as access to housing, food, and transportation", reported Sarah Miller, MSW Clinical Case Management Coordinator.



Shawnee Health's Clinical Case Managers are Navigators, SHIP Counselors, and Community Health Workers/HFS Application Agents.



Celebrating Record Breaking Open Enrollment (continued)

"DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) Navigator team, during OE 11, held 15 events that included Library enrollment events, WIC mobile van outreach, tabling at a local food pantry, a veteran's event at a VFW, and staffing at 2 emergency assistance events. Outreach events like these helped the DCHD Navigator team have over 453 consumers contacts", stated Robin Lavender Client Access Coordinator/ Lead Navigator at DuPage County Health Department.

Need Health Insurance?
Our Enrollment Counselors Can Help!
Marketplace & Medicaid

Open Enrollment Event

Saturday, January 6th
11am-3pm
Joliet Public Library - Black Rd.
3395 Black Road,
Joliet, IL 60431
Walk-in - First come, first serve

Unable to make this event?
Call for an enrollment appointment
Will County Community Health Center
1106 Neal Avenue, Joliet, 60433
815-774-6090

What to Bring

- Driver's License or state identification
- Social Security Numbers of household members
- Proof of Immigration Status (Green Card)
- Employer and income information for every member of your household

Open Enrollment for Marketplace Ends January 15th!

Rosa & Janet prepare for an enrollment event at the Joliet Public Library on a snowy January morning!

Will County
Health Department &
Community Health Center

Cass County Health Department Navigator team hosted an outreach event at the Beardstown Lady Tiger Classic (which is a weeklong basketball tournament) with over 5000 attendees.



Cass County Health Department:
Olidia Montoya (navigator) & Reycher Nunez



Cass County Health Department: Olidia Montoya and Louise Yale
(both navigators).



Turkey Giveaway Results

Beth Ann Gailey, Corporate Director of Communications and Strategy, SIHF Healthcare

SIHF Healthcare, a leader in providing comprehensive health care services, partnered with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBS-IL) and other Managed Care Organizations to host an extraordinary Thanksgiving initiative. In line with the spirit of the holiday season and to foster community connection, BCBS-IL generously donated 500 turkeys and supplied blood pressure cuffs for individuals who participated in blood pressure screenings and at-home colon cancer screening kits for eligible individuals.

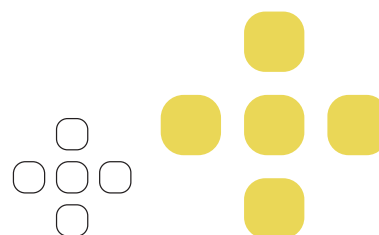
Other Managed Care Organizations also showed their support: Meridian donated green beans, United Healthcare contributed corn, and Aetna was there to provide health packets.

The SIHF Healthcare Mobile Health Unit performed blood pressure screenings, glucose checks, and provided 21 flu and 30 COVID vaccines to community members. Our Community Health Workers were able to connect 161 individuals to local food pantries and other supportive resources, thereby addressing Health Equity and Social Determinants of Health.

As the Medicaid Unwinding project progresses nationwide, our Patient Navigator team aided those without health insurance. This event served as an excellent opportunity to discuss medical coverage with attendees. We successfully assisted 275 individuals with their health insurance needs and helped 10 families with redetermination.

Besides the dedication of the SIHF Healthcare staff, the City of Cahokia Heights Police Department provided traffic control and offered much-needed assistance during the community event.

This Thanksgiving Initiative connected the community not only with a free turkey but also the essential health and supportive resources they required in one accessible location. We eagerly look forward to partnering with our Managed Care Organization partners in 2024 to make this event more expansive and impactful than ever.





Benefits Assistance in Strong Demand at VNA

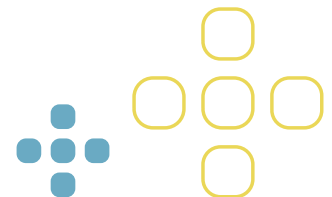
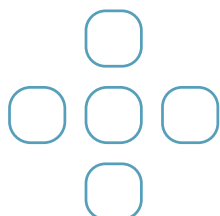
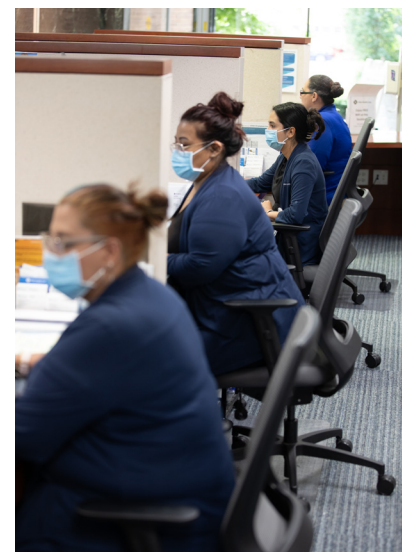
Erin Weldon, Philanthropy & Communications Associate, VNA Health Care

The VNA Health Care Benefits team has provided approximately 15,000 benefits consultations, including Marketplace assistance during 2023 to patients across the suburbs of Chicago. To accomplish this, VNA activity engages in education and outreach activities in its clinics and the community throughout the year.

Over the last six months, the VNA team attended over 20 community events with the primary focus of informing eligible individuals of benefits options for themselves and their families. Within its clinics, VNA staff help identify self-pay patients who may need assistance in obtaining benefits and schedule them with appointments to work one-on-one with a trained VNA benefits specialist. The benefits team also proactively reaches out to other patients who may be eligible for Marketplace coverage and works with them on an individual basis.

VNA makes it easy for patients and community members to get benefits assistance, whether in person, phone, email, social media, or a message through the MyVNA patient portal. VNA has an active social media presence and leverages it to educate and inform patients and followers about benefits eligibility and the multitude of primary care and additional wrap-around services offered by VNA. Recently one individual reached out to ask for help through Google MyBusiness to ask if VNA was able to provide assistance. Within minutes, an appointment was made to ensure that this individual was able to obtain benefits prior to the end of Marketplace open enrollment.

Another patient came in for her appointment and asked for assistance as she and her husband no longer qualified for Medicaid but were too young to be eligible for Medicare. The team at VNA determined that they were eligible for the Health Care Marketplace and VNA was able to explain their options and guide them on the sign-up process.





TRAINING CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

12I PHM: POPULATION HEALTH BEYOND THE EHR

February 28

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

[Register](#)

MARCH

MEDICATION FOR OPIOID USE DISORDER (MOUD) TRAINING FOR PROVIDERS

March 8

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

[Register](#)

CMS INTEROPERABILITY AND PRIOR AUTHORIZATION FINAL RULE (CMS-0057-F)

March 13

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

[Register](#)

IPHCA ADULT MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING

March 19

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

[Register](#)

SECURE 2.0 ACT

March 21

2:00 p.m.

[Register](#)

INTEGRATING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH STRATEGIES WITHIN ORAL HEALTH VISITS

March 26

12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

[Register](#)

APRIL

REVENUE CYCLE PEER INTEREST GROUP

April 16

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

[Register](#)

IPHCA ADVOCACY DAY EVENTS

April 16-17

5:00 p.m.

[Register](#)

SAVE \$150!



2024 i2i Client Conference

Building a Healthier Future

Register Now!

April 18-19 in Franklin, TN

Client Conference Focus Areas

- Value Based Care
- Health Plan Partnerships
- Social Drivers of Health
- Health Data = Better Care
- Friends Using PHM
- Tracks Refresh & Revenue
- Quality & Care Management
- PRiZiM Decision Intelligence
- PRiZiM Inpatient Insights
- Using Health Plan Data

IPHCA



Want to attend the i2i Client Conference?

IPHCA and i2i are offering:

- \$150 off Early Bird Registration
- Each member IPHCA Health Center can register up to TWO (2) members!
- Use Registration Code: **IPHCA-i2i24** to save \$150!

REGISTER NOW

INSPIRING BETTER CARE **FOR A BETTER LIFE**

www.i2ipophealth.com



IPHCA ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS

Access Community Health Network
 AHS Family Health Center
 Alivio Medical Center
 American Indian Health Service of Chicago
 Aunt Martha's Health & Wellness
 Beloved Community Family Wellness Center
 Cass County Health Department
 Central Counties Health Centers, Inc.
 Chestnut Health Systems, Inc.
 Chicago Family Health Center
 Christian Community Health Center
 Christopher Rural Health Planning Corporation
 Community Health & Emergency Services, Inc.
 Community Health Care, Inc.
 Community Health Centers of Southeastern Iowa, Inc.
 Community Health Partnership of Illinois
 Crossing Healthcare
 Crusader Community Health
 Eagle View Community Health System
 Erie Family Health Center, Inc.
 Esperanza Health Centers
 Family Christian Health Center
 Friend Health
 Grand Prairie Services
 Greater Family Health
 Hamdard Center for Health & Human Services
 Haymarket Center
 Infant Welfare Society of Chicago
 Inner City Muslim Action Network
 Knox County Health Department
 Lake County Health Department/CHC
 Lawndale Christian Health Center
 Legacy Medical Care
 Macoupin County Public Health Department
 Mile Square Health Center
 Near North Health
 PCC Community Wellness Center
 Pillars Community Health
 Preferred Family Healthcare
 Prime Care Health
 Promise Healthcare
 Rural Health, Inc.
 Shawnee Health Service
 SIHF Healthcare
 SIU Center for Family Medicine
 Tapestry 360 Health
 TCA Health, Inc.
 VNA Health Care
 Wabash County Health Center
 Whiteside County Community Health Clinic
 Will County Community Health Center

IPHCA ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

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 Cook County Health and Hospitals System
 Douglas County Health Department
 Heritage Behavioral Health Center
 Thresholds
 Thresholds Health

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 CareMessage
 Certintell Telehealth
 Chartspan
 CliftonLarsonAllen LLP
 Compliatric
 Henry Schein
 Hinshaw & Culbertson
 i2i Population Health
 IFF
 IHA Business Resources - Association Venture Corporation
 LabCorp (Laboratory Corporation of America)
 Luma Health
 Mission Mobile
 Mutual of America
 Nonstop Administration and Insurance Services, Inc.
 Heartland Alliance Health
 Heartland Health Services
 Howard Brown Health
 Quest Diagnostics
 TruMed Systems
 Zivaro

IPHCA NETWORK MEMBER

AllianceChicago

WHO WE ARE

IPHCA is a nonprofit trade association that serves as the voice of and champion for Illinois' community health centers. Guided by our mission to educate, empower and advocate for our member health centers, we work to expand community primary care options across Illinois. By advocating on behalf of health centers, IPHCA also advocates for access to cutting-edge, compassionate care for every patient.

To learn about membership options for health centers, businesses and organizations, visit iphca.org.