



FINANCIAL PRESSURES EXPERIENCED BY COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS TALKING POINTS

Please use these talking points in conversations with your NYS Assembly Members and Senators to demonstrate the need for health center rate reform. **Personalize these talking points to include how rising costs and workforce challenges are impacting your health center and patient population.**

CHCS' FUNDING HAS NOT KEPT UP WITH INFLATION

- **Reimbursement rates for CHCs do not reflect today's costs.** The base reimbursement rate was set over twenty years ago – based off costs in 1999 – and has been limited to marginal increases over time.
- **Rising operating costs are far exceeding reimbursement rates.** Costs today for personnel, benefits, equipment, medical supplies, and office space are significantly higher than they were decades ago and have risen exponentially since the pandemic.
- **CHCs struggle to find ways to make up the difference between our reimbursement rates and actual costs to keep up with patient demand.** We braid and blend many kinds of funding – federal and state grants, reimbursement, philanthropic funding, and 340B – which can make sustainability planning and expansion incredibly difficult.

CHCS PROVIDE ESSENTIAL SERVICES TO THEIR COMMUNITIES

- **CHCs serve many patients with complex medical, behavioral, and social needs.** Among CHC patients, 90% are low-income, 13% are uninsured, and 59% are enrolled in Medicaid or Child Health Plus.
- **Demand for health care at CHCs is growing,** especially for dental services and behavioral health services. Yet, we cannot always meet demand due to cost pressures.
- **CHCs are doing so much more than ever before, but with the same rate.** CHCs deliver a full spectrum of services, including many social care supports like providing housing, transportation vouchers, and food.

WORKFORCE CHALLENGES EXACERBATE FINANCIAL PRESSURES

- **CHCs have long experienced workforce shortages.** The pandemic exacerbated what is now an unprecedented amount of workforce attrition affecting operations and patient care.
- **Nursing staff, behavioral health staff, and dental staff** are among some of the hardest to recruit and retain.
- **CHCs often cannot provide competitive salaries** compared to lucrative deals offered by travel nursing opportunities or for-profit health care organizations.
- **Insufficient staffing levels have increased burnout rates** as the burden of responsibilities fall onto existing staff, which in turn affects workforce retainment.
- **The cost of living is increasing,** however, CHCs often cannot adjust staff salaries to account for increases in cost of living, due to the stagnation of our funding streams, jeopardizing our ability to retain staff.

THE SOLUTION

- **Health centers require a new and updated payment rate** that will account for increases in operational costs and the new, expanded model of health and social care that is the hallmark of community health centers.