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## **Continuing Support for State and Federal Workforce Programs Critical to Addressing Primary Care Shortage**

A new report released today by the Community Health Care Association of New York State finds that difficulties in recruiting and retaining providers at New York's federally qualified health centers (FQHC) persist despite the existence of numerous state and federal loan repayment and practice support programs designed to resolve that very problem.

FQHCs provide primary care in medically underserved areas but often struggle with recruiting and retaining qualified providers. Key reasons for that difficulty include the inability to provide competitive salaries and lack of interest in coming to some of the areas in which FQHCs are located.

Federal programs such as the National Health Service Corps, which is set to expire on September 30<sup>th</sup> unless reauthorized by Congress, and State programs such as Doctors Across New York and the Primary Care Service Corps, provide scholarships and loan repayments to providers who commit to working in designated health provider shortage areas.

However, the report finds that FQHCs face numerous barriers when seeking to participate in several of these programs, including uncertainty regarding continuation of federal programs, overly burdensome application requirements, delays in receiving approval to participate, and inconsistent funding cycles.

The report, titled **FQHC Utilization and State and Federal Loan and Scholarship Programs to Support Clinician Recruitment**, recommends several changes that would help these programs work better. Recommendations include: ensuring continued annual financial support for the programs, some of which are only offered every other year; a simplified and streamlined application process; allocating targeted state workforce funding for community-based providers; and enhancing outreach and education about the programs.

“Access to high-quality, comprehensive primary care reduces avoidable emergency room visits, saves money and keeps people healthy in their communities. However, ensuring access requires a stable and well-qualified workforce,” said **Rose Duhan**, CHCANYS President and CEO.

“That is why it’s critical that Congress continue supporting primary care workforce recruitment and retention programs by reauthorizing the National Health Service Corps and Teaching Health Center programs which are due to expire on September 30<sup>th</sup>,” Ms. Duhan said. “Additionally, we hope the report recommendations will help policy makers increase access to primary care and ensure that primary care providers have the resources necessary to serve all New Yorkers.”

To access the report, click [here](#).

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**About the Community Health Care Association of New York State (CHCANYS):** CHCANYS’ mission is to ensure that all New Yorkers, including those who live in medically underserved communities, have continuous access to high quality community-based health care services, including a primary care home. CHCANYS serves as the voice of community health centers as leading providers of primary health care in New York State.

**About Federally Qualified Health Centers:** Federally qualified health centers (FQHC) are not-for-profit, community-based providers that provide high quality, cost-effective, patient-centered primary and preventive health services to anyone seeking care, regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay. FQHCs are medical homes, offering a comprehensive model of care that is associated with demonstrated improved outcomes and reduced costs. Serving 2.2 million New Yorkers at 650 sites statewide, New York State’s 68 FQHCs form an extensive primary care network that is central to the health care safety net.