



# Member Newsletter

advocatesforcommunityhealth.org

## May 2024

Dear ACH Members,

While we appreciate Representatives Bucshon, Carter and Harshbarger for attempting to lead efforts toward 340B reform, the harm that will come to health centers from the present language in the newly introduced *340B ACCESS Act* is troubling. We've compiled a [brief summary for our members](#) of our initial review along with key provisions and details on why we are unable to support this legislation in its current form. This document may be revised following further legal scrutiny. In the interim, should you have any questions, please reach out.

My recent visit to Morris Heights Health Center (MHHC) in the Bronx, NY was enlightening. MHHC is piloting its [Age Well program](#), which is partly made possible by a \$500,000 grant from ACH's Community Health Entrepreneur Challenge. Visits like these inspire me, as well as the collective work we're doing to eliminate health disparities. MHHC continues to bring a visionary approach to its services and programming, all of which is driven by the needs of its patients, community, and team.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my work is learning about your health center's aspirations and then doing everything I can to help support them through our work at ACH. It is what keeps me energized.



Please feel free to connect with me to share your plans for the future. I'd love to hear about them and collaborate with you on how to make these dreams a reality.

Warmly,

Amanda Pears Kelly

## The Latest from DC

### An Update from our Policy & Government Affairs Team

Yesterday, Representatives Larry Bucshon, MD (R-IN), Buddy Carter (R-GA), and Diana Harshbarger (R-TN) introduced the *340B ACCESS Act*. ACH is unable to support the 340B ACCESS Act in its current form. The provisions in this legislation would result in an unacceptable reduction in the value of the 340B program to health centers. [Read our full statement](#)

House Energy and Commerce Committee Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA) and Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations Chair Morgan Griffith (R-VA) today announced a subcommittee hearing titled "Oversight of 340B Drug Pricing Program" on June 4 at 12:00pm. The hearing will be open to the public and will be livestreamed online at <https://energycommerce.house.gov/>

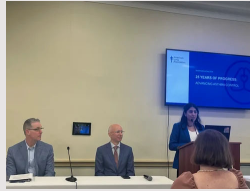
Congress has taken steps to reauthorize COVID-19 telehealth flexibilities for an additional two years. The House Energy & Commerce Health Committee recently voted unanimously in favor of H.R. 7623, the Telehealth Modernization Act of 2024, demonstrating strong bipartisan support. The bill also ensures that Medicare would reimburse telehealth visits at the same rate as in-person visits. Now, the bill must pass through the full Energy & Commerce Committee (E&C), the full House, and then the Senate. [Read our comment letter to E&C Leadership](#)

### ACH on Capitol Hill

ACH's SVP of Policy & Government Affairs, Stephanie Krenrich, recently spoke at HRSA's FY 2026 budget listening session this month on behalf of increased funding for health centers. [Read our written testimony.](#)

ACH is proud to support the American Lung Association and attended a Congressional Briefing on "25 Years of Progress: Advancing Asthma Control." We were also excited to attend the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Policy for the People Health Equity Summit. The summit serves as a vital space for dialogue and action on critical issues shaping the future of Black communities in America. ACH is dedicated to finding innovative solutions in the fight for greater health equity.





## **LinkedIn Editorial from Amanda Pears Kelly** **Leave Primary Care to the Experts: Why Retail Health Clinics Can't Replace Long-Term Investments in Community Health Centers**

If you've been following the news lately, you might have read that several major retailers have concluded that their experiment in primary care has failed – the business is simply too complex, and not profitable. Only one gold standard in primary care remains – community health centers.

[Read the Editorial](#)

## **Membership News**



### **Founding ACH Member David B. Vliet is Retiring; Leaves Long Legacy of Advocacy**

David B. Vliet, MBA has been a pivotal figure in the Community Health Center movement since 2002. He has served as CEO for FQHCs and made significant contributions to the field, most recently at LifeLong Medical Care in California. His leadership and vision have played a key role in developing models of care for the elderly, cementing his status as an influential advocate for the underserved.

[Read More](#)



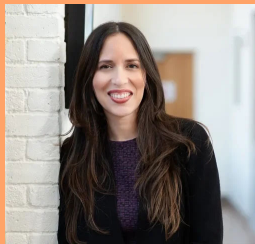
**Innovation in Community Health Series:  
Open Door Health Centers Community Health and Wellness Garden  
Program Offers its Patients Something More**

Open Door's Community Health and Wellness Garden program, which emphasizes garden-based education and food as medicine, began in 2011 and has expanded to four sites throughout the north coast of California. The program turns vacant lots into vibrant garden spaces with a range of activities for all ages and abilities where no experience is necessary.

[Read the Story](#)

**Member Spotlight:  
Lowell Community Health Center (LCHC)**

LCHC recently [launched its new Health Justice Learning Institute](#) and appointed Sheila Och as the inaugural executive director. The \$500,000 grant from ACH's Community Health Entrepreneur Challenge, in collaboration with UnitedHealthcare, helped fuel the planning development phase.



**Member Spotlight:  
Columbia Basin Health Association (CBHA)**

CBHA [opened the Behavioral Health Center Portable Mental Health Clinic at Wahluke School District](#) as part of the grant it received from the Community Health Entrepreneurial Challenge. Students now have a safe space to receive mental health care. For this project, CBHA recently won their school district's Community Award.



## Members in the News

- Five ACH members and national health center leaders are interviewed in this conversation in health care on CHC Radio. [Read more](#)
- Legacy Community Health, the largest FQHC in Texas with over 57 clinic locations, is adding a 40K SF facility in Pasadena as part of a \$50 million gift from Houston Methodist. [Read more](#)
- Lowell Community Health Center announced the expansion of its in-house pharmacy, which began just three years ago, and a new walk-in clinic. [Read more](#)
- The opening of the Evara Health Institute will mark an important step forward for health care in Tampa Bay. [Read more](#)

Have good news to share? Please [let us know!](#)


Members-Only Webinar

### The Role of FQHCs in the Provision of Maternal Health Care in Rural America

[Register Now](#)

Join ACH to hear about opportunities for FQHCs to address challenges in accessing maternal healthcare in rural areas.

**June 5 @ 12:00 PM ET**



ACH Working Groups offer opportunities for members to have a direct impact on various policy priorities. The next meetings are scheduled as follows:

- **Health Equity** Working Group: June 12, 2024 | 4 pm EST
- **Membership** Working Group: June 17, 2024 | 2 pm EST
- **Workforce** Working Group: June 20, 2024 | 2 pm EST
- **CHC Funding** Working Group: June 26, 2024 | 2 pm EST

## Funding Opportunities

### Highlighted Opportunity: Clinical Research in Primary Care Settings

NIH announced a new effort to establish a coordinated infrastructure to integrate innovative research into clinical care in primary care settings. This effort aims to:

- Pilot and implement infrastructure to support primary-care-based clinical research with a focus on health equity and whole-person health
- Establish a foundation for engagement in communities underrepresented in

- clinical research
- Implement study designs to address common health issues and disease prevention

Applications are **due by 5:00 pm EDT on June 14th, 2024**. [More information](#)

[View All Funding Opportunities for Members](#)

## Access Your Members-Only Portal

**Enter Password: ACHMember**

- Government grant opportunities
- Event recordings and resources
- Newsletter archives and policy updates
- 2024 Policy Agenda
- Grassroots Advocacy Resources



## Must-Read Articles

- Many people disenrolled from Medicaid during the redeterminations process were likely unaware they had coverage to begin with, a study published in the May issue of *Health Affairs* found. [Read more](#)
- The Virginia Telemental Health Initiative, a pilot program that offered free telehealth mental health services to eligible uninsured Virginians, will now become the first statewide virtual free mental health clinic. [Read more](#)
- Kroger Health is collaborating with Better Health Group to launch primary care services in its Kroger stores for senior patients in Atlanta and Georgia. [Read more](#)



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Advocates for Community Health, 1575 I St. NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20005

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