



ADVOCATES FOR
COMMUNITY HEALTH
United for Health and Innovation

POLICY & ADVOCACY

A STRONG WORKFORCE

For Community Health Centers



300K+

People employed by the
nearly 1,500 CHCs,
Including many veterans

70%+

of CHCs reported
critical staff shortages
in 2024

50%

of CHCs estimate employees
left for new opportunities
w/10-25% wage increases

We envision a network of community health centers (CHCs) with workforces that are reflective of the patients and communities they serve. We see CHCs as the centerpiece in creating an abundant pathway of skilled professionals with the infrastructure necessary to provide exceptional care to patients.

ACH strongly believes that access to professional development and mental health services, systems to maintain a sustainable workload, and pathways for career growth must be in place for this workforce to thrive. We believe health centers should have a culture of continuous learning and growth at every level.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Labor, and Department of Education must improve their collaboration in order to bolster the health care workforce pathway to address the healthcare workforce shortage and staffing crisis.

Training programs based at CHCs are successful and should be expanded. Since the Teaching Health Centers Graduate Medical Education program began in 2010, THCs have trained more than 2,000 new primary care physicians and dentists, the majority serving in underserved areas.

CHCs are a source of mentorship and professional pathway programs within underserved communities. This pathway should start with outreach to elementary aged children all the way to career entry.

CHC workforces must reflect the populations they serve. This kind of representation increases patient trust, health care quality, and health outcomes.

Given their vast cultural and linguistic expertise, CHCs are critical partners to recipients of Medicare Graduate Medical Education dollars in training future health professionals and should be recognized as such.



1575 I St. NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20005



833-696-2773



info@advocatesforcommunityhealth.org



OUR POLICY PRIORITIES

A STRONG WORKFORCE

Advocates for Community Health recommends the following policy solutions to address primary care workforce recruitment and retention challenges in order to continue providing high-quality care to the patients community health centers serve.

Prioritize growing a culturally competent workforce through well-funded education and training programs

Invest in long-term, robust funding of the National Health Service Corps and reduce barriers to provider loan forgiveness opportunities.

Improve and expand the workforce pipeline for CHCs via college pathway and grow-your-own programs and partnerships between CHCs and education institutions

Improve workforce recruitment and retention rates through leadership training and incentives

Integrate CHCs more fully into Graduate Medical Education and continue investing in the successful Teaching Health Center model

Address health care workforce burnout and build resilience

