



# STRENGTHENING THE COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER WORKFORCE

## THE ISSUE

Community Health Centers (CHCs) serve nearly 34 million patients nationwide, yet workforce shortages threaten access to care—particularly in rural and underserved communities. Primary care is essential to prevention, chronic disease management, and early treatment.

HRSA projects a 24% national shortage (70,610 full-time primary care physicians) by 2038, widening the gap between patient need and provider capacity.

**A strong CHC workforce is essential to access, outcomes, and health system resilience.**

## THE OPPORTUNITY

ACH envisions a strong CHC workforce that reflects the communities it serves and is prepared to meet current and future needs. With targeted federal support, CHCs can strengthen workforce pipelines, invest in infrastructure, and support high-quality, patient-centered care.

This opportunity requires:

- **Professional development** and career advancement
- **Workforce well-being** and mental health supports
- **Sustainable workloads** and retention strategies
- **Continuous learning** and leadership

## POLICY PRIORITIES

ACH urges Congress to strengthen and sustain the community health center workforce by:

**1. Advance the *Developing the Community Health Workforce Act*** (to be introduced) to: improve recruitment and retention through loan repayment; increase workforce diversity; create CHC workforce pipelines; expand CHC-hospital GME partnerships; and grow the behavioral health workforce.

### 2. Expand Workforce Pipelines

- Invest in and increase funding for the *National Health Service Corps (NHSC)* and *Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME)*

- Support college pathway and grow-your-own partnerships

### 3. Improve Recruitment & Retention

- Expand and modernize loan repayment and scholarship programs
- Ensure predictable federal funding for competitive compensation

### 3. Support Workforce Resilience & Innovation

- Invest in burnout prevention, leadership training, and flexible staffing models

## OUR ASK:

*Congress must prioritize sustained, targeted workforce investments so health centers can recruit, retain, and support the workforce patients depend on—today and in the future.*