



2021 Legislative and Budget Items of Interest to Colorado Community Health Centers

The Colorado Community Health Network (CCHN), on behalf of Colorado's 20 federally qualified Community Health Centers (CHCs), closely monitors state legislation and funding that impacts CHCs. CCHN's top priorities include:

- Protect Medicaid, Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+), the Colorado Indigent Care Program (CICP), the Primary Care Fund (PCF), and other programs that support CHCs in the state budget
- Protect and refine CHC cost-based reimbursement
- Grow and protect telehealth reimbursement in both Medicaid and Medicare
- Participate in and shape The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing payment reform programs
- Monitor and influence system transformation to increase investment in primary care and the uninsured

Below are CCHN's positions on legislation and budget items as of March 5, 2021. In addition to these items, CCHN is monitoring many other bills and budget items that may impact CHCs and the patients they serve.

2021 Legislative Positions

ACTIVELY SUPPORT: HB21-1107 Protections for Public Health Department Workers

This bill would protect the personal information of certain public health workers of CDPHE or county or district public health agencies, who are engaged in specific public health duties.

- Potential CHC Impact: CHCs partner closely with their Public Health Departments on a number of programs and have been partnering even more closely during the time of COVID. The protection of these public health workers is in the best interest of the entire health care community.

ACTIVELY SUPPORT: SB21-102 Sunset Dental Hygienists Specialized Functions

This bill would continue specialized services that dental hygienists can provide, including to place interim therapeutic restorations (ITR) and apply silver diamine fluoride (SDF) until Sept. 1, 2025.

- Potential CHC Impact: Colorado CHCs employ over 120 dental hygienists. This proposed legislation would allow for dental hygienists to continue to provide these important services at CHCs. This will continue to increase access to care and improving patient oral health outcomes among CHC patients.

ACTIVELY SUPPORT: HB21-XXXX Physician Assistant Supervision Requirements

This bill would update supervision requirements for Physician Assistants (PAs), eliminating the legal requirement that an experienced PA be supervised by a physician after their first three years of clinically practicing as a PA, and would update the term used to describe the relationship between PA and physician from "supervision" to "collaboration," among other provisions.

- Potential CHC Impact: Colorado CHCs employ over 200 PAs. This proposed legislation would allow these PAs to practice more autonomously (freeing up time of physicians to focus on more complex patients) and would increase access to care, specifically in areas of the state with less MD/DO- level providers.

2021 Budget Positions

ACTIVELY SUPPORT: Protect the Primary Care Fund

The Primary Care Fund plays a key role in allowing CHCs to provide high-quality comprehensive primary care to uninsured patients. CCHN supports budget items related to protecting, increasing, and expanding funding for the Primary Care Fund, and opposes any proposed cuts to the program.

ACTIVELY SUPPORT: Increase State Funds for CHP+

This budget item would request an additional \$10.4 million in General Funds to ensure the continuation of CHP+ coverage with the scheduled decrease in federal matching dollars.

- Potential CHC Impact: CHCs serve roughly a quarter of the state's CHP+ population. Without these general fund dollars, the state may have to make changes to eligibility or reduce benefits for CHP+ enrollees.

ACTIVELY SUPPORT: Restore Medicaid Adult Dental Benefit

This budget request would restore the adult dental annual benefit cap to \$1,500 per patient.

- Potential CHC Impact: Restoring the annual patient cap for this benefit will allow Medicaid patients to access more needed oral health services.

ACTIVELY SUPPORT: Restore Low-Income Senior Dental Program

This budget request would restore the \$1 million to the Low-Income Senior Dental Program that was cut in 2020.

- Potential CHC Impact: This program allows CHCs to provide dental care to seniors who would otherwise might not receive it. Restoring last year's cut will allow CHCs to expand services to more seniors, etc.