Colorado Community Health Center
2022 Workforce Landscape

Community Health Centers (CHCs) are vital to the economic health of Colorado communities as employers and businesses.

Colorado CHCs provided **5,889 full-time jobs** to Coloradans in 2020.  

Each year, CHCs contribute **$1.3 billion** to Colorado's economy, all while providing cost savings to the state’s health care system.

Colorado CHCs depend on a network of clinicians, advanced practice providers, clinical support staff, and administrative staff to deliver on the promise of affordable and accessible health care for one in seven Coloradans.

CHCs have played a critical role caring for Coloradans during the COVID-19 pandemic. CHCs are facing pandemic-related workforce challenges which impact their ability to provide access to essential primary care services.

### Staff Shortages

In December 2021, there were 553 job openings at CHCs (compared to 221 in December 2020 and 148 in December 2019).

Of these job openings, 317 were for clinical positions vs. 182 for non-clinical positions.

### High Turnover

In 2020, some Colorado CHCs experienced turnover rates as high as 55%.

The most significant turnover occurred among behavioral health providers, dental staff, and clinical support staff. CHCs have expressed that staff turnover was exponentially worse in 2021 due to pandemic-related burnout.

### Growing Patient Demand

The patient base of Colorado CHCs has continued to increase; from 2010 to 2020, the number of patients served by Colorado CHCs grew by 37%.

The need for CHC services has skyrocketed during the COVID-19 pandemic as the demand for all types of health care services has increased.

### Rising Personnel Costs

Colorado CHCs are struggling to meet the growing demand for increased employee compensation.

Large health care systems, which are tooled differently, are increasing wages at unprecedented rates, making it difficult to recruit and retain all types of staff at CHCs.

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**Policy Opportunities**

- **Loan Repayment**
  - Continued investment and expansion of the Colorado Health Services Corps (CHSC) and other loan repayment/forgiveness programs

- **Retention Support**
  - Enhanced state income tax credits for safety net workers
  - Expanded funding and scope for rural preceptor tax credits (HB22-1005)
  - State funding for health care worker retention bonuses

- **Workforce Pipeline**
  - Increased state funding to support paid apprenticeship programs
  - Continued investment in education - safety net pipeline
  - Explore opportunities for scholarships

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1. 2020 Uniform Data System (UDS)
2. 2019 Capitol Link Economic Impact Report of Colorado CHCs
3. CCHN Jobs Tracker
4. CCHN 2021 Turnover Report
5. UDS Reports, 2010-2020

The Colorado Community Health Network (CCHN) is the unified voice for Colorado’s federally qualified Community Health Centers and their patients. For more information, please visit cchn.org