

California Health+Advocates' 2023 Legislative Priorities

February 21, 2023



Community Health Centers Background

- Today, more than 1,300 community health centers (CHCs) serve the state of California, and provide comprehensive, high-quality care to 7.2 million people.
- Community health centers provide the full spectrum of care, from primary care to dental to behavioral health care and a variety of enabling and wraparound services.
- In many rural communities throughout California, community health centers serve as the only source of medical and wellness care for middle and working-class families in the region.

Health Center Viability

AB 1549 (W. Carrillo) - Prospective Payment System (PPS) reform - This proposal will modernize FQHC reimbursement rules, PPS, to align with state-led care transformation initiatives, and ensure health centers can successfully meet rising operational costs, support a thriving workforce, and continue providing innovative, quality, patient-centered, equitable care to the Medi-Cal members they serve.

AB 1612 (Pacheco) - Eliminating Barriers to Health Access - This proposal seeks to increase health access by streamlining licensing and building standard requirements (known as OSHPD 3) while continuing to provide necessary patient protection. These heightened standards result in barriers to access for patient care because CHCs are required to utilize their funds for unnecessary construction costs rather than using the funds for patient care by opening additional sites in underserved areas.

340B – Health+Advocates will continue to protect the \$105M pool of funding secured to help 340B non-hospital clinics with financial challenges caused by Medi-Cal Rx implementation. We will also support state legislation to prohibit pharmacy benefit managers from imposing any undue and burdensome requirement on 340B providers, like CHCs. Finally, we will support advocacy efforts that push for federal reform within the 340B program including protecting contract pharmacy relationships.

Access to Care

SB 282 (Eggman) - Same Day Access – This proposal would allow FQHCs and RHCs to bill Medi-Cal for two visits if a patient is provided mental health services on the same day they receive other medical services; it ensures more early intervention in mental illness and guarantees we are using the integrated health services available to our communities at their full potential. Pursuing a pilot program will evaluate how this change impacts patient outcomes and produces overall cost savings.

Medi-Cal Redeterminations – Health+Advocates is seeking \$60 million to ensure CHCs have access to adequate funding and resources to facilitate Medi-Cal redeterminations, help patients navigate the health plan changes in counties with new plans due to procurement, and prepare for enrollment of the adult Medi-Cal expansion population.

Empowering Communities

AB 85 (Weber) - Social Determinants of Health – This proposal seeks to improve access to social determinants of health (SDOH) screenings, referrals, and community navigation services. Additionally, AB 85 aims to close the gap between community-based organizations (CBOs) and providers to improve follow-ups after screening and collaboration efforts with community organizations to assist patients with their needs.

Strong Workforce

Health+Advocates will focus on protecting previous year investments and ensure workforce funding is properly implemented. We will support efforts to secure funding for health center training, loan repayment, and other innovations to recruit and retain diverse allied, primary care, dental, and behavioral health professionals, as well as non-profit program and administrative staff. We will also identify and pursue strategies to sustainably increase wages and provide fair and competitive compensation to successfully recruit and retain health center staff.