

AB 1612 Talking Points

- AB 1612 is authored by Assemblymember Blanca Pacheco and is sponsored by California Health+ Advocates & the California Partnership for Health. It currently has no opposition.
- The bill will streamline licensing and building standard requirements for community health centers (CHCs).
 - Specifically, AB 1612 will update the construction and building standards for outpatient clinics to say that a clinic in good standing would be able to acquire and operate an existing outpatient setting or build a new outpatient clinic without being linked to the heightened requirement of a hospital clinic who provide inpatient services, whereas in our settings only outpatient services are provided.
- For context, in California, CHCs must follow building standards set by The Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI), and the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC). These building standards apply to **both** community health centers **and** hospital clinics. It is written this way because existing statute requires hospital clinics standards to be linked with those for CHCs.
 - Current law is problematic because our facilities only provide outpatient services, while hospital clinics are allowed to provide up to 25% of their care as inpatient services. This is preventing HCAI from modifying our standards to the appropriate acuity level for a primary care outpatient clinic setting.
 - Since CHCs only provide outpatient care, our facilities should not be held to hospital clinic construction requirements, which are tailored to address the higher acuity needs of inpatient services allowed for hospital-based clinics.
- In fact, private physician offices and county clinics provide the same services as our facilities, often to the same population, and currently operate outside of the hospital-based construction requirements without any documented risk to public health and safety or environmental protections.
- Meeting the current standards often creates an undue financial burden for CHCs, which is a deterrence and additional obstacle for us to overcome to **expand vital healthcare services and establish new clinic sites as we try to meet the ever-growing healthcare needs of California's most vulnerable populations throughout the state.**
- AB 1612 will continue to protect patients' health and safety, while allowing HCAI to adopt standards that are consistent with the care community health centers provide.