

Immediate Release: March 25, 2021



30 Oregon Health Centers Receive \$84 million in American Rescue Plan Act Awards
Funding Will Expand Access to COVID-19 Vaccines and Build Confidence in Vulnerable Communities

Portland, OR – It was announced today that 30 Oregon Community Health Centers will receive over \$84 million in American Rescue Plan Act awards, provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health (HHS), through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Awards range from about \$670,000 to \$10.9 million per health center.

“This investment in Oregon’s Community Health Centers (CHCs), which have been providing front-line testing, vaccinations, and care to thousands of COVID-19 patients during this global pandemic in communities throughout our state, comes at a critical time,” said Joan Watson-Patko, OPCA’s Executive Director. “Oregon’s health centers have pivoted to reconfigure their health care delivery models and services to care for their communities and patients in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Oregon’s health centers are focused on supporting the critical needs of vaccinating, testing, and treatment in their communities as key partners in the public health response to the pandemic. To meet these needs health centers are modifying their physical infrastructure and adding mobile units and other mechanisms for service delivery. These funds will allow health centers to reach further into their communities to deliver preventive primary care services to people at higher risk for COVID-19.”

For example, Klamath Health Partnership (KHP), a community health center serving Klamath County recently purchased an old ambulance to use as a mobile testing unit. In an effort to center equity, KHP is using their mobile unit to focus vaccination, testing, treatment and physical health services on communities of color which have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

“We are thrilled and thankful to receive this additional help so quickly,” said Amanda Blodgett, COO at KHP. “These additional resources will allow us to expand operational capacity not only during the pandemic but beyond.”

KHP, like many other health centers, worry about communities made vulnerable across the state, many of which have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19. Oregon CHCs have seen over four times the COVID-19 positivity rate (14.6%) as the state average (3.5%) and over eighteen times the rate for racial and ethnic minorities (63.4%), according to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) data as of March 12, 2021.

Community Health Centers are recipients of direct federal vaccine allocations.

“Health centers are trusted sources of quality community-based care and are uniquely positioned to assist in vaccinating vulnerable and hard-to-reach communities across the state, including people experiencing homelessness and poverty, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), agricultural and migrant farm workers, and people living in rural and frontier communities,” said Watson-Patko. “As part of the largest primary care network in the United States, our health centers remain committed to keeping their doors open and to providing care to people who may otherwise not have access to services.”

About Oregon’s CHCs

Oregon’s community health centers deliver integrated medical, dental, and behavioral health services at over 200 locations to the communities made vulnerable across the state. Over 466,000 Oregonians receive their care at a community health center, including one in four people on the Oregon Health Plan. Over 73% of patients live below the poverty line, and 94% live at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Over 75% of community health centers have clinic sites serving rural communities, 30% of

Oregon's community health centers are federally recognized as Health Care for the Homeless locations, and 33% are designated as Migrant Health Centers. Find out more about [Oregon's CHCs here](#).

About OPCA

OPCA is a non-profit membership association of Oregon's 34 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), including two FQHC Look-Alikes. FQHCs are also known as community health centers (CHCs). The organization's mission is to lead the transformation of primary care to achieve health equity for all.

OPCA believes all people, in Oregon and beyond, should have the chance to lead their healthiest lives and have access to equitable health care. Oregon Primary Care Association supports a network of community health centers that deliver exceptional health care to people in urban, rural and frontier communities who may otherwise not have access to services. By helping health centers apply innovative approaches to health care delivery and system challenges, OPCA is transforming primary care in Oregon and beyond. Follow us on Twitter [@OregonPCA](#) or on [Facebook](#)