



Winter 2021 Quarterly Newsletter

Published February 2021

CHAMPS 2020 Awards Ceremony Highlights

The 2020 CHAMPS Awards Ceremony, held virtually on November 20, 2020, honored eight individuals from Region VIII for their exceptional contributions to the health center community. Visit the new [CHAMPS Awards](#) webpage to learn more about this year's awardees, watch recordings from the virtual ceremony, and remember awardees from prior years. Congratulations to the 2020 CHAMPS Awardees:

★ **Exceptional Administrative Leadership Award**

Breann Streck, Senior Director of Operations, RiverStone Health (MT)

★ **Exceptional Board Leadership Award**

Marge Gavenda, Board Secretary and Development Committee Chair, Summit Community Care Clinic (CO)

★ **Exceptional Clinical Leadership Award**

Chad Hess, PA-C, Associate Medical Director, Pueblo Community Health Center (CO)

★ **John Mengenhausen Presidential Award**

Keith Horwood, MD, Associate Medical Director, Community Health Centers, Inc. (UT)

★ **Outstanding Advocate of the Underserved Award**

Juanita Sapp, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Heritage Health Center (WY)

★ **Outstanding Emergency Response Leadership Award**

Debby Myers, RDH, Infection Prevention/Control Manager, Salud Family Health Centers (CO)

★ **Outstanding Legislative Leadership Award**

Tracy Johnson, PhD, Colorado State Medicaid Director, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (CO)

★ **Stanley J. Brasher Legacy Award**

John Mengenhausen, Chief Executive Officer, Horizon Health Care, Inc. (SD)



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CHAMPS Executive Committee Welcome and Thanks

CHAMPS welcomes the [2020-2022 CHAMPS Executive Committee](#), elected by the Board of Directors during their meeting in November 2020. Thank you CHAMPS Executive Committee members for your dedication to CHAMPS and service to Region VIII – your manifold contributions are sincerely appreciated.

★ **President**

Kristi Halvarson, Executive Director, Community Health Service Inc. (ND)

★ **Vice President**

John Santistevan, President/Chief Executive Officer, Salud Family Health Centers (CO)

★ **Immediate Past President**

Keith Horwood, MD, Associate Medical Director, Community Health Centers, Inc. (UT)

★ **Treasurer**

Maria Clemons, CPA, Executive Director, Northwest Community Health Center (MT)

★ **Secretary**

Colette Mild, Chief Executive Officer, Heritage Health Center (WY)

★ **South Dakota Representative**

John Mengenhause, Chief Executive Officer, Horizon Health Care, Inc. (SD)

★ **Clinical Representative**

Chastity Dolbec, RN, BSN, Director of Patient Care and Innovation, Coal Country Community Health Centers (ND)

Don't Miss These Upcoming CHAMPS Trainings

CHAMPS is offering a variety of virtual trainings for Region VIII health centers in the coming months. More information about these valuable learning opportunities can be found in the list below, throughout this newsletter, and on the [CHAMPS website](#).

- ★ Registration is open for the CHAMPS/Rocky Mountain Public Health Training Center (RMPHTC) **Addressing Suicide in Primary Care ECHO Learning Community**, occurring every Thursday in March from 12:00-1:00PM MT / 1:00-2:00PM CT (see page 6).
- ★ CHAMPS, in partnership with the National Institute for Medical Assistant Advancement (NIMAA), will be hosting a **medical assistant training webcast** on Tuesday, March 16 from 11:30AM-1:00PM MT / 12:30-2:00PM CT. More details will be coming soon.
- ★ Registration is open for the CHAMPS **2020 Region VIII Health Center Workforce Data webcast**, occurring on Wednesday, March 24 from 11:30AM-1:00PM MT / 12:30-2:00PM CT (see page 4).
- ★ Registration is open for CHAMPS 2021 virtual **CORE Competencies for Health Center Supervisors and Managers training**, occurring every Thursday in April from 9:00-11:30AM MT / 10:00AM-12:30PM CT (see page 3).
- ★ Registration is open for the CHAMPS 2021 virtual **Spanish Language for Health Care Professionals trainings**, taking place throughout April (see page 7).
- ★ CHAMPS/RMPHTC will host the **Prevent and Treat Childhood Obesity in Primary Care ECHO Learning Community** during spring 2021 (see page 6).
- ★ The Northwest Regional Primary Care Association (NWRPCA), in partnership with CHAMPS and the Bureau of Health Workforce (BHW), will be hosting a **pipeline development webcast series** in the spring. More details will be coming soon.

Thank You, [CHAMPS Members!](#)

CHAMPS would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the 51 Region VIII health centers and State Primary Care Associations (SPCAs) who supported CHAMPS through 2020-2021 Organizational Membership, making it possible for CHAMPS to provide quality programs and services.

Learn more about the [Benefits of CHAMPS Organizational Membership](#).

The CHAMPS 2021-2022 membership year begins April 1, 2021; more information is coming soon.

Region VIII 2019 BPHC UDS Summary



Each year CHAMPS compiles a summary of Region VIII Bureau of Primary Health Care (BPHC) Uniform Data System (UDS) information, focusing on data relating to grantees, sites, staffing, visits, income, and patients, as well as trends for medical, dental, and mental/behavioral health productivity, factors impacting financial trends, and performance for 13 clinical measures. The full [2019 Region VIII BPHC UDS Summary](#) is now available, along with a two-page [2019 Region VIII Health Center Fact Sheet](#) and a two-page [2019 UDS Workforce Metrics Infographic](#).

Visit the [CHAMPS Publications](#) webpage to review Region VIII BPHC UDS Summaries from prior years.

2020/2021 Region VIII T/TA Needs Assessment

CHAMPS, in partnership with the Region VIII State Primary Care Associations (SPCAs), recently completed the 2020/2021 Region VIII Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) Needs Assessment. Over 95% of health centers in the region responded, indicating that burnout, meeting patient targets/projections, retention of staff, clinic operations, and telehealth were top challenges/concerns (in addition to COVID-19). Additionally, respondents identified their most-needed T/TA topics, including burnout prevention, support staff professional development, leadership development and training, supervisory skills training, remote patient engagement, funding to support staff that address social determinants of health, the Uniform Data Systems (UDS) measure around depression remission at 12 months, identifying and addressing preventable high costs within the patient population, remote patient engagement, and more. CHAMPS will utilize results to guide future programming. Questions? Contact the CHAMPS [Workforce Development and Member Services Director](#).

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Encouraging successful careers and strong, cutting-edge organizations by providing live and archived continuing education, recruitment and retention tools, and the latest information on current trends and statistics. Learn more [here](#).

Registration is Open: CHAMPS Virtual CORE Competencies Training

Registration is now open for CHAMPS 2021 Virtual CORE Competencies for Health Center Supervisors and Managers Training. This course, facilitated by Lisa Mouscher, CEO and Lead Consultant at Sogence Training and Consulting, is specifically designed for health center supervisors and managers, and offers intensive, hands-on, and immediately applicable skill-building to successfully navigate management and supervisory roles in the fast-paced and often challenging health center environment. Sessions will take place on Thursdays throughout April from 9:00-11:30AM MT / 10:00AM-12:30PM CT. A limited number of registration scholarships are available for participants from each Region VIII state, courtesy of Region VIII State Primary Care Associations (SPCAs). Available scholarships will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, one per health center. Additionally, due to the generous support of Region VIII SPCAs, all health centers in Region VIII qualify for the discounted CHAMPS Organizational Member rate.

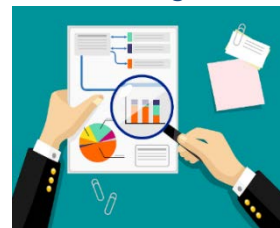


For more information and to register by March 3rd, please visit the CHAMPS [Leadership Learning Opportunities](#) webpage.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEWS, *Continued*

Now Available: CHAMPS 2020 Salary Survey Report

During the spring and summer of 2020, CHAMPS undertook a survey of the region's health centers to collect salary, benefits, and other workforce data from 47 organizations. The CHAMPS 2020 Region VIII Health Center Salary, Benefits, Turnover, and Vacancy Report was released electronically in December 2020, and printed copies were mailed to [CHAMPS Organizational Members](#) and non-members who submitted data for the project in late January/early February 2021. Additional printed copies are available for purchase. Related Region VIII Health Center Clinical Staffing and Provider Productivity Expectations Reports are under development and will be released in the coming months.



For more information or to order a printed copy of the 2020 Salary Survey Report, please visit the [CHAMPS Publications](#) webpage.

Registration is Open: Region VIII Health Center Workforce Data Webcast

Registration is now open for CHAMPS 2020 Region VIII Health Center Workforce Data Webcast: Understanding and Utilizing Statistics from the CHAMPS Salary, Benefits, Turnover, and Vacancy Survey Project. This event, taking place on Wednesday, March 24, 2021 from 11:30AM-1:00PM MT / 12:30-2:00PM CT, will explain the history and methodology of the survey, and highlight findings relating to salaries and benefits for all health center staff including a look at base vs. additional pay and the structure of health center benefits packages. Presenter Andrea Martin, Workforce Development and Member Services Director at CHAMPS, will also address trends in additional workforce metrics including vacancies, turnover, challenging areas of recruitment and retention, and more. Participation in the live and archived versions of this webcast is free for participants from [CHAMPS Organizational Members](#) and non-members who submitted data for the 2020 Region VIII Health Center Salary, Benefits, Turnover, and Vacancy Survey Project.

To learn more and register, visit the [CHAMPS Upcoming Live Distance Learning Events](#) webpage.

Update: RTAT Participation

The Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) [Health Professions Education and Training \(HP-ET\) Initiative](#) will enhance the ability of health centers to recruit, develop, and retain their workforce by exposing health and allied health professions students, trainees, and residents to education and training programs conducted at health centers. The HP-ET Initiative uses the [Readiness to Train Assessment Tool \(RTAT\)](#) to help health centers assess and improve their readiness to engage in these programs. Primary Care Associations (PCAs) across the country will be utilizing the results of this assessment to target related training and technical assistance needs.

All health centers should invite staff members from multiple disciplines to participate in this 15-25 minute assessment. As of February 10, 2021, 83% of health centers in Region VIII have submitted one or more responses to the RTAT.

To access the survey before it closes on February 28, 2021, please click [here](#).

Subscribe to the New CHAMPS Workforce Focus

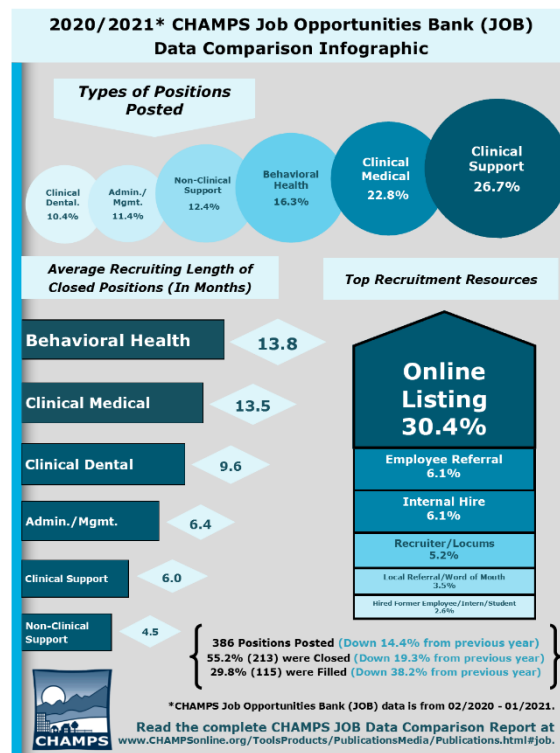
The [CHAMPS Workforce Focus](#) is an e-bulletin for human resources, recruitment and retention, and pipeline development contacts within the Region VIII community of health centers. The Workforce Focus is shared four to six times per year with brief updates on upcoming events, important announcements, and quick overviews of useful workforce tools and resources. Click [here](#) to subscribe.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEWS, *Continued*

CHAMPS Region VIII Job Opportunities Bank Report

The online CHAMPS [Job Opportunities Bank \(JOB\)](#) is a free resource where Region VIII health centers and Primary Care Associations (PCAs) can advertise open positions. Each February, CHAMPS creates a report comparing two years of data relating to these posts, presenting recruitment trends and achievements throughout the region. Highlights for the most recent year of data (February 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021) include:

- ★ Forty-three different Region VIII health centers advertised 386 career opportunities.
- ★ The average recruitment length for positions that were closed during the year was 8.5 months; average recruitment lengths increased for Administrative/Management, Behavioral Health, Clinical Dental, Clinical Medical, and Non-Clinical Support postings. The average recruitment lengths for Clinical Support postings decreased from the prior year.
- ★ Almost 30% of the health center postings in the 2020-2021 period were reported as having been filled.
- ★ The top four reported successful recruitment resources were online listings, employee referral, internal hire, and recruiter/locums, representing 47.8% of the recruitment resources cited for filled postings.



To download the report and related infographic (seen above), visit the [CHAMPS Publications](#) webpage.
 If you have an open position you would like added to the CHAMPS Job Opportunities Bank, please contact the [CHAMPS Programs Coordinator, Workforce and Communications](#).
 If you want to sign up for the CHAMPS monthly JOB email, visit the [CHAMPS Job Bank](#) webpage.

CHAD Winter Wellness

Submitted by Carmen Toft, CHAD

The Community HealthCare Association of the Dakotas (CHAD) has developed a free *Winter Wellness* video series that is focused on the wellness and health of health center staff and teams. This series is designed to supplement existing tools for promoting individual wellness and understanding the ways a pandemic can undermine the wellbeing of staff and patients.



CHAD's four-part *Winter Wellness* series contains three five-minute videos on self-compassion prescriptions, exploring psychological flexibility, and exploring internal conflict, plus one 30-minute training on organizational healing. Each release is pre-recorded and designed to be listened to individually or shared as part of a team meeting. While they are designed with both video and audio components, the audio can also stand-alone if you prefer to listen in the car or on a healthy walk!

To access the videos, visit the [CHAD Winter Wellness Series](#) webpage.

Stay up to date with all the latest news and CHAMPS offerings and resources through the CHAMPS [LinkedIn Company Page!](#)

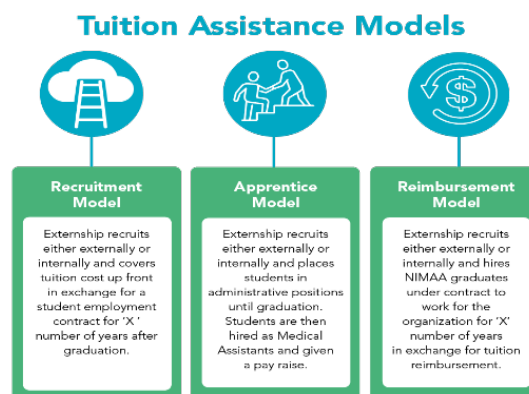


WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEWS, *Continued*

NIMAA Externship Models

Submitted by Stephanie Ivers Heine, Community Health Center, Inc.

Not all health centers are the same. However, when building a workforce pipeline from health center communities, tuition assistance greatly facilitates recruitment and retention. That is why the National Institute of Medical Assistant Advancement (NIMAA) works closely with its externship partners in Region VIII to determine which tuition assistance models best suit their team-based medical assistant recruitment efforts. The graphic to the right includes the three most common models used by NIMAA externships today.



If you are interested in becoming a NIMAA externship organization, please contact [NIMAA](#).

MOUNTAIN/PLAINS CLINICAL NETWORK (MPCN) NEWS

Providing professional, administrative, and educational support to all clinicians who practice in Community, Migrant, and Homeless Health Centers in Region VIII to ensure the delivery of the highest possible quality of care to poor and underserved populations. Learn more [here](#).

Registration is Open: CHAMPS/RMPHTC Addressing Suicide in Primary Care ECHO Learning Community

CHAMPS and Rocky Mountain Public Health Training Center (RMPHTC) are offering a new ECHO Learning Community for Region VIII health center medical and behavioral health providers, clinical support staff, quality improvement staff, and related disciplines. Addressing Suicide in Primary Care ECHO Learning Community participants will learn from subject matter experts and engage in conversations with peers. Registration is free for all Region VIII health centers. This series will be held virtually the following Thursdays in March from 12:00-1:00PM MT / 1:00-2:00PM CT.

- ★ **March 4: Understanding Suicide in Region VIII**
Kim Patton, PsyD | HRSA Public Health Analyst
- ★ **March 11: Implementing Zero Suicide Principles**
Chelsea Booth, PhD | Zero Suicide Institute Associate Director
- ★ **March 18: Suicide Safe Care for Patients**
Karl Rosston, LSCW | MT Department of Public Health and Human Services Suicide Prevention Coordinator
- ★ **March 25: Using a Strength-Based Approach to Suicide Assessment and Treatment**
John Sommers-Flanagan, PhD | University of Montana Professor of Counseling



To learn more and to register, please visit the [CHAMPS Project ECHO Learning Communities](#) webpage.

Coming Soon: CHAMPS/RMPHTC Learning Collaborative to Prevent and Treat Childhood Obesity in Primary Care

CHAMPS and Rocky Mountain Public Health Training Center (RMPHTC) have once again partnered with the Lifestyle Medicine Department of Children's Hospital Colorado to offer an ECHO series for health center care teams. Children's Hospital specialists will serve as faculty for this series addressing topics that include dietetics, introducing exercise, comorbidity screening, effective communication strategies, and when to refer patients to specialists. This series will be offered in spring 2021; additional details and registration information will be coming soon.

To learn more, visit the [CHAMPS Project ECHO Learning Communities](#) webpage.

Registration is Open: CHAMPS Spanish Language Trainings

Register today for one of four CHAMPS Spanish Language Trainings for Health Care Professionals to be held online throughout April 2021 in partnership with Denver Medical Society (DMS), each providing Spanish language instruction from Rios Associates for clinical staff at Region VIII health centers.

The first offering is the traditional [Medical Spanish Language Course for Beginner and Intermediate Speakers](#), to be held over four half-days: Thursday, April 22, Friday, April 23, Thursday, April 29, and Friday, April 30, 2021. CHAMPS has offered this popular four-day training for over three decades, now in an online format. And, new this year, CHAMPS will host three additional courses:

- ★ The two-day [Medical Spanish for Advanced Spanish Speakers](#) will take place on Monday, April 26 and Tuesday, April 27, 2021. The course is intended for physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and other clinical personnel with advanced Spanish language skills.
- ★ The two-day [Spanish for Oral Health Providers](#) will take place on Monday, April 19 and Tuesday, April 20, 2021. The course is intended for dentists, orthodontists, dental hygienists, and other clinical dental personnel with beginner to intermediate Spanish language skills.
- ★ The two-day [Spanish for Behavioral Health Providers](#) will take place on Monday, April 26 and Tuesday, April 27, 2021. The course is targeted for psychologists, psychiatrists, mental health counselors, social workers, addiction counselors, and other behavioral health personnel with intermediate to advanced Spanish language skills.

The registration deadline for all offerings is Wednesday, March 31, 2021, or when registration is full.

For more information and to register, please visit the CHAMPS [Events & Trainings](#) webpage.

CHAMPS Resiliency Collaborative is Back

The CHAMPS Resiliency Collaborative is a facilitated peer support group that uses concepts from the evidence-based framework, Finding Meaning in Medicine, in an online format. Each session incorporates the practice of mindfulness techniques and practical body awareness exercises. The remaining time is comprised of group discussion on topics selected by the participants. This cohort is already meeting twice each month and will continue to meet through May, at no cost to participants. Sessions are held on the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 12:00-1:00PM MT / 1:00-2:00PM CT. Enrollment was open to medical, behavioral, and oral health providers from health centers in Region VIII. This cohort, capped at 20 providers, filled to capacity quickly and registration is closed.



For more information or to be added to a waitlist for a future cohort, please visit the CHAMPS [Events & Trainings](#) webpage or contact the CHAMPS [Clinical Quality Improvement Director](#).

Support for Rural Health Care Systems with Data Challenges

Submitted by Jane Harris, C-WHO

In collaboration with PacificSource Health Plans, Cornerstone Whole Healthcare Organization, Inc. (C-WHO) is providing technical assistance to select primary care clinics to produce scalable data aggregation and analysis solutions to improve patient outcomes. The solutions are tailored to the clinic based on the current needs, systems, and data capabilities, and may focus on population health, risk stratification, visualizations, hierarchical condition category (HCC) code optimization, and cost effectiveness. PacificSource and C-WHO are dedicated to developing a sustainable solution that works with the Electronic Health Records (EHR) and tools available at each primary care clinic. These services are at no cost to the primary care clinics. PacificSource and C-WHO will empower primary care clinics to thrive by encouraging them to move toward shared savings/risk arrangement contracts with productive workflows to improve the total cost of care and reduce provider burden as it relates to data sources.

To learn more, please visit the [C-WHO website](#) or contact [Jane Harris](#).

Assisting Region VIII health centers and Primary Care Associations in pursuing health equity and addressing health disparities by affecting the social determinants of health in their communities. Learn more [here](#).

Honoring Dr. Jack Geiger

Jack Geiger, MD, one of the foremost leaders in the struggle for equality, social justice, and human rights nationally, died on Monday, December 28, 2020, in New York City. Dr. Geiger is broadly recognized as the father of the community-based health center model of care in the U.S. He founded and directed the nation's first urban and rural Community Health Centers at Columbia Point, Boston and Mound Bayou, Mississippi, in 1965 – inspiring the growth of the Community Health Center Program, which today serves 30 million people in more than 14,000 medically underserved communities located in every state, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Territories.

Dr. Geiger's life and professional career are testaments to his determination to improve the quality of life of people suffering from poor health, poverty, and discrimination. Early in his career, he promoted and led campaigns to end discrimination in hospital care and admission to medical schools. That effort extended to the civil rights movement in the 1960s when, as part of the Medical Committee for Human Rights, he organized medical students to provide care to civil rights workers protesting discrimination throughout the South.



For more information on Dr. Geiger's inimitable contributions to health centers and the American health care delivery system, see the National Association of Community Health Center's [publication](#).

New Special Enrollment Period Announced

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, President Biden signed an Executive Order (EO) establishing a new Special Enrollment Period (SEP) for the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplace on Thursday, January 28. This SEP will run from February 15 through May 15, 2021, and during this time, people will be able to apply for coverage without needing to demonstrate that they have had a qualifying event.

In Colorado, Region VIII's only State-Based Marketplace (SBM), a SEP will run from February 8 through May 15, 2021, and consumers will not have to demonstrate that they have had a qualifying event.

As with a traditional Open Enrollment period, it is important to make sure folks know about this opportunity to get covered. Some of the most vital messages to emphasize are:

- ★ **Affordability:** Discounts based on income and tax credits are available to keep health plans affordable.
- ★ **Peace of Mind:** Comprehensive coverage and consumer protections haven't changed. Plans offered at [HealthCare.Gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) cover comprehensive benefits like preventive care, check-ups, prescriptions, hospitalizations, mental health care, and more.
- ★ **In-Person Assistance:** Health centers have years of experience in connecting people to affordable health care regardless of income.

Various organizations, including Community Catalyst and Young Invincibles, have created new marketing materials and toolkits.

To view marketing materials, toolkits, and other relevant resources, visit the CHAMPS [Health Center Operations Resources for COVID-19](#) webpage. For additional information, visit the CHAMPS [Outreach & Enrollment](#) webpage or contact CHAMPS [Programs Coordinator, Population Health](#).

HEALTH EQUITY NEWS, *Continued*

Sign up for the CHAMPS Health Equity Digest

The CHAMPS Region VIII Health Equity Digest was designed to assist Region VIII health centers and Primary Care Associations (PCAs) in addressing health inequities. The digest focuses on health disparities, obstacles to health, social determinants of health, programs and resources to help close the gaps, and more. CHAMPS distributes this resource quarterly. Please click [here](#) to subscribe.

Introducing Telehealth to Rural and Indigenous Communities

Submitted by Alisha Acker, HRSA Region VIII ORO



Wičáŋpi Wiŋ by Jewel Azure

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Region VIII Office of Regional Operations (ORO) met with local, state and tribal leaders at the annual North and South Dakota Tribal Maternal Child Health Summit, hosted by the American Indian Public Health Resource Center (AIPHRC) at North Dakota State University (NDSU), in November 2019. During that meeting they learned about challenges in Region VIII including the need for maternal health and telehealth options. Maternal healthcare deserts were a concern, including the lack of maternal health specialists in the mountain west and plains states; substance use disorders and mental health challenges were also a concern with pregnant and parenting women.

In November 2020, the Region VIII ORO created a tri-regional (Regions VI, VII, and VIII) two-day virtual Telehealth and Maternal Health Workshop for tribes and rural communities across the nation; over 1,000 participants joined. In January 2021, the Region VIII ORO partnered with AIPHRC and NDSU to create a Maternal Health webpage which includes recordings from the Telehealth and Maternal Health Workshop, as well as current maternal health materials and resources. In addition, they launched a Maternal Health Learning Collaborative in partnership with the University of North Dakota, North Dakota Department of Health, and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The learning collaborative will include a group of tribal and rural maternal health providers, and topics will include women and substance use disorders, anxiety and postpartum depression, and management and care of mom and baby with substance use and mental health challenges. Additionally, screening tools, educational materials, peer to peer provider resources and mentoring programs, and SAMHSA program resources will be shared. The group is planning to provide a four-month learning series to help tackle provider challenges and needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, and they hope to plan additional training opportunities for fall 2021. They would like to have a second Maternal Health Learning Collaborative specifically focused on Region VIII rural community health centers.

For more information, visit the [AIPHRC Introducing Telehealth to Rural and Indigenous Communities webpage.](#)

National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership Toolkit

As part of their work as a HRSA-funded National Training and Technical Assistance Partner (NTTAP), the [National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership](#) published a toolkit that provides the health center community with information and resources to start, strengthen, and sustain a medical-legal partnership (MLP). The toolkit can be used both by health centers new to MLP who want help with the initial planning process and by health centers that are already actively providing legal services, but want help facilitating continuous quality improvement conversations to address issues like low/high referral volumes or funding instability.



Click [here](#) to download the toolkit.

For more information, please visit the CHAMPS [Social Determinants of Health Resources](#) webpage.

Providing resources, data, and support to Region VIII health centers and Primary Care Associations to assist in the response to the ongoing Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Learn more [here](#).

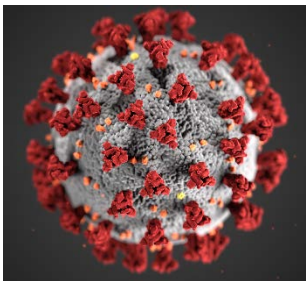
Weekly HRSA COVID-19 Surveys Provide Valuable Data about Health Centers' Response to the Pandemic

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) requests that Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and FQHC Look-Alikes complete a weekly survey to gather valuable public health data regarding the national COVID-19 response. Survey results help public health agencies, government resources, and CHAMPS better serve Region VIII health centers, and findings have influenced policy and funding decisions at a national level. The survey helps track the number of patients who have undergone COVID-19 testing, critical information about clinic operations, and the number of people who have received Influenza and COVID-19 vaccinations.

CHAMPS compiles Region VIII state results from the survey each week to monitor trends in testing capacity, patients tested, and more. Between April 3 and December 25, 2020, approximately 75% of Region VIII health centers, on average, completed the weekly survey, and the CHAMPS summaries demonstrate the tremendous work that these health centers undertook during that time in response to COVID-19. Testing was a monumental task that stretched staff capacity, with Region VIII health centers testing 274,712 patients for COVID-19 between April and December, representing 4.30% of all patients tested at health centers nationally (in comparison, Region VIII health centers served 3.68% of the nation's health center patients in 2019 according to Uniform Data System [UDS] reports). Health centers also struggled with high staff absenteeism due to COVID-19, with some states reporting up to 15% health center absenteeism at its peak in November 2020. In addition, Region VIII health centers have contributed greatly to the nationwide effort on flu vaccination last fall, providing 191,097 flu vaccinations April-December, or 5.85% of all the flu vaccinations dispensed at health centers nationally.

*To learn more about the survey, visit the HRSA [COVID-19 Survey](#) webpage.
To review weekly Region VIII results of this survey, visit the CHAMPS [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Resources](#) webpage.*

CHAMPS Released Seven New COVID-19 Resource Webpages



CHAMPS [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Resources](#) webpages include a multitude of COVID-19 toolkits, webinars, guidance documents, clinical articles, and more pertinent to all aspects of health center COVID-19 response. The original resource webpage has been reformatted to include seven new pages that provide resources regarding COVID-19 and Health Equity, Health Center Operations, Influenza and COVID-19 Vaccine, Provider Resources, Staff Safety and Wellness, and Telehealth. You may be particularly interested in these two pressing issues: the [Monoclonal Antibodies Treatment](#) section and the [Influenza and COVID-19 Vaccine Resources](#) webpage, both of which are updated weekly.

If you have any questions about these materials or would like to share additional resources, please contact the CHAMPS [Programs Coordinator, COVID-19 Response](#).

Archived: COVID-19 Vaccine Planning Collaborative Meeting

On January 19, 2021, CHAMPS hosted a video collaboration meeting for State Primary Care Association (SPCA) staff, vaccine coordinators, and other health center staff working to support COVID-19 vaccine administration planning efforts at Region VIII health centers. Attendees shared promising practices with their peers and addressed topics such as encouraging uptake of the vaccine, plans to administer the second dose to patients, and other concerns.

To view this recorded event, visit the [Online Archived CHAMPS Distance Learning Events](#) webpage.

Health Centers to Take Center Stage in COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout

Health centers have played a key role in the nation's COVID-19 vaccination effort since the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued an Emergency Use Authorizations (EUA) for two vaccines for the prevention of COVID-19 in December 2020. Efforts to vaccinate healthcare staff and adults aged 70 and older have provided a foundation to the vaccine rollout and demonstrated the value that health centers provide to the nation.



Health centers will soon take center stage after the White House recently announced the launch of the [Federally Qualified Health Center Vaccine Program](#) that will provide more vaccines for health centers as part of a broader effort to reach underserved and vulnerable populations. The program will be phased in, with the first centers able to start ordering vaccines in February. Additional health centers will quickly be added to the program to receive direct distribution of vaccines. If your health center wishes to be considered for the new program, please know that the Bureau of Primary Health Center is monitoring response to and using the [weekly COVID-19 survey](#) results to make decisions on health center acceptance in the new vaccine initiative.

To learn more, read the White House [fact sheet](#) or the National Association of Community Health Center's [press release](#).

SPEED Program

The U.S. Government is working to increase the availability of COVID-19 monoclonal antibody (mAb) therapies for outpatient treatment of mild to moderate COVID-19 infection in patients who are at high risk of disease progression or hospitalization. To enhance allocation to priority settings that care for populations at high risk for hospitalization, the [Special Projects for Equitable and Efficient Distribution \(SPEED\)](#) program was established. SPEED is separate and complementary to the state-based allocation system and provides direct federal allocation of mAbs to participating sites. Any Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) or FQHC Look-Alike facility with the capacity and capability to administer mAbs to their patients are eligible to participate in SPEED. Health centers that do not have on-site capabilities to administer mAbs may partner with local hospitals or community infusion centers to receive SPEED allocations approved for designated use with FQHC patients only.

To learn more about mAbs and SPEED, visit the CHAMPS [Provider Resources for COVID-19](#) webpage.

COVID-19 Resources for Clinical Teams Serving Migrant and Immigrant Communities

Submitted by Claire Hutkins Seda, MCN

The Migrant Clinicians Network (MCN) has developed numerous new resources and online seminars to support clinical teams to best serve patients during the pandemic and beyond. Two new checklists, developed in partnership with the National Resource Center for Refugees, Immigrants, and Migrants, support outreach teams in safely conducting events during COVID-19 (available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)) and help clinics consider the needs of migrants and immigrants while rolling out COVID-19 vaccinations (available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)). [Upcoming online seminars](#) include a webinar on contact tracing, and a multi-part learning collaborative for managers to enhance team well-being in the midst of grief, stress, and anxiety. [Recent archived seminars](#) cover COVID-19 vaccines, intimate partner violence, MCN's Health Network, and more, including some in Spanish. MCN's active [blog](#) provides numerous additional resources and updates, plus from-the-field best practices and insights.

Keep up with MCN's new resources and trainings by visiting their [website](#), signing up for their [newsletter](#), and subscribing to their [blog](#).

REGIONAL & NATIONAL NEWS

Tell Congress You Support Their Efforts for Health Centers

Various committees of the House of Representatives have been marking up the Biden Administration's \$1.9 trillion [American Rescue Plan](#) and aim to bring the package to the House floor later in February.

The current bill includes the following support for health centers and workforce programs:

- ★ \$7.6 billion for health centers, as defined by Section 330 and the Social Security Administration, including Look-Alikes.
- ★ \$800 million for the National Health Service Corps.
- ★ \$200 million for Nurse Corps Loan Repayment Program.
- ★ \$330 million for the Teaching Health Center program to increase the Per Resident Amount and expand the number of sites.



The [National Association of Community Health Centers \(NACHC\)](#) is encouraging advocates to tell their Representatives why they value health centers and want them to support this funding.

For more tools, visit the CHAMPS [Education & Advocacy Communications Resources](#) webpage or contact CHAMPS [Programs Coordinator, Population Health](#).

Public Charge Update

On Tuesday, February 2, 2021 President Biden signed an Executive Order (EO) entitled [Restoring Faith in Our Legal Immigration Systems and Strengthening Integration and Inclusion Efforts for New Americans](#). Among other provisions, the EO called for an "immediate review" of the Public Charge regulation, and for recommendations to "address concerns about the current public charge policies' effect on the integrity of the Nation's immigration system and public health." It also calls on Federal agencies "to reduce fear and confusion among impacted communities" about the regulation. The Administration must still go through the entire notice-and-comment rulemaking process before it can rescind this regulation.

For more information, visit CHAMPS [Immigration Resources](#) webpage.

340B Update

Members of Congress (MOCs) have been working on a "Dear Colleague" letter to send to presumptive U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra.

The letter urges Becerra to take four actions to protect the 340B Drug Discount Program:

1. Penalize manufacturers that are not in compliance with their obligations under the statute;
2. Require manufacturers to refund covered entities for unlawful overcharges;
3. Halt manufacturers' attempts to unilaterally overhaul the structure of the 340B program; and
4. Seat the Administrative Dispute Resolution panel to adjudicate disputes within the program.



The deadline for MOCs to sign onto this letter was extended to COB on Thursday, February 25, 2021.

Visit the Health Center Advocacy Network [340B Advocacy](#) webpage for more information or contact CHAMPS [Programs Coordinator, Population Health](#).

Updated Federal Poverty Guidelines

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recently released the 2021 Federal Poverty Guidelines that went into effect January 13, 2021. The Federal Poverty Guidelines are used to determine financial eligibility for certain federal programs. They are simplified versions of the Poverty Thresholds, which are updated each year by the Census Bureau and used mainly for statistical purposes. Programs that use the Federal Poverty Guidelines include Head Start, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the National School Lunch Program, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, and the Children's Health Insurance Program. Additionally, percentage multiples of the guidelines are used as an eligibility criterion for various services, including sliding scale services at Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs).

To view the new Federal Poverty Guidelines, visit the HHS [Poverty Guidelines](#) webpage. For more resources on poverty, visit the CHAMPS [National Data Resources](#) webpage.

Addressing Hypertension Among Racial and Ethnic Minorities



The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) recently awarded almost \$90 million to 496 health centers for a three-year project addressing hypertension among racial and ethnic minorities. The project will include the use of self-measured blood pressure (SMBP) technology to increase the number of adult patients with controlled hypertension. This funding is a part of a larger HRSA and Office of Minority Health initiative to implement evidence-based interventions that improve both cardiovascular health and COVID-19 outcomes nationally for racial and ethnic minority populations.

Eighteen Region VIII health centers received this award: four in Colorado, six in Montana, one in North Dakota, six in Utah, and one in Wyoming.

To learn more, visit the HRSA [FY 2021 Supplemental Funding for Hypertension](#) webpage.

Becoming a NACHC Board Member

Becoming a National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) Board Member is an excellent opportunity to be a leader in the national Community Health Center Movement. The NACHC Board consists of eight nationally elected officers, plus two representatives from each of the ten regions, two nationally elected clinician representatives, and two nationally elected health center board members. Requirements to serve on the NACHC Board include:

- ★ **NACHC Individual Membership:** Must be a NACHC Individual Member in good standing and have maintained current Individual Membership for the past three consecutive years.
- ★ **Representing NACHC Organizational Member or Chartered Regional Affiliate:** Must be employed by or serve on the board of a NACHC Organizational Member in good standing that has maintained current membership for the past three consecutive years, or be employed by a chartered State, Territorial, or Regional Affiliate for the past three consecutive years.
- ★ **NACHC Committee Participation:** Must have served on at least two different NACHC committees at any time within the last five years, with at least a 50% record of attendance on each committee.

To learn more about NACHC Committees, please visit the NACHC [Committees](#) webpage.

For more information about current NACHC Board Members, please visit the NACHC [Leadership](#) webpage.

For more information about current Region VIII representatives to the NACHC Board, please visit CHAMPS [Region VIII NACHC Board of Directors Members](#) webpage.

REGIONAL & NATIONAL NEWS, *Continued*

BPHC Reorganization

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Bureau of Primary Health Care (BPHC) is undergoing [internal reorganization](#), with plans to change post-award activities to be based on function rather than geography in the hopes to better support grantees. One of the adjustments includes shifting the Office of Northern Health Services to become the Office of Health Center Investment Oversight and shifting the Office of Southern Health Services to become the Office of Program Monitoring. Additionally, BPHC intends to increase their data analytics capacity to boost their ability for proactive, data informed decision making.

*For more information,
watch the February 9th [Today with Macrae: Health Center Program Updates](#) recording,
or view the [National Association of Community Health Center's press release](#).*

Region VIII in the News

- ★ Mountain Family Health Centers: [Giving Thought: Need health insurance? Mountain Family Can Help](#) (*The Aspen Times*, January 6)
- ★ Heritage Health Center: [New Face Leading Heritage Health Center](#) (*Powell Tribune*, January 7)
- ★ RiverStone Health: [Yellowstone County Rescinds Local Health Orders Effective Immediately](#) (*Billings Gazette*, January 7)
- ★ Horizon Health Care: [Health Care Facility in Elk Point, SD Undergoing Renovations](#) (*KTIV*, January 8)
- ★ Montana Primary Care Association: [Health Care and Seniors Groups Praise Governor Gianforte's Revision to Vaccine Distribution Plan](#) (*EIN Presswire*, January 13)
- ★ Colorado Community Health Network, Mountain Family Health Centers, and Valley-Wide Health System: [Vaccine Rollout in Rural Colorado Going as Smooth as Could Be Expected, Providers Say](#) (*The Gazette*, January 18)
- ★ Community HealthCare Association of the Dakotas: [SD Sees Fast Vaccine Delivery, Faces Rural Test](#) (*Black Hills Pioneer*, January 18)
- ★ Clinica Family Health and Salud Family Health Centers: [Boulder County COVID-19 Vaccine Providers Share Registration Insight](#) (*Daily Camera*, January 20)
- ★ Uncompahgre Medical Center: [Town Commends UMC for COVID-19 Work](#) (*Telluride Daily Planet*, January 20)
- ★ Falls Community Health: [Sioux Falls Public Health Director Announces Retirement](#) (*Argus Leader*, January 22)
- ★ PureView Health Center: [Mobile Clinics Bring COVID-19 Vaccines to Vulnerable Populations in Helena](#) (*Independent Record*, January 22)
- ★ Sunrise Community Health: [COVID In Weld County: Health Clinic Works to Reach Latino Community With Vaccine Information](#) (*CBS Denver*, January 27)
- ★ Community Health Centers: [COVID-19 Vaccine Being Sent Directly to Community Health Centers](#) (*Fox 13 Salt Lake City*, February 10)
- ★ Denver Health Community Health Services, Salud Family Health Centers, and STRIDE Community Health Center: [Salud Family Health Centers Will Get Direct Vaccine Shipments Under New Federal Program](#) (*CBS Denver*, February 10)
- ★ Tepeyac Community Health Center: [Local Community-Based Clinic is Prioritizing Latinos First for COVID Vaccines](#) (*9News*, February 10)

National Funding Opportunities

- ★ HRSA [Rural Communities Opioid Response Program - Implementation](#) (March 12, 2021)
- ★ HRSA [Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Part F Dental Reimbursement Program](#) (March 12, 2021)
 - ★ HRSA [Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems](#) (March 15, 2021)
- ★ HRSA [Health Center Program Service Expansion - School-Based Service Sites](#) (March 22, 2021)
 - ★ HRSA [Evidence Based Telehealth Network Program](#) (April 2, 2021)
 - ★ HRSA [Emerging Issues in Maternal and Child Health](#) (April 9, 2021)
- ★ HRSA [Rural Communities Opioid Response Program-Psychostimulant Support](#) (April 12, 2021)
 - ★ HRSA [Vision Screening in Young Children Program](#) (April 12, 2021)

UPCOMING EVENTS

March

**Today with Macrae:
Health Center Program Updates**

March 2, 2021
12:00-1:00PM MT / 1:00-2:00PM CT

CHAMPS Resiliency Collaborative

March 3 & 17, 2021
12:00-1:00PM MT / 1:00-2:00PM CT

**CHAMPS/RMPHTC Addressing Suicide in
Primary Care ECHO**

March 4, 11, 18, & 25, 2021
12:00-1:00PM MT / 1:00-2:00PM CT

NACHC Leading Through Change Webinar

March 10, 2021
12:00-1:30PM MT / 1:00-2:30PM CT

NACHC Policy and Issues Forum

March 15-18, 2021

CHAMPS/NIMAA Medical Assistant Webinar

March 16, 2021
1:00PM MT / 12:30-2:00PM CT

**NCCHCA/NCFH/NWRPCA 2021 Virtual Forum
for Migrant and Community Health**

March 22-26, 2021

**Today with Macrae:
Health Center Program Updates**

March 23, 2021
12:00-1:00PM MT / 1:00-2:00PM CT

**CHAMPS 2020 Region VIII Health Center
Workforce Data Webcast**

March 24, 2021
11:30AM-1:00PM MT / 12:30-2:00PM CT

**MPCA PCMH Webinar Series:
Annual Reporting Overview**

March 24, 2021
10:00-11:00AM MT / 11:00AM-12:00PM CT

MPCA HIPAA Webinar Series

March 25, 2021
11:00AM-12:00PM MT / 12:00-1:00PM CT

MPCA Living Your Best Life (With Diabetes)

March 30-31, 2021
8:00AM-12:00PM MT / 9:00AM-1:00PM CT

April

**CHAMPS Virtual CORE Competencies for
Health Center Supervisors and Managers**

April 1, 8, 15, 22, & 29, 2021
9:00-11:30AM MT / 10:00AM-12:30PM CT

CHAMPS Resiliency Collaborative

April 7 & 21, 2021
12:00-1:00PM MT / 1:00-2:00PM CT

**MPCA PCMH Webinar Series:
Behavioral Health Distinction**

April 14, 2021
10:00-11:00AM MT / 11:00AM-12:00PM CT

**NACHC Building and Strengthening a
Resilient Team Webinar**

April 15, 2021
12:00-1:30PM MT / 1:00-2:30PM CT

**CHAMPS/DMS Two-Day Spanish
for Oral Health Providers**

April 19-20, 2021
8:00AM-12:00PM MT / 9:00AM-1:00PM CT

**CHAMPS/DMS Four-Day Medical Spanish
Language Course for Beginner and
Intermediate Speakers**

April 22-23 & 29-30, 2021
8:00AM-12:00PM MT / 9:00AM-1:00PM CT

**CHAMPS/DMS Two-Day Medical Spanish
Language Course for Advanced Speakers**

April 26-27, 2021
8:00AM-12:00PM MT / 9:00AM-1:00PM CT

**CHAMPS/DMS Two-Day Spanish
for Behavioral Health Providers**

April 26-27, 2021
8:00AM-12:00PM MT / 9:00AM-1:00PM CT

Looking Forward

**NACHC Conference for
Agricultural Worker Health**

May 4-6, 2021

AUCH Triannual Membership Meetings

May 20, 2021

NACHC Community Health Institute (CHI)

August 20-24, 2021

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This publication was supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$719,941 with 20% financed with non-governmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit HRSA.gov.