



Bi-Lines

May 2013

Bi-State Primary Care Association Newsletter

Message from the Executive Director



Dear Friends:

As you read this, Bi-State is advocating for Medicaid expansion in New Hampshire to improve access to health care for our residents. For 58,000 people, it will mean access to primary health care; perhaps for the first time. We know that many of those who would be eligible are providing child care to our children and home health care to our loved ones. The uninsured population includes people working in education, health care, and the nonprofit community, those working in construction and landscaping, self-employed consultants, sole-proprietors, and retail sales people. They are our neighbors and our friends.

Recently, I had the privilege of representing the Vermont and New Hampshire Community Health Centers during meetings with our Members of Congress in Washington, D.C. I was joined by New Hampshire and Vermont Community Health Center directors, board members, and a patient who wanted to share her experience at the local Community Health Center.

During meetings with Members of Congress and their staff on Capitol Hill, we provided a snapshot of the need for primary care services in New Hampshire and Vermont, especially for those in medically underserved areas. We offered the latest federally compiled data that demonstrate the high quality of care and cost-effectiveness of the Community Health Center model of care. We presented awards to our Congressional Delegations for their bipartisan support of Federally Qualified Health Centers, Community Health Centers, Rural Health Clinics, National Health Service Corps, Area Health Education Centers, Maternal and Child Health Title V, Title X Family Planning, and the Women, Infants and Children Nutrition Program. You can read more about our meetings with Congressional delegations here: [New Hampshire](#) and [Vermont](#). See pictures below for quotes from our Representatives.

Several of our members attended the National Association Community Health Centers' Policy and Issues Forum during that same trip to Washington. The NACHC conference brings together thousands of Community Health Center CEOs, doctors, and nurses, as well as policy experts, opinion-makers, and directors of primary care associations nationwide. We are reminded that Community Health Centers provide care to more than 22 million patients in 9,000 communities across the country, and that their cost-effective model of care has been credited for producing \$24 billion in annual savings to the U.S. health care system. You can find information and the locations of Community Health Centers in New Hampshire and Vermont on [Bi-State's website](#).

Sincerely,

Tess Stack Kuenning, CNS, MS, RN
Executive Director, Bi-State Primary Care Association

Benefits of Medicaid Expansion Outlined in Bi-State's Report



Kristine Stoddard, Director, NH Public Policy

Joining the discussion at the state policy level, Bi-State released a report that outlines the positive impact Medicaid expansion would have on the state and extend health care coverage to 58,000 residents. New Hampshire's 17 Community Health Centers, with 34 sites statewide, currently provide primary care services to more than 122,000 people in hundreds of towns and cities - and more than 30 percent of their patients are uninsured. A recent study done by the [Kaiser Family Foundation](#) found that nearly 20,000 children and 127,000 non-elderly adults in New Hampshire are uninsured.

Bi-State's Report: [Implementing Health Care Reform: Building on New Hampshire's Primary Care Foundation](#)

Medicaid Expansion Discussed on The Exchange - *Guests:* Tess Stack Kuenning; Rep. Tom Sherman, MD; Sen. Andy Sanborn; and Rep. William O'Brien. [Listen to podcast.](#)

[Op Ed in the Union Leader](#) by Rep. Tom Sherman, MD

[New Hampshire at Health Care Crossroad](#) by Tess Stack Kuenning, CNS, MS, RN

On Capitol Hill, Support for Greater Access to Primary Care

Distinguished Community Health Advocate Award -Senator Shaheen



Senator Shaheen receives Distinguished Community Health Advocate Award

"I'm truly honored and humbled by Bi-State Primary Care Association's recognition," said Senator Shaheen. "It's imperative that we support local health centers as they are critical to improving the health and well-being of our communities. I'm committed to doing my

part here in the Senate and look forward to continuing to support Bi-State Primary Care Association's efforts, especially as a new member of the Congressional Community Health Center Caucus." - **Senator Shaheen**

Distinguished Community Health Champion Award - Senator Sanders

"I am honored to receive the Distinguished Community Health Champion Award. Community Health Centers provide primary care, dental care, mental health services and low-cost prescription drugs

to more than 22 million Americans. I'm extremely proud that the community health centers in our state provide care to one in five Vermonters. Community health centers will play a growing role when millions of people get health insurance coverage through the Affordable Care Act, and I will continue to support their efforts to expand across America."- **Senator Sanders**



Senator Sanders receives Distinguished Community Health Champion Award



Senator Ayotte receives Distinguished Community Health Advocate Award

Distinguished Community Health Advocate Award - Senator Ayotte

"Community Health Centers are an important part of the safety net in New Hampshire and across the nation, helping provide quality services to those with limited access to health care. I'm honored to receive this award." - **Senator Ayotte**

Distinguished Community Health Defender Award - Rep. Welch

"Our community health centers have a proven record of providing top-rate affordable health care to thousands of Vermonters. They provide access to high quality primary and preventive care, including dental care and mental health services, and low-cost prescription drugs. For rural Vermonters, community health centers are an integral part of our health care network." - **Congressman Welch**



Rep. Welch receives Distinguished Community Health Defender Award

Distinguished Community Health Advocate Award - Senator Leahy



Kathryn Toomajian accepts Distinguished Community Health Advocate Award for Senator Leahy

"Community health centers are vital parts of Vermont's health care infrastructure. Rural areas, like much of Vermont, depend on these important community-based resources to ensure the availability of local dependable and affordable health care services. I am constantly impressed with

the hard work they do every day to ensure all Vermonters can receive the health care services they need. I value our partnership, and I'm grateful for this recognition." - **Senator Leahy**

About Bi-State: Bi-State Primary Care Association, serving Vermont and New Hampshire, is a nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organization that works with federal, state, and regional health policy organizations, foundations, and payers to develop strategies, policies, and programs that provide and support community-based primary health care services in medically underserved areas.

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