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Community Health Centers Need Restoration of Primary Care Funds

CONCORD, NH (Jan 11, 2013) – CONCORD, NH (Jan 11, 2013) – The release of Phase II of the report on the impact of Medicaid expansion on the State reports that the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid expansion will reduce the number of uninsured in New Hampshire and have a positive impact on the state's economy.

New Hampshire's 16 nonprofit Community Health Centers, with 38 sites, serve 125,000 people living in hundreds of cities and towns statewide. 35,000 patients have NO health insurance. The Community Health Centers are sometimes referred to as the 'safety-net providers' because their shared mission is to serve all people within their service area, regardless of insurance coverage or ability to pay. Fulfilling that mission alone is good reason for the Community Health Centers to exist; however, they do much more. Community Health Centers provide cost-effective preventive and primary care services including medical, behavioral, and oral health services and connect patients with many supporting services that eliminate barriers to access, including a sliding fee scale for people that are unemployed or do not have health insurance. Community Health Centers keep adults healthy and at work, and children healthy and at a school. This helps keep down the overall health care costs for everyone.

Community Health Centers are an integral part of the primary care infrastructure in New Hampshire, but they've been hit with several financial blows. The State primary care contracts were reduced by \$4 million in the current biennium budget. This blow came during the recession when the Community Health Centers provided more than \$9.5 million in uncompensated health care to New Hampshire residents.

Expanding access to Medicaid to those earning less than 138 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (approx. \$15,000 per year for a single person) and restoring the \$4 million cut from the primary care budget will enable the Community Health Centers to maintain their service levels while they work to increase funding from other sources.

Bi-State Primary Care Association and the New Hampshire Community Health Centers support the Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act and encourage restoration of \$4 million to the primary care contracts that support Community Health Centers.

For more information, please read Bi-State's new report: [Implementing Health Care Reform: Building on NH's Primary Care Foundation](#) on Bi-State's website: www.bistatepca.org.

About Bi-State Primary Care Association

Bi-State Primary Care Association, serving New Hampshire and Vermont, is a nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organization that supports greater access to primary care, especially in medically underserved areas. Bi-State works with policymakers at the federal, state, and regional level to develop strategies, policies, and programs that support community-based primary health care services. Bi-State provides education, training, resources, and community development to support the primary care services provided by Community Health Centers.

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