

FOR THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF AORTIZ@MAHEALTHCOUNCIL.ORG

From the Boston Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/boston/news/2026/08/10/community-health-medicaid-cuts-financial-plans.html>

SUBSCRIBER CONTENT:

Health Care

Community health center leaders brace for federal cuts, cut positions

'This is one of the most existential crises in the history of the health center movement.'



Charles River Community Health Center's location on Western Avenue in Allston. Community health centers across Massachusetts are bracing for changes to federal Medicaid policies that promise to strain already tight budgets and leave leaders with tough choices to make.

GOOGLE MAPS



By [Isabel Hart](#) – Reporter, Boston Business Journal
Aug 10, 2026

Listen to this article 5 min

Story Highlights

- Upwards of 200,000 Massachusetts residents could lose Medicaid coverage by 2027.
- Community health centers derive 31% of revenue from Medicaid reimbursements.
- Charles River Community Health, others are reducing leadership positions to save money.

Community health centers across Massachusetts are bracing for federal Medicaid policies changes that promise to strain already tight budgets and hurt their ability to care for the state's neediest patients.

Reports project that [upwards of 200,000 Massachusetts residents could lose Medicaid coverage](#) come 2027 through changes to work requirements, increased eligibility paperwork and increases to premiums for some insurance products.

Community health centers – the nonprofit health clinics that provide care regardless of a patient's ability to pay – are uniquely positioned to bear the brunt of those changes, said Michael Curry, CEO of The Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers, which supports over 50 health centers statewide.

GET TO KNOW YOUR CITY

Find Local Events Near You

Connect with a community of local professionals.

[Explore All Events](#)

“Any volatility, any uncertainty with whether they can get care, they still are going to show up at community health center doors,” Curry said.

According to Curry, 66% of the state’s uninsured population receives care at community health centers, and the volume that percentage represents is expected to rise with Medicaid eligibility changes.

The new requirements will “create such administrative hassle and burden ... that people will churn off Medicaid,” Curry said.

Community health centers have a lot at stake when that happens, Curry said – 31% of health center revenue comes from Medicaid, and it creates a financial challenge when reimbursement is uncertain.

“This is one of the most existential crises in the history of the health center movement,” Curry said.

On the front lines

At Charles River Community Health, a health center that sees patients primarily from Allston, Brighton, Watertown and Waltham, administrators expect to see an increase in the patients who come in with no insurance at all.

Currently, according to the health center’s CEO, Matt Mullaney, roughly 1% of patients have no insurance at all. Mullaney said he expects to see that number double or triple come 2027.

The health center is already in a challenging financial situation, Mullaney said, and has been taking steps to manage expenses while looking at ways to increase revenue going forward.

Mullaney said Charles River reduced the size of its leadership team from five to three, through job eliminations, and is changing how it offers its own employees insurance. Other [community health centers have also made job cuts](#) as the federal landscape shifts.

All of this adds to the existing challenge for health centers that compete with other, more profitable types of healthcare providers, he said.

Charles River has opened new space in Brighton and will be adding more in Waltham next June, which Mullaney said is both a way to continue serving the community while broadening its patient base to increase margins.

Currently, Charles River sees roughly 13,500 patients a year. With the new additions, Mullaney said, they are targeting service of 22,000 patients within three-and-a-half years.

Mullaney is also expecting the additional administrative requirements to strain the health center's workforce.

"We already devote about 10% of our total full-time equivalent workforce to insurance issues, helping people get insurance, billing insurance, fighting with insurance when we don't get paid for something legitimate," Mullaney said. "That's already more people than work in the entire behavioral-health department and work in the entire vision department."

The new requirements will add work for some staff. Mullaney said Charles River plans to train its community health team to help patients work through the new processes, which he said "will take time away from other things" like helping patients with food insecurity, housing challenges and more.

Doing business differently

Curry said a likely legislative change in the state, which would require commercial insurers to reimburse community health centers at the same rate as Medicaid, is a point of optimism.



Image: Kevin L. Fisher, Kreative Photography

Michael Curry, president & CEO at Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers

KEVIN L. FISHER, KREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

“We are in a moment where our members are concerned, but they're also motivated to blunt the impact,” Curry said.

Beyond that, Curry said Mass League has been advising its members on ways to do business differently, in some cases by sharing administrative resources or through exploring mergers.

“Where we can get some efficiencies, economies of scale, and where we can streamline processes, health centers are in the work of doing that now to realize some savings,” Curry said.

Curry said he doesn’t expect that efficiency work to result in layoffs or reduced services. If anything, he said, it would improve access by giving patients a broader network of caregivers to see.

“Out of this turmoil is born some innovation around what we do,” he said.

T H E L I S T

The Largest Hospitals in Massachusetts

Total net patient revenue for 2024

Rank	Prior Rank	Hospital/Prior rank (*unranked in 2024)/
1	1	Massachusetts General Hospital
2	2	Brigham and Women's Hospital
3	3	UMass Memorial Medical Center
View This List		