



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 3, 2019

Contact: Julie DiRossi-King, COO
(614) 507-7805

OACHC Seeks Inclusion of Key Workforce Program in the State Budget

Ohio's only comprehensive primary care workforce strategy exclusively targeting the underserved was not included in the Sub Bill

(COLUMBUS) – While OACHC is appreciative of the state budgets' efforts to support Ohio's youngest and most vulnerable, there is great disappointment that the FQHC Primary Care Workforce Initiative (PCWI) was not funded in Substitute House Bill 166.

Over the past four years the PCWI program has exposed Ohio students to a team-based, patient-centered medical home practice. At a time when Ohio faces a shortage in primary care physicians, this successful program is a tool to increase the quality and number of primary care providers and family physicians in Ohio.

"If we want to invest in our kids and families, beat the opioid epidemic, and reduce Ohio's abysmal rates of infant deaths, we need a strong foundation of primary care – medical, dental, and behavioral health – and we need to particularly cultivate this strong foundation in our hardest hit communities serving our most vulnerable," says OACHC Chief Operating Officer Julie DiRossi-King. "The FQHC Primary Care Workforce Initiative is a forward-thinking program developed by the Ohio General Assembly and Ohio Department of Health that truly moves the needle."

"As we continue to face a primary care workforce shortage here in Ohio and across the country, coupled with a maldistribution of providers and where they locate, it really is a 'one-two punch' for Community Health Centers and other safety net providers caring for vulnerable populations in our highest need areas of the state."

"While we fully support the emphasis on workforce in HB 166, we believe Ohio will miss its mark by eliminating the FQHC primary care workforce initiative," says Chief Medical Officer Dr. Ted Wymyslo, "Investments in recruiting and retaining the next generation of primary care providers will ensure that many of the state's priorities are sustainable for the future of Ohio's health."

"Now more than ever before, we must grow our primary care workforce, not remove capacity, particularly in our underserved areas."

About Ohio's Community Health Centers

Federally Qualified Health Centers and FQHC Look-Alikes, more commonly referred to as Community Health Centers (CHCs), are non-profit health care providers that deliver affordable, high-quality and comprehensive primary care to medically underserved populations, regardless of insurance status. CHCs

provide integrated whole person care, oftentimes providing onsite dental, behavioral, pharmacy, vision and other needed supplemental services under one roof. While each is distinct, they share one common purpose: to provide primary health care services that are coordinated, culturally and linguistically competent and community directed.

About OACHC | www.ohiohc.org

OACHC is a not-for-profit professional association representing Ohio's Federally Qualified Health Centers. OACHC's Mission is to ensure access to high-quality affordable health care for all Ohioans through the growth and development of Ohio's Community Health Centers. OACHC represents Ohio's 55 Community Health Centers at 345+ locations, including multiple mobile units, in 69 of Ohio's 88 counties.

###