

The State of Community Health Centers in 2024

New Research, Challenges and Opportunities

September 26th, 2024



Welcome & Introductions



The
Commonwealth
Fund



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
Community Health Centers®

Background on the Commonwealth Fund Surveys of FQHCs



The
Commonwealth
Fund



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
Community Health Centers®

The Commonwealth Fund Surveys of Federally Qualified Health Centers

Goal: assess health centers' changing capacity to meet the needs of patients

Timeline: conducted in 2009, 2013, 2018, 2024

Survey Topics:

- Patient characteristics
- Access and coordination
- Quality improvement
- Information technology
- Social service and behavioral health integration
- Participation in new models (e.g. PCMH; value-based care)
- Ongoing and anticipated challenges

Partners:



Survey Methodology

Sample: Drawn from UDS (annual report FQHCs submit to HRSA) list of all FQHCs that have at least one site that is a community-based primary care clinic

Participants: FQHC executive directors or clinical directors

Instrument: 12-page questionnaire completed online or by mail; ~20-25 minutes to complete

Weighting: Weighted by number of patients, sites, geographic region, urban/rural location to reflect the universe of primary care community centers

Response Rates:

- 51% in 2018 (694 responses/1,367 centers)
- 56% in 2024 (766 responses/1,368 centers)

Regional Reports: All FQHCs that completed the survey receive reports summarizing the performance of FQHCs within their state and region

Key Findings from the 2024 Commonwealth Fund Survey of FQHCs and Beyond



The
Commonwealth
Fund



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
Community Health Centers®

CHCs fill a critical gap in the health care system



1 of 3
people in poverty



1 of 4
racial and ethnic minorities



1 of 4
best served in a language other than English



1 of 5
uninsured people



1 of 6
Medicaid beneficiaries

31.3

million people received care at a federally qualified health centers in 2023

132.5

million patient visits (virtual and in-person)

Centers consistently deliver the core pillars of primary care

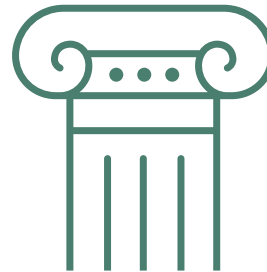


High-quality care for millions



Coordination

55% of Centers, including **65%** of rural Centers, offer complex care management.



Accessibility

88% of Centers, including **93%** of rural Centers, offer same or next-day appointments.



Comprehensiveness

70% of Centers offer virtual mental health counseling. **88%** offer virtual substance use disorder treatment.

Telehealth use has soared since 2018, allowing centers to reach more patients and provide more timely care

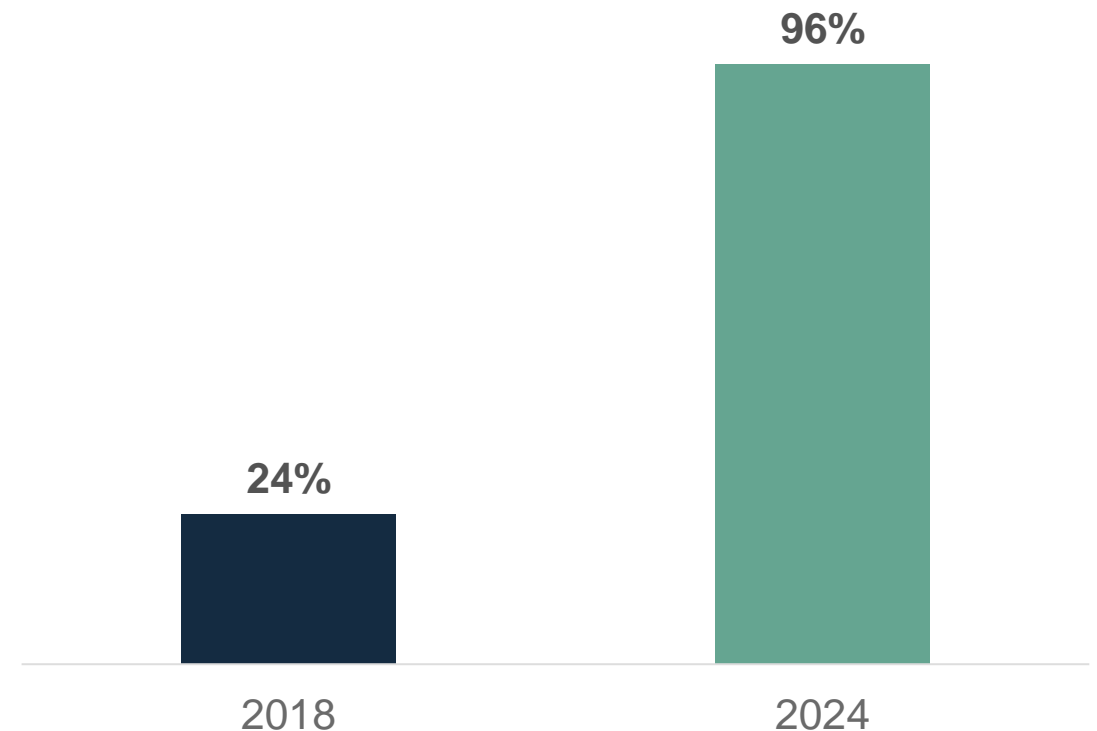
Over 80% of Centers said telehealth has allowed them to...

- Reach patients who otherwise would go without care
- Improve the timeliness of their care

Over 60% of Centers said the following were challenges to telehealth use...

- Lack of patient access to tech & broadband
- Low or reimbursement – *more rural centers said this was a challenge*

Percent of centers that offer telehealth, over time



Community health centers' care goes beyond primary care

“I think the people who work in health centers really are engaged in the community and in community empowerment. Not just in health, but also in other ways. . . . I don't believe other health systems do that, and I don't believe other health systems are aligned in that way.”

-- **FQHC Director of Policy**



Source: Celli Horstman et al., “Community Health Centers Need Increased and Sustained Federal Funding,” To the Point (blog), Commonwealth Fund, Sept. 25, 2023.

Centers consistently help patients address the social and economic conditions that affect their health

Screening

Significantly more centers screen their patients for unmet social and economic needs in 2024, compared to 2018.

For example, **70%** screened patients for food insecurity needs in 2024, compared to **41%** in 2018.

Care Delivery

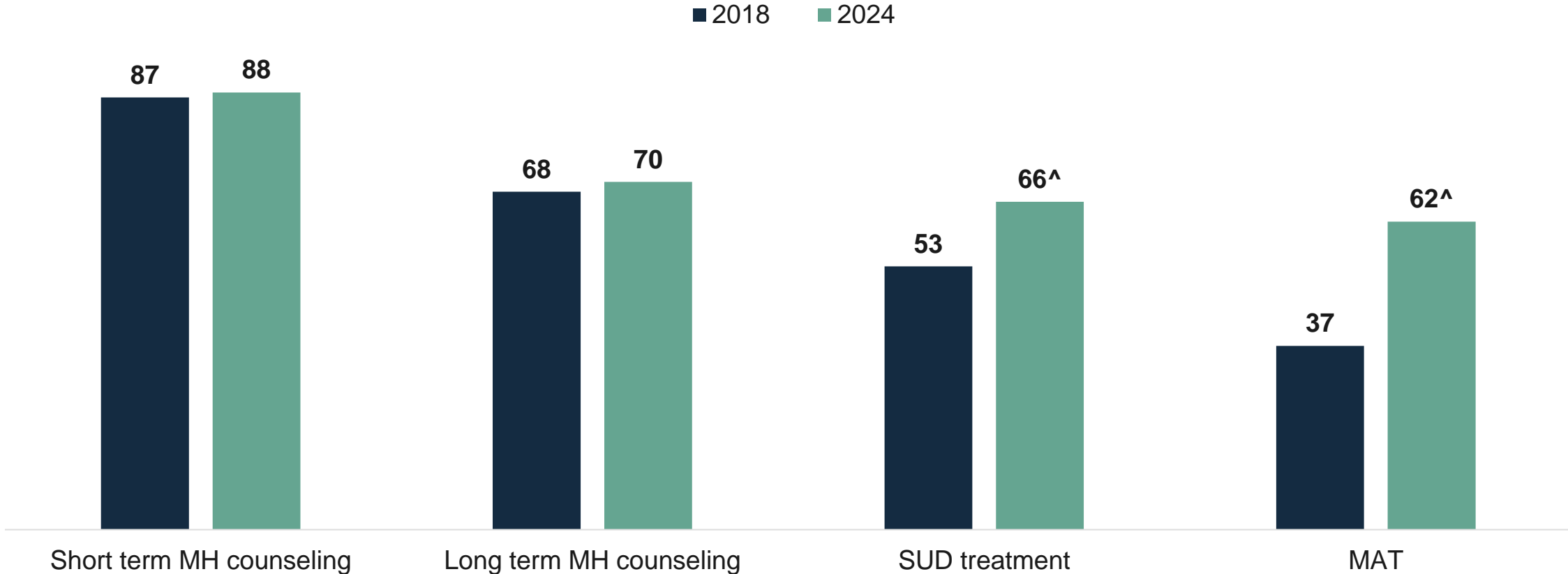
55% of Centers, including **57%** in urban and suburban areas, provide services to their patients, like food pantries

Coordination

61% of Centers coordinate with community-based organizations and social services.

Centers have increased their availability of services to meet rising demand for behavioral health care

Percent who responded their largest site “usually” or “often” has the following services available onsite for patients with emotional or behavioral health needs.



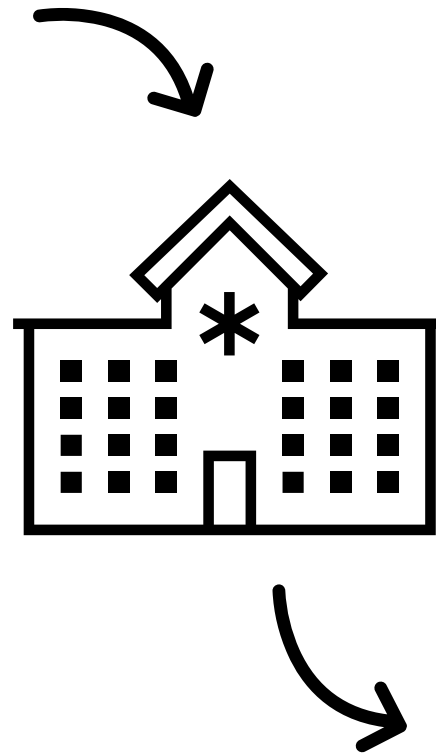
Source: Celli Horstman et al., Community Health Centers’ Progress and Challenges in Meeting Patients’ Essential Primary Care Needs: Findings from the Commonwealth Fund 2024 National Survey of Federally Qualified Health Centers (Commonwealth Fund, Aug. 2024).

Staffing and coordination are challenges to behavioral health care delivery

Workforce challenges within CHCs

77% of Centers don't have enough mental health professionals onsite.

70% of Centers said that a lack of onsite BH staff was a challenge to addressing patients' needs.



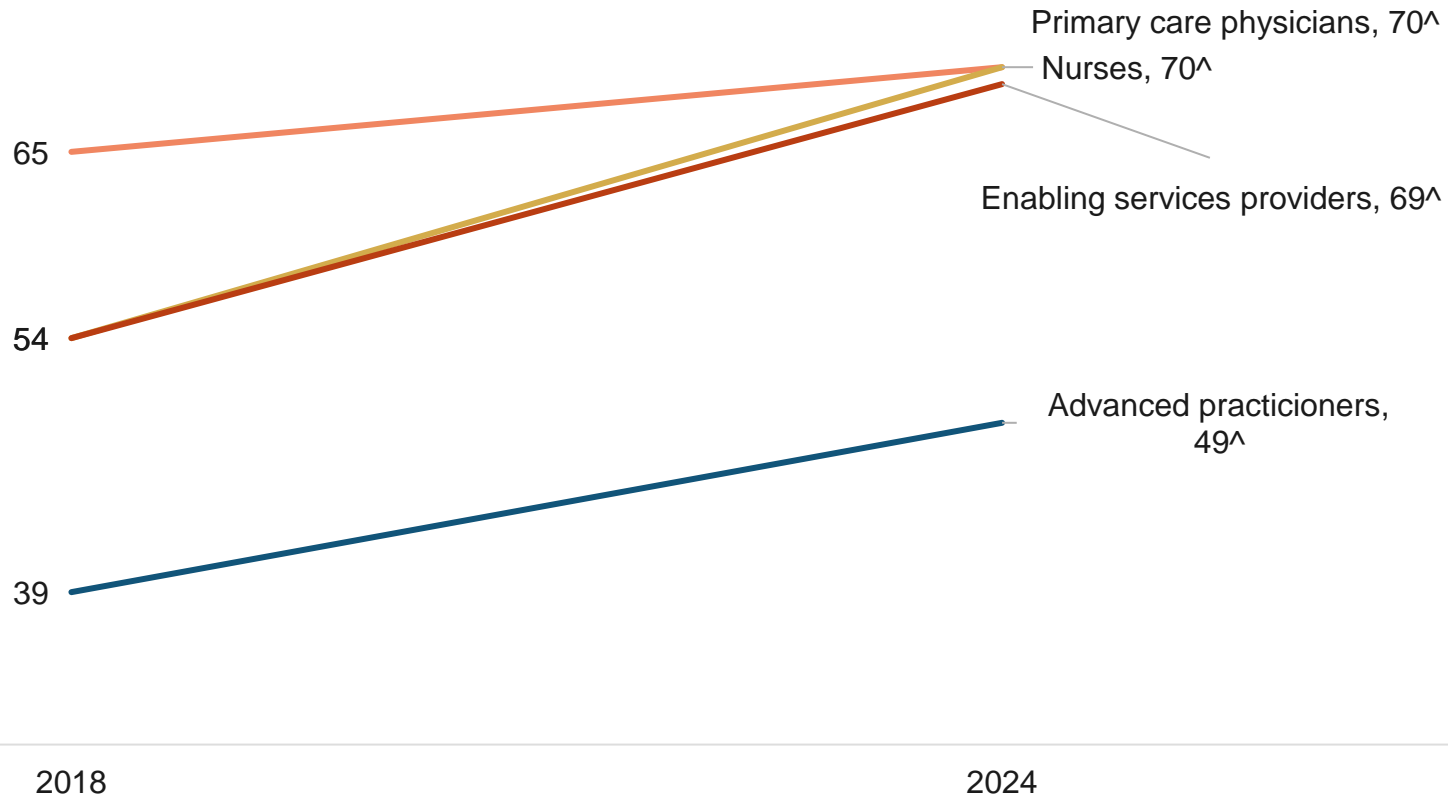
79% of Centers said it is difficult or impossible for patients to get appointments with BH specialists outside the Center.

91% of Centers said that an insufficient number of BH providers in the community was a challenge to addressing patient's needs.

Workforce challenges outside CHCs

Workforce shortages have significantly increased since 2018

Percent who responded “yes” there are currently shortages of the following types of personnel at their largest site.



According to research by NACHC, the #1 reason for staff turnover at CHCs was: **financial opportunities at larger health care organizations.**

Centers are facing an uncertain financial future



48% of Centers anticipate their *competition with retail clinics* will increase in the next two years.

42% of Centers anticipate the *amount of uncompensated care they provide* will increase in the next two years.

38% of Centers anticipate their *revenue from the 340B prescription drug program* will decrease in the next two.

12% decrease in inflation-adjusted federal funding for CHCs through the Community Health Center Fund between FY2015-2022.

Panel Discussion

Opportunities to Continue to Provide High-Quality Primary Care for Millions



The
Commonwealth
Fund



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
Community Health Centers®

Panelists



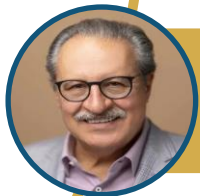
Moderator: Corinne Lewis, MSW
Assistant Vice President, Delivery System Reform, The Commonwealth Fund



Celli Horstman, MPP
Senior Research Associate, Delivery System Reform, The Commonwealth Fund



Peter Shin, MPH, PhD
Chief Science Officer, National Association of Community Health Centers



Castulo De La Rocha, JD
President, CEO, AltaMed Health Services



Robert Nocon, MHS, PhD
Assistant Professor, Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine



The
Commonwealth
Fund



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
Community Health Centers®