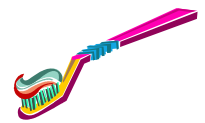


Rhode Island Community Health Centers: Leaders in Dental Care for Low-Income Rhode Islanders



Rhode Island's 10 Community Health Centers provide high quality, affordable primary care to our state's most vulnerable populations. The community health centers fill a vital role as the safety net health providers in Rhode Island. Eight of our community health centers provide dental care to adults and children who have RIte Care, Medicaid, private insurance, and who are uninsured. Uninsured patients pay for services on a sliding-scale basis. Most of the health centers' dental patients are covered by RIte Care or are uninsured.

Rhode Island Community Health Center Dental Providers

- Blackstone Valley Community Health Care
- Block Island Health Services
- Comprehensive Community Action Program
- East Bay Community Action Program
- Northwest Community Health Care
- Providence Community Health Centers
- Thundermist Health Center
- Wood River Health Service

Providers	Total	Full Time	Part Time	FTE
Dentists	28	15	13	21.12
Dental Hygienists	19	14	5	16.1
Total	47	29	18	37.22

Dental Facts and Figures

Increasing capacity

In 2003 the community health center dental patient population was fewer than 10,000 patients. By 2007, that population increased to over 28,000 patients. In 2008, the health centers treated nearly 31,000 adults and children throughout Rhode Island.

In 2008, community health centers had over 85,000 dental visits including oral examinations, emergency visits, and preventative services.

In 2008, community health centers operated 66 out of the 69 chairs at the centers.

Commitment to improved dental facilities

Since 1998, community health centers have made a dental capital investment of approximately \$5 million including the recent additions to Blackstone Valley Community Health Care's location in Pawtucket and Northwest Community Health Care in Pascoag.

Threat to dental services

Dental services for 38,000 parents who are covered by RIte Care are threatened. The Governor proposes to save \$525,277 in general revenue by eliminating this coverage. Dental coverage costs less than \$14 per person per year. The Rhode Island Health Center Association believes that dental coverage is an essential component of primary health care. RIHCA urges the Governor and General Assembly to reconsider this budget item. The health centers have worked over the last ten years in partnership with state government to build up dental capacity. Elimination of dental coverage for these parents threatens the health centers' ability to continue providing comprehensive, high quality dental care across all populations.