



Health Care Home Tennessee

a campaign by the Tennessee Primary Care Association

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Tennessee's Health Centers to Serve 500,000 by 2015

Nashville, TN – The Tennessee Primary Care is preparing to launch a campaign, “**Health Care Home Tennessee**” that will call for continued investment and partnership in Tennessee’s Community Health Centers to strengthen their infrastructure and provide the necessary tools for growth so that they can serve over 500,000 medically needy Tennesseans by the year 2015.

“As our health centers see rapid growth in their patient numbers, it’s critical for us to strive to ensure that everyone in Tennessee has *both* affordable insurance coverage *and* a regular source of primary health care – a health care home,” said Kathy Wood-Dobbins, the Association’s CEO. “The goal of the **Health Care Home Tennessee** plan is to connect all Tennesseans with affordable health care in their communities. The doors to these health care homes are open to everyone, including the uninsured and TennCare, Medicare, and privately insured patients.”

Community Health Centers provide primary care services regardless of a patient’s ability to pay and are strategically located in areas where private medical care is scarce, nonexistent or not easily accessible, such as an urban community or a rural county. Community Health Centers have over 150 sites providing primary health care services in the state. Tennessee’s health centers have experienced a steady increase in their patient base, an average of about 10 percent each year. In 2006, Tennessee’s health centers served over 273,000 people, 91 percent of them living below the poverty level and nearly 40 percent of them uninsured.

“Strengthening the primary care infrastructure in the state will lead to long-term systemic savings in Tennessee and a healthier state as a whole,” said Wood-Dobbins. In order for Community Health Centers to keep up with the rising demand for accessible and affordable health care in Tennessee, the network of health centers across the state will require sustainable state and federal funding, increases in the primary care workforce, capital funding for renovated or new facilities and a focus on quality care that improves health outcomes.

As a part of the Tennessee Congressional delegation in Washington, we’ll need support as we progress with the **Health Care Home Tennessee** plan. The services our Health Centers deliver are critical to the welfare of all Tennesseans.

The Tennessee Primary Care Association would like to thank Congressman David Davis, Congressman Zach Wamp, Congressman Lincoln Davis, Congressman Jim Cooper, Congressman Bart Gordon, Congressman Marsha Blackburn, Congressman John Tanner, and Congressman Steve Cohen who voted in favor of the Health Centers Renewal Act (HR 1343) and Senator Bob Corker for signing onto the Senate version of the bill. In addition to reauthorizing the program through 2012, this bill will preserve the program’s core elements, enabling uninsured and low-income individuals to access care in Tennessee.

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About the Tennessee Primary Care Association (TPCA):

Tennessee Primary Care Association (TPCA) is a nonprofit corporation connecting Tennesseans with a health care home, especially the medically underserved. Since its inception in 1976, TPCA committed to 1) identifying unmet needs and gaps in service access, 2) developing systems of care, 3) advocating for resources, and 4) promoting awareness of Community Health Centers. Membership includes 34 nonprofit primary care clinics across the state operating over 150 sites providing comprehensive medical care.