

Press Release

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New Analysis Finds that Collaborations between Community Health Centers and Family Planning Clinics Hold Promise to Improve Access to Care

WASHINGTON and NEW YORK – A new report titled, “A Natural Fit: Collaborations Between Community Health Centers and Family Planning Clinics,” released today by the Geiger Gibson /RCHN Community Health Foundation Research Collaborative at the George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services examines the financial and long-term health impact of collaborations between Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and family planning clinics. The researchers found that building formal affiliation arrangements between community health centers and family planning programs has the potential to improve access to comprehensive care while drawing on the expertise of both types of safety net providers.

“This analysis shows the potential for strong health center/family planning clinic collaborations to emerge and the importance of these collaborations to population health,” said Sara Rosenbaum, Harold and Jane Hirsh Professor of Health Law and Policy at the School of Public Health and Health Services.

Reviewing the similar missions and community orientation of both programs including their use of income-adjusted fee schedules, the authors also describe their unique strengths. Community health centers’ strengths lie in the comprehensiveness of their care and in their ability to treat a wide array of health conditions, whether reproductive or otherwise. The strengths of family planning clinics, in contrast, lie in the additional layer of patient confidentiality they may provide, the fact that they may offer a wider array of family planning options, and their experience in reaching especially hard-to-serve populations such as adolescents. Noting the importance of the formation of strong treatment networks as a measure of health care quality and in response to expanding insurance coverage, the analysis considers the potential affiliation arrangements that health centers and family planning clinics might develop.

“The mission of community health centers is to provide accessible, comprehensive, high quality care to all” said Julio Bellber, president and CEO of the RCHN Community Health Foundation. “Formal collaborations with family planning clinics could help health centers effectively deliver on this mission in the evolving health care landscape.”

To access the policy research brief, click here:

http://www.gwumc.edu/sphhs/departments/healthpolicy/dhp_publications/pub_uploads/dhpPublication_13A_FEE26-5056-9D20-3D3479861216C7E4.pdf

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About the Geiger Gibson / RCHN Community Health Foundation Research Collaborative

The Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy, established in 2003 and named after human rights and health center pioneers Drs. H. Jack Geiger and Count Gibson, is part of the School of Public Health and Health Services at The George Washington University. It focuses on the history and contributions of health centers and the major policy issues that affect health centers, their communities, and the patients that they serve. Additional information about the Research Collaborative can be found online at www.gwumc.edu/sphhs/departments/healthpolicy/ggprogram or at rchnfoundation.org.

About the RCHN Community Health Foundation

The RCHN Community Health Foundation, founded in October 2005, is a not-for-profit foundation whose mission is to support community health centers through strategic investment, outreach, education, and cutting-edge health policy research. The only foundation in the country dedicated to community health centers, the Foundation builds on health centers' 40-year commitment to the provision of accessible, high quality, community-based healthcare services for underserved and medically vulnerable populations. The Foundation's gift to the Geiger Gibson program supports health center research and scholarship. For more information on RCHN CHF, visit www.rchnfoundation.org.

About the George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services:

Established in July 1997, the School of Public Health and Health Services brought together three longstanding university programs in the schools of medicine, business, and education that we have since expanded substantially. Today, more than 1,100 students from nearly every U.S. state and more than 40 nations pursue undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral-level degrees in public health. Our student body is one of the most ethnically diverse among the nation's private schools of public health. <http://sphhs.gwumc.edu/>