



## **Health and Reentry Project Statement on New Community Health Center Funding and Policy to Support Transitions in Care for Justice Involved Individuals**

### **Background**

*Today, the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) [announced](#) new funding for Community Health Centers (CHCs) to provide health care for people returning to their communities from incarceration. Alongside the new funding, HRSA released [draft policy guidance](#) for CHCs covering activities in this area, which is open for public comment.*

*The new initiative will provide 51 CHCs with two years of resources, which can be used to improve transitions from correctional to community-based health care, including by providing chronic disease, mental health, and substance use disorder care to individuals before and after release. CHCs will need to work collaboratively with local stakeholders in their communities to develop these new approaches, including local public safety officials.*

*In March, the Health and Reentry Project (HARP), with support from the Commonwealth Fund, released an issue brief, [Essential Connections: Community Health Centers' Role in Facilitating Healthy Transitions Out of Incarceration](#). Nationwide, almost 1,500 CHC organizations provide care to over 31 million patients, including many people as they return to communities following incarceration. The brief examines current CHC approaches to serving individuals who are, or have been, incarcerated, the role CHCs can play in improving public health and public safety by supporting continuity of care as people return home, and makes policy recommendations.*

### **HARP's Executive Director, Vikki Wachino, issued the following statement on today's announcement:**

“For people returning to their communities from incarceration, timely access to quality health care can mean the difference between life and death. That is why Community Health Centers are a good fit to provide that care. They are rooted in communities, provide a range of primary care and behavioral health services, and connect people to essential community-based services like housing, transportation and employment supports, all of which are high priorities as people return home. These centers are mission-driven and held accountable through data and regular evaluation.

As bipartisan leaders in states and the federal government recognize the need for better access to health care for people who are returning home, including advancing [Medicaid](#)'s ability to provide coverage for services at reentry, these new policies will help ensure that people receive needed care in the days and weeks following release, helping them return to their families and communities healthy and whole. By investing in health care at reentry, we can not only improve



people’s health, but we can improve public safety by breaking the cycle of incarceration and reducing recidivism. We know that access to health care is an essential building block for millions of Americans who’ve earned a second chance; today’s announcement is a major step toward that goal.”

### **About HARP**

HARP focuses on improving the health of people returning to communities after leaving incarceration through policy, practice, and partnership. For more information visit: <https://healthandreentryproject.org/> or contact [info@healthandreentryproject.org](mailto:info@healthandreentryproject.org).