



Health Center Association  
OF NEBRASKA

2025 PROJECT ACCESS

# IMPACT REPORT

Prepared by Health  
Center Association  
of Nebraska

[www.hcanebraska.org](http://www.hcanebraska.org)

# Prepared By

The Health Center Association of Nebraska (HCAN) in collaboration with the Centene Foundation, Nebraska Total Care, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Nebraska, the Creighton Community Collaborative, Nebraska Blue Foundation, and the Project Access Steering Committee.

## About Us

Health Center Association of Nebraska (HCAN) is Nebraska's non-profit Primary Care Association, representing the state's seven Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), also known as community health centers. In 2024, Nebraska's health centers served over 123,000 Nebraskans, including 7,500 individuals experiencing homelessness, over 2,400 agricultural workers, and over 40,000 children. Nebraska's health centers provide care across 87 service locations, including mobile medical and dental services, school-based clinics, and services co-located with community partners like public health departments, homeless shelters, and public housing.

HCAN was established in 2011 and is funded primarily through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

## Acknowledgements:



# Project Access Overview

Project Access was established by the Centene Foundation and Nebraska Total Care, in partnership with the Health Center Association of Nebraska (HCAN), to increase access to care at the seven Nebraska Community Health Centers (CHCs). Nebraska's CHCs serve over 123,000 patients with integrated primary care, preventative services, chronic disease management, and support services addressing medical, dental, and behavioral health needs. Project Access focuses on increasing patient access by addressing provider shortages, improving clinic operations, expanding capacity, and enhancing the workforce pipeline.

Funding for Project Access is made possible through the generous support of the Centene Foundation, Nebraska Total Care, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Nebraska, the Nebraska Blue Foundation, and the Creighton Community Collaborative. Their continued financial contributions reflect a shared commitment to improving healthcare access for all Nebraskans.



## Recruitment and Retention:

Support health centers with competitive compensation through sign-on bonuses, loan forgiveness, education, licensure, relocation aid, and innovative retention strategies.



## Clinical Optimization:

Fund initiatives to enhance patient access, like hiring consultants, upgrading technology, or improving scheduling to reduce no-shows and increase same-day/next-day appointments.



## Capital Improvements:

Expand access by adding physical capacity, growing telehealth, developing mobile programs, and advancing new projects to serve additional Nebraskans.



## Workforce Pipeline Development:

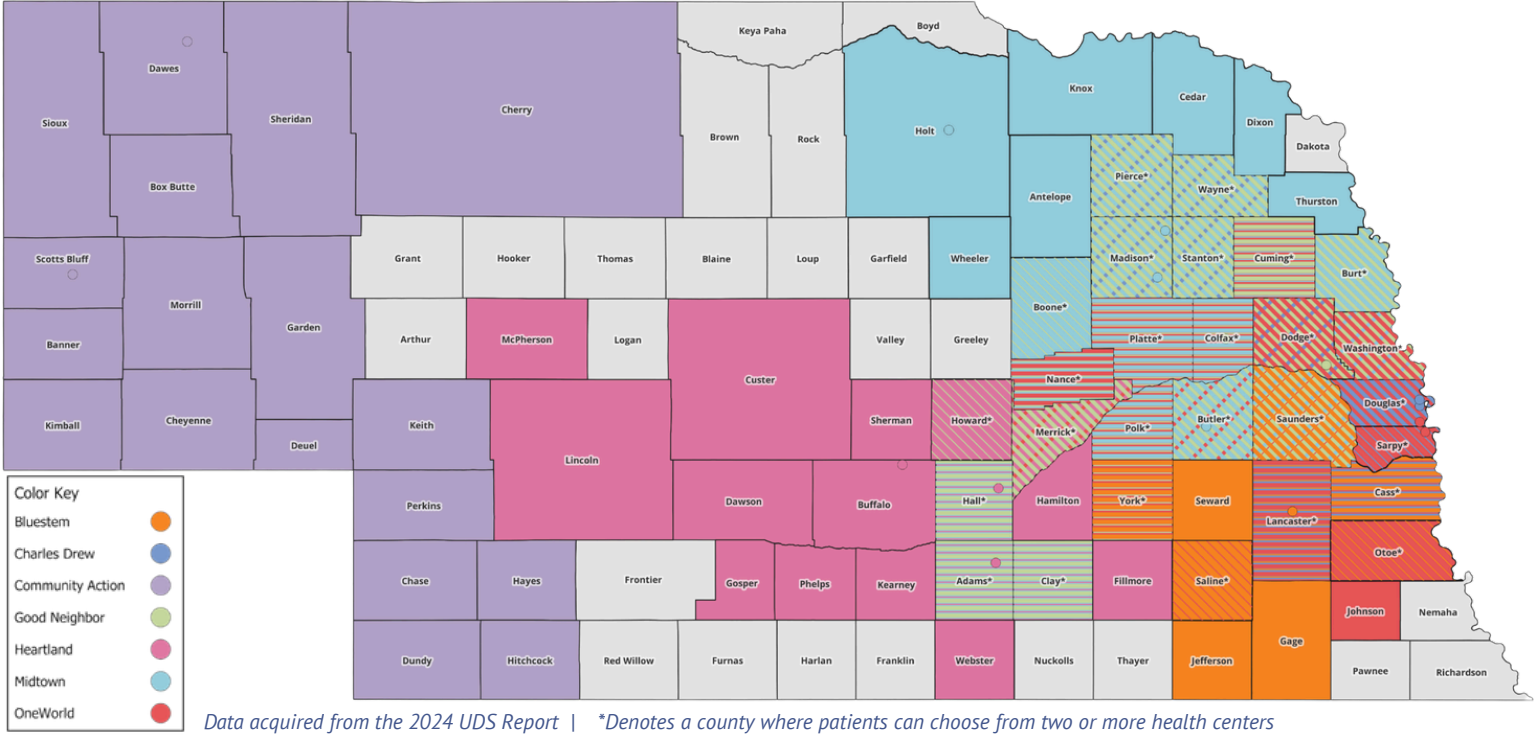
Collaborate with key stakeholders to address workforce shortages, attract talent to health centers, and expand Nebraska's health science graduate pool, focusing on health center-affiliated programs.



## Project Access Administration

HCAN continues to serve as the day-to-day administrator of Project Access, with ongoing oversight from the Project Access Steering Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to govern the overall vision and direction of the program, set measurable goals, and review metrics over time. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Committee to evaluate the effectiveness of the overall program and guide the sustainability of Project Access.

# Nebraska Community Health Centers



**Bluestem Health**  
 1021 North 27th St. | Lincoln, NE 68503  
 Ph. 402.476.1455 | [www.bluestemlincoln.com](http://www.bluestemlincoln.com)  
 4 service delivery sites

**Heartland Health Center**  
 2116 W. Faidley Ave | Grand Island, NE 68803  
 Ph. 308.382.4297 | [www.heartlandhealthcenter.org](http://www.heartlandhealthcenter.org)  
 17 service delivery sites

**Charles Drew Health Center, Inc.**  
 2915 Grant St. | Omaha, NE 68111  
 Ph. 402.451.3553 | [www.charlesdrew.com](http://www.charlesdrew.com)  
 16 service delivery sites

**Midtown Health Center**  
 302 West Phillip Ave | Norfolk, NE 68701  
 Ph. 402.371.8000 | [www.midtownhealthne.org](http://www.midtownhealthne.org)  
 19 service delivery sites

**Community Action Health Center**  
 975 Crescent Dr. | Gering, NE 69341  
 Ph. 308.632.2540 | [www.capwn.org](http://www.capwn.org)  
 2 service delivery sites

**OneWorld Community Health Centers, Inc.**  
 4920 South 30th St. | Omaha, NE 68107  
 Ph. 402.734.4110 | [www.oneworldomaha.org](http://www.oneworldomaha.org)  
 23 service delivery sites

**Good Neighbor Community Health Center**  
 4321 41st Ave | Columbus, NE 68602  
 Ph. 402.562.7500 | [www.ecdhd.ne.gov](http://www.ecdhd.ne.gov)  
 4 service delivery sites

# Project Access Impact

HCAN spoke at the National Association of Community Health Centers Partners Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota in November 2025. The workshop titled “Project Access: A Multi-Partner Approach to Health Center Growth and Sustainability” highlighted how HCAN, the Centene Foundation, and Nebraska Total Care collaborated together to develop and implement Project Access – providing additional unrestricted dollars to retain high performers, recruit and remain competitive in a tough fiscal environment, and foster partnerships with academic institutions to grow the workforce of the future. This session provided state associations and community health centers with best practices and lessons learned to expand partnerships with key stakeholders in their local communities.

HCAN is proud that Project Access is being recognized for its structural and collaborative innovations both locally and nationally! Below are significant wins for 2025.



**69**

Total staff hired

**29**

Loan repayment matches

**19**

Capital Improvement projects

**9**

Clinical Optimization Projects

**369**

Staff Retention Bonuses

**33**

HCAN Pipeline Development Presentations

## Project Access: Increasing Access to Care Video

This video highlights Project Access' powerful impact and key accomplishments made within our local communities.



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“Project Access gives us the flexibility to really do innovative things that we weren't able to afford for ourselves but that have always been in the back of my mind as difference makers to achieving the impact that I know we can do for our community.”

**Kathy Nordby, Midtown Health Center, CEO**

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“Project Access is a Godsend. There are probably 3,000 more patients that are accessing our services, and I think that's because we have the best and brightest talent - because we have the ability to retain them.”

**Andrea Skolkin, OneWorld Community Health Centers, Inc., CEO**

# Recruitment & Retention

69

Total number of providers/staff hired through Project Access throughout 2025

29

Total number of hires that received loan repayment matches

40

Total number of hires that received a recruitment incentive

## Talent Acquisition Specialist Updates

- HCAN's Talent Acquisition Specialist, Becca Usher, joined the HCAN Team in January 2025.
- In early 2025, HCAN vetted and selected an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform to enhance and maintain HCAN's new candidate database.
- Throughout 2025, HCAN represented Nebraska's health centers at 15 outreach events, including conferences, career fairs, and student presentations.
- Throughout 2025, HCAN presented 17 candidates to the Nebraska health centers for on-site interviews and consideration!
  - The Nebraska health centers made 6 offers.
- Active outreach, sourcing, and direct recruitment remains a strategic priority for primary care providers, pediatricians, behavioral health providers, dentists, and dental hygienists. We are lucky to have Becca on the HCAN Team!



## Recruitment Brochures

The development of a targeted recruitment brochure has strengthened our ability to attract high-quality physician candidates. Designed to clearly communicate each organization's mission, values, and opportunities, the brochure serves as a compelling introduction for prospective recruits.



## Hiring Update

### Meet Lori Bratetic, MSN, APRN, FNP-C, PMHNP!

Lori discusses the value of being dually licensed and how it allows her to fully care for her patients.

At Midtown Health Center, she enjoys serving a diverse patient population and caring for patients of all ages at the West Point location—supporting comprehensive, patient-centered care across the lifespan.



# Clinical Optimization

Charles Drew Health Center, Inc. in Omaha, purchased a new ultrasound machine to enhance on-site maternal health services, minimizing external referrals and promoting continuity of care.

Good Neighbor Community Health Center, in Columbus, reduced their no-show rate by over 10% in late 2024. Throughout 2025, they maintained their low no-show rate through increased patient outreach efforts.

Community Action Health Center, in Gering, optimized on-site dental sterilization to support provider efficiency and positively impact infection control protocols.



## Meet Ruchika Reddy Sama, MPS, CPHQ



Quality and Compliance  
Coordinator  
Good Neighbor Community  
Health Center

Ruchika joined the team at Good Neighbor as their first Quality and Compliance Coordinator! Thanks to Project Access, Ruchika joined the health center in April 2025 after completing her master's in health information technology. Over the past year, Ruchika has turned strategic plan and employee engagement data into scorecards, began leading monthly quality committees, works with clinical supervisors on opportunities for improvement, and educates providers on how to incorporate changes into their existing workflows. She is skilled at turning data into actionable insights to support the health center and their patients. Good Neighbor is thrilled to have Ruchika on the team and plans to use 2026 Project Access funding to complete her H1B sponsorship application for continued employment. Welcome, Ruchika!

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“The ultrasound has had a significant impact on patient care at CDHC by expanding the ability to provide timely, high-quality diagnostic and procedural services directly within the health center. In Q4 2025, the ultrasound was used to identify retained products of conception in a patient who experienced a miscarriage, allowing providers to ensure the patient received the urgent care needed. By integrating ultrasound capability into routine clinical practice, CDHC continues to strengthen early detection, improve patient outcomes, and enhance coordination between primary and acute care settings.” - **Ginny Czechut, CDHC Development Director**

# Capital Improvements

- **Bluestem Health**, in Lincoln, remodeled nursing stations and waiting rooms at two of their physical locations.
- **Charles Drew Health Center, Inc.**, in Omaha saw 112 patients on their new Mobile Medical Unit. Medical, dental, behavioral health, and pharmacy services are provided Monday through Thursday to patients experiencing homelessness at the Saint Francis House.
- **Community Action Health Center**, in Gering, remodeled and expanded their behavioral health waiting room. The waiting room was intentionally designed to maximize patient privacy and increase access to behavioral health care in Western Nebraska.
- **Good Neighbor Community Health Center**, in Columbus, added four new primary care exams rooms, increasing the total number of patients served by up to 15 per day.
- **Heartland Health Center**, in Grand Island, purchased a jaundice meter to better assess newborn health in clinic. The jaundice meter also minimizes unnecessary blood draws from our smallest patients.
- **Midtown Health Center**, in Norfolk, continued providing in-house x-rays throughout 2025. A total of 759 x-rays were taken, providing patients with a needed same-day, cost-effective service.
- **OneWorld Community Health Centers Inc.**, in Omaha, broke ground on their new Workforce Training Center. This building, located at the historic Livestock Exchange stockyards campus in South Omaha, will expand access to care, house a child development center and micro-unit for epidemic and pandemic responses.



# Workforce Pipeline Development

- Throughout 2025, HCAN represented Nebraska's health centers at 15 outreach events, including conferences, career fairs, and student presentations.
- HCAN is actively partnering with a rural health center and a local school of medicine to develop and implement a rural training track for Family Medicine residents. If approved, this would be the first two-year, on-site training curriculum in the state of Nebraska within a rural health center. All collaborative partners are working towards a September 2026 application.
- HCAN staff actively present to students, residents, and key collaborative partners on the value of working at, and partnering with, the Nebraska community health centers. Staff completed 33 presentations throughout 2025.



# Thank You!

HCAN's mission is to advance the health center movement through access, health, and well-being for ALL. The development, implementation, and expansion of Project Access provides health centers with the opportunity to retain high-performers, recruit and remain competitive in a tough fiscal environment, and foster partnerships with academic institutions to grow the workforce of the future. This work would not be possible without our partners and their financial investments.

Interested in learning more about Project Access? Please reach out to Jenna Thomsen, Director of Strategy and Development, at [jlt@hcanebraska.org](mailto:jlt@hcanebraska.org).

## Where Your Dollars Go

**91%**

Direct Health Center Programming

**3%**

Operations

**6%**

Administration

