

Introduction

Section 330 of the United States Public Health Service Act authorizes the existence and support of the Health Center Program. The Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA) administers the program and currently supports 1,202 organizations. Through a network of more than 8,000 service delivery sites known as health centers, health care services were provided to 25,860,296 patients in 2016 (see [2016 Health Center Data](#)).

Health centers are required to provide comprehensive, culturally-competent, high-quality primary health care services to medically underserved communities and vulnerable populations, including migratory and seasonal agricultural workers and their families. There are five fundamental aspects of the Health Center Program, which all Health Centers must adhere to:

Health Center Program Fundamentals

1. Located in or serve a high need community.
2. Governed by a community board.
3. Provide comprehensive primary health care services.
4. Provide services available to all with fees adjusted based on ability to pay.
5. Meet other performance and accountability administrative, clinical and financial requirements.

(See bphc.hrsa.gov/about)

Types of Health Centers

The Health Center Program includes two major types of organizations, the grant-supported Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and the Health Center “Look-Alikes,” which are recognized as FQHCs but are not federally funded (see bphc.hrsa.gov/about/lookalike)

- Grant-Supported Federally Qualified Health Centers are public and private non-profit health care organizations recognized as FQHCs by the Center for Medicaid and Medicare (CMS) and are partially funded under the Health Center Program [Section 330 of the Public Health Service (PHS) Act].
- Non-grant-supported health centers “Look-alikes” are public and private non-profit health care organizations certified by CMS, meeting PHS Section 330 definition of “health center” but do not receive Health Center Program funding (see bphc.hrsa.gov/about).

Comprehensive Primary Health Services

To meet the health care needs of the target populations and the PHS Section 330 Program Requirements, health centers provide comprehensive health care services, including as appropriate: preventive and primary care, oral health, mental health and substance abuse services. In order to overcome barriers to care experienced by the population they serve, health centers also provide an array of supportive and enabling services such as outreach, transportation, case management, translation/interpretation services, and nutrition services, among others.

(See <http://bphc.hrsa.gov/about/requirements/index.html#services1>)