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## **Oregon Community Health Centers to Receive Nearly \$5 Million from Federal Government to Support COVID-19 Vaccinations**

Friday, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), announced a new [\\$350 million initiative](#) for HRSA-supported health centers to increase COVID-19 vaccines in their communities, with a specific focus on underserved populations.

Oregon will receive a total of [\\$4,940,192 to support 32 health centers in the state](#). Thirty HRSA-Funded Health Centers will receive a total award of \$4,818,135, while two Health Center Program Look-Alikes will receive a total award of \$122,057.

“Health centers are community-led organizations, adaptable and responsive to the unique needs in their areas,” said Oregon Primary Care Association Executive Director Joan Watson-Patko. “They are essential in vaccinating hard-to-reach patients across the state. HRSA’s latest initiative will bolster the tailored approaches community health centers take to help combat the threat of COVID-19.”

For example, Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center has provided more than [90,000 doses of COVID vaccine in 2022](#) at its 18 locations across Washington and Yamhill counties. Community health centers like Virginia Garcia build connections with patients over time through regular wellness checkups, educational outreach, and preventative care for health issues like heart disease or diabetes.

“We witness a lot of vaccine hesitancy in the population we serve,” said Roxanna Pascual, Virginia Garcia Regional Operations manager. “We provide a space where people feel safe getting tests, vaccines, and therapeutics for their illness.”

With this new funding, Oregon’s health centers can expand mobile, drive-up, walk-up, or community-based vaccination events, including events with community and faith-based organizations. Health centers can also use funds to provide transportation, translation, education, and interpretation services related to COVID-19 vaccinations.

### **About Oregon’s CHCs**

Oregon’s community health centers deliver integrated medical, dental, and behavioral health services at over 200 locations to the communities made vulnerable across the state. Over 466,000 Oregonians receive their care at a community health center, including one in four people on the Oregon Health Plan. Over 73% of patients live below the poverty line, and 94% live at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Over 75%

of community health centers have clinic sites serving rural communities, 30% of Oregon's community health centers are federally recognized as Health Care for the Homeless locations, and 33% are designated as Migrant Health Centers.

### **About OPCA**

The Oregon Primary Care Association (OPCA) is a nonprofit membership organization for the state's federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) and look-alikes. OPCA members deliver integrated medical, dental, and behavioral health services to vulnerable communities. OPCA generates data-based insights into members' operational challenges, provides best-practices training, and shapes evolving health policy to achieve health equity in Oregon and beyond.

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