

HANDS OFF

OUR CARE

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS CAN'T
REPLACE PLANNED PARENTHOOD

BRIDGE
PROJECT

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS CAN'T TAKE THE PLACE OF PLANNED PARENTHOOD



Community health care clinics have been suggested as a possible solution to cover any lack of coverage caused by potential closures to Planned Parenthood clinics by anti-choice politicians. Community health clinics can be found in rural and urban communities to provide affordable and accessible healthcare to their patients. Planned Parenthood focuses specifically on reproductive health, providing a wide variety of birth control options including reversible long-term birth control options and accessible STI and cancer screenings that are often not available at community health clinics.

Recently, however, Republicans in Congress, without studying the issue, have suggested that community health clinics can take over the services that Planned Parenthood clinics provide in the event that clinics are shut down. But while both community health clinics and Planned Parenthood clinics work to promote public health, shutting down Planned Parenthood clinics would only hurt the health of communities, leaving women and their families with fewer - and in some cases no other - options for care.

**“THE ASSERTION THAT COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTERS COULD STEP INTO A
BREACH OF THIS MAGNITUDE
IS SIMPLY WRONG AND DISPLAYS A
FUNDAMENTAL MISUNDERSTANDING
OF HOW THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WORKS”**

Sara Rosenbaum, J.D.,
founding chair of the Department of Health Policy
at George Washington University Milken Institute
School of Public Health

DIFFERENCES IN WAIT TIME

Appointments like birth control and STI screenings are critical in preventative care. And when it comes to preventing spread of STIs in a community and preventing lapses in birth control, wait time matters. Women can simply get care more quickly at a Planned Parenthood clinic than they can at a community health clinic. According to the Guttmacher Institute, the average wait time for an initial contraceptive appointment for a federally-qualified health clinic is 2.5 days, over two times the wait at a Planned Parenthood clinic. For Health Department sites, the wait is even worse, with an average of 4.1 days, nearly four times the wait at a Planned Parenthood clinic. Additionally Guttmacher found that 78% of Planned Parenthood clinics offer weekend or evening hours compared with just 57% of health clinics.

In Indiana, a potential patient was told by phone that she had to wait until May for an appointment at a community health clinic, 12 weeks after she called. Several other calls to health clinics in other states resulted in a wait of 6-8 weeks or required the patient to become a primary care patient with a waiting period of 30 days to see a doctor. Long waits could increase the likelihood in a lapse of birth control, increasing the risk of unplanned pregnancy. To a patient is looking for STI screening, a wait of 6-12 weeks could complicate treatment and further spread disease. If Planned Parenthood clinics close, those already long wait times could become even longer, keeping women and their families from getting the care they need in a timely fashion. Community health clinics can simply not handle the demand alone.



PLANNED PARENTHOOD PROVIDES MORE CONTRACEPTIVE OPTIONS FOR WOMEN

Planned Parenthood offers more contraceptive options for women, making it easier for women to find a long-acting contraceptives like IUDs and implants and enables women to receive these options on the day they enter. Planned Parenthood clinics are especially important because they serve more contraceptive clients than other clinics. According to Guttmacher, "two thirds of Planned Parenthood clinics see at least 50 contraceptive clients per week, compared with only one-quarter of health department sites and fewer than one-fifth of federally qualified health centers."

PLANNED PARENTHOOD PROVIDES MORE CONTRACEPTIVE OPTIONS FOR WOMEN

A survey by Health Management Associates found that in Wisconsin, in seven of the fifteen Wisconsin counties in which Planned Parenthood operates, there are simply no real, feasible alternative for family planning services. In four of those other counties in which Planned Parenthood operates, there is only one viable alternative. The study also found that alternatives to Planned Parenthood often offered only limited hours and didn't even offer some of the most effective contraceptives like IUDs.

As important as community health clinics are, they simply do not have the resources to provide all of the contraceptive services that Planned Parenthood clinics provide.

SOME COMMUNITY HEALTH CLINICS DON'T OFFER WOMEN'S HEALTH SERVICES

Because community health clinics serve a wide variety of needs and patient populations, some of the clinics simply don't offer reproductive health services at all. In fact, some of the community health clinics listed in Indiana are located at high schools and limited to students. **Some health clinics** are actually homeless shelters, food banks, and dentist's offices. Some only handle mental health. While all of these services are incredibly important to a community's health, they can't provide the kind of preventative health services that women and their families in those communities need – family planning, cancer screenings, and STI testing.



**“FOR MANY WOMEN IN AMERICA,
PLANNED PARENTHOOD
IS THE ONLY PLACE
WHERE THEY ARE ABLE TO
GET NEEDED QUALITY CARE”**

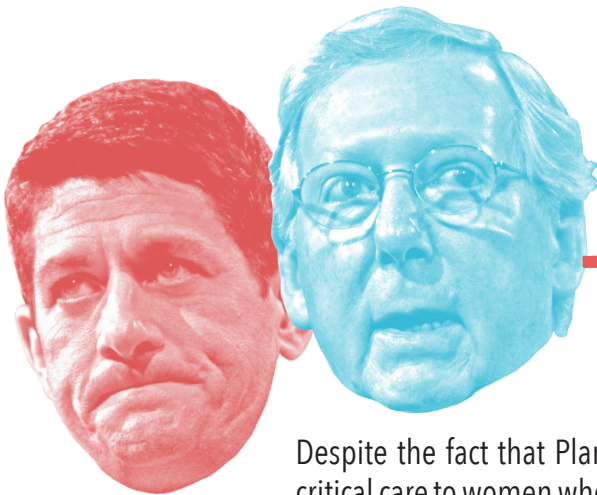
Mark S. DeFrancesco, MD, MBA, FACOG,
Immediate Past President of the American Congress of
Obstetricians and Gynecologists

PLANNED PARENTHOOD SERVES UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Over half the Planned Parenthood health centers are in rural and underserved communities. In **68 percent of counties** with Planned Parenthood clinics (**332 of the 491 counties**), Planned Parenthood provided care for at least half of the women that received contraception through the public safety net. In **21 percent of counties** with a Planned Parenthood health center, Planned Parenthood is the only safety net family planning provider. **Nearly one-third of all women** in need of publicly funded contraceptives live in counties where Planned Parenthood is the primary safety net health care provider. And **more than six in 10 women** who received care at a publicly funded center providing contraceptive services in 2006–2010 considered the center their usual source of medical care. Planned Parenthood serves as an incredibly important source of care for low-income women, families already struggling to make ends meet and people of color.

**“IT IS SIMPLY UNREALISTIC
TO EXPECT OTHER PROVIDERS
TO READILY STEP UP & RESTORE
THE GRAVELY DIMINISHED
CAPACITY OF THE FAMILY
PLANNING SAFETY NET WERE
PLANNED PARENTHOOD DEFUNDED.”**

Guttmacher Institute,
Understanding Planned Parenthood’s Critical Role
in the Nation’s Family Planning Safety Net



THREATS TO PLANNED PARENTHOOD CLINICS

Despite the fact that Planned Parenthood clinics only add to the health of communities, providing critical care to women who often have few other options, Republicans in Congress are set on defunding Planned Parenthood in their upcoming **reconciliation bill**. Speaker Paul Ryan has dismissively claimed that community health clinics could pick up the slack if Planned Parenthood clinics are shuttered, but nothing could be further from the truth. Community health clinics simply cannot “fill the overwhelming hold torn in the safety net” if the Republican Congress defunds Planned Parenthood. Clinics are just not equipped to take over the volume and breadth of services that Planned Parenthood provides. The Republican plan to strip funding for Planned Parenthood would lead to closures of clinics across the country and eliminate options for the critical family planning and preventative care that Planned Parenthood provides.

WHAT HAPPENED WHEN PLANNED PARENTHOOD CLINICS CLOSED?

“PLANNED PARENTHOOD HAS BECOME SO DOMINANT AS A SOURCE OF FAMILY PLANNING THAT IF YOU PULLED IT AWAY, IT WOULD NOT BE SO EASY TO FIND PLACES THAT PROVIDE THOSE SERVICES AS AN ALTERNATIVE.”

Leighton Ku,

a professor in the department of health policy
at George Washington University

We know how the closure of a Planned Parenthood negatively impacts a community because we've seen the effects already. Public health officials who have witnessed Planned Parenthood's absence in their communities have said that the loss of Planned Parenthood have hurt thousands of women. The hardest hit are low-income women, families already struggling to make ends meet and people of color.

In Shawano County, Wisconsin after the Planned Parenthood closed, the local community health clinic was slammed with a deluge of patients, resulting in **significant wait times**. Now, the county is facing outbreaks for STIs like gonorrhea and chlamydia.

In Texas, when targeted legislative cuts shut down Planned Parenthood in Midland, nearby clinics tried to minimize the fallout by sharing medical records, but only about **100 former Planned Parenthood patients** ever showed up at the other clinics. This resulted in a rise in STDs and in unplanned pregnancies in the area.



“SOME OF THEM ARE AT CAPACITY, SOME OF THEM ALSO **DON'T PROVIDE THE FULL RANGE OF SERVICES.”**

said **Alina Salganicoff**, director of women's health policy at the Kaiser Family Foundation, adding that **community health centers often do not provide as full a range of contraceptive services as Planned Parenthood does, including long-lasting methods like intrauterine devices.**



IN 68 PERCENT OF COUNTIES WITH PLANNED PARENTHOOD CLINICS (332 OF THE 491 COUNTIES), PLANNED PARENTHOOD PROVIDED CARE FOR AT LEAST HALF OF THE WOMEN THAT RECEIVED CONTRACEPTION THROUGH THE PUBLIC SAFETY NET

In 2013, cuts to Indiana's public health infrastructure forced the closing of Scott County's Planned Parenthood, leaving the community with nowhere to turn for HIV testing and education. Following the closure, Scott County was faced with an **unprecedented HIV outbreak** in 2015. Governor Mike Pence called the HIV outbreak a "public health disaster" and **declared a public health emergency** in Scott County.

But the problem doesn't end there. Nine other counties in Indiana have now been identified as a risk for an HIV outbreak **by the CDC**. One of the Planned Parenthood health centers that remains is in a neighboring county to Scott County, in Jackson County and is at risk of an HIV outbreak. If Planned Parenthood is defunded, this health center will be a risk for closure and would exacerbate the already dire circumstances.

States like Indiana and Texas simply can't afford to lose another health clinic. While the Republicans in Congress tries to frame their efforts as pro-life, their actions to close down Planned Parenthood clinics do nothing but rip away health care options from women and their families, endangering lives. Planned Parenthood has been a trusted provider for decades, providing care for many generations of women across the country. Closing Planned Parenthood clinics would mean that millions of women, many of whom are young, low-income, immigrants, or uninsured, would lose a trusted source of care, and in some cases the only source of care they have.