



IPHCA™
 Indiana
 Primary Health Care
 Association

Monthly **March 2026**

All the latest news and resources - distributed to IPHCA members



Celebrate together

Marking

National Doctors Day **March 30**

National Dentists Day **March 6**

Dental Assistants Recognition Week **March 1-7**

Highlighting our amazing teams ! See pages 14 - 22

Nominate your

 Navigator of the Year

See page 29



also this month ...



The view
 from the Hill

Our advocates
 in Washington

see page 8

AC26

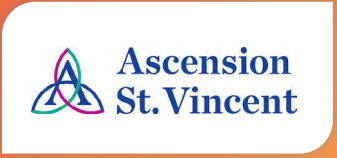


Calling all Speakers!

Share your insights at AC26

plus all conference news **pages 4-5**

Our member organizations





Welcome to the March Issue

Welcome to our March edition. This month we observe **National Nutrition Month**, **Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month**, and **National Kidney Month**, timely reminders that prevention, access, and awareness are essential to building healthier communities.

Nutrition is central to that effort. While medical care is critical, it represents only part of what determines health outcomes. Access to affordable, nutritious food is one of the most significant non-medical drivers of health, influencing rates of heart disease, diabetes, obesity, kidney disease, and colorectal cancer. What people eat, and whether healthy options are accessible, directly shapes long-term health and preventable risk.

In Indiana, the need is urgent. According to Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana, 13.9% of Hoosiers experience food insecurity, with child food insecurity at 18.2%. In Marion County, nearly one in four children faces food insecurity, with similarly high rates in Fayette, Scott, Wayne, and Jennings counties. More than 1 million Hoosiers, about one in seven, are affected. This is the highest level in nearly a decade, and rates are rising across all 92 counties. Many families earn too much to qualify for assistance yet still struggle to afford nutritious food. Others face limited access to full-service grocery stores or lack practical knowledge about making healthy, realistic food choices. Too often, individuals are forced to choose between food, medication, housing, and utilities.

As healthcare and community leaders, we must ask: What resources exist in the communities we serve? How are we connecting patients to them? Are we equipping our teams to have practical, actionable conversations about nutrition that patients can understand and implement?

As you read this issue, consider how nutrition can be woven into everyday patient interactions. Even a few simple, consistent messages can reinforce healthier choices and strengthen whole-person care.

Thank you for all you do to advance the health and well-being of Hoosiers across our state.

Sean

Sean Herbold, IPHCA CFO [Contact Sean](#)

IPHCA Monthly March 2026

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>>> [Clickable links](#) are provided throughout this newsletter - please notify us of any missing or incorrect links.

Any comments or suggestions please contact [Sean Herbold](#), IPHCA CFO.

If you have not done so already, [please follow us on Facebook!](#)



Also [visit our website](#) to find links to [previous issues](#), an [events calendar](#), our [resource center](#) and more!

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John Fordham Design



Leading the Way:

Advancing the Future of High-Quality Primary Care



Save the date for AC26!

IPHCA Annual Conference 2026 will take place on **October 5 & 6**, at the Horizon Convention Center, in Muncie, IN.



Our theme this year is: **Leading the Way:**
Advancing the Future of High-Quality Primary Care

Find all details at our Conference pages here

You can **register** to attend, or be a **sponsor** or **exhibitor** using the buttons below.



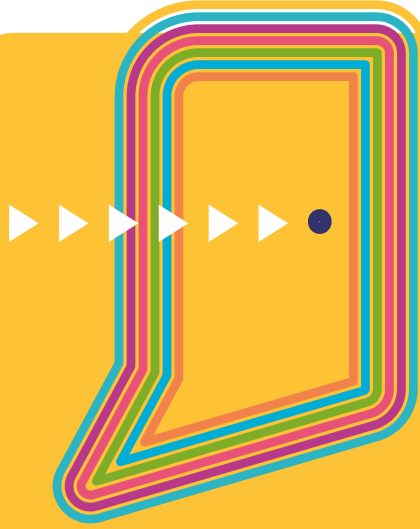
Register



Sponsor



Exhibit



All roads lead to Muncie in October!

Join us for AC26 on the 5th and 6th of October for our Annual Conference at the **Horizon Convention Center**, Muncie!

Our Conference hotel is the recently **Courtyard Marriott**, right adjacent to the Horizon Center, and within walking distance of shops and restaurants.



AC26 Speaker Call

Share your knowledge and expertise at **IPHCA Annual Conference 2026**

Our conference brings together professionals across Indiana who are passionate about “Leading the Way: Advancing the Future of High-Quality Primary Care.”

We welcome your expertise in clinical integration, behavioral health, value-based drivers of health, clinical operations, workforce development, policy, or other areas that advance primary care.

We encourage you to share your knowledge and help shape the future of community health in Indiana.

>>> Click here to find out more

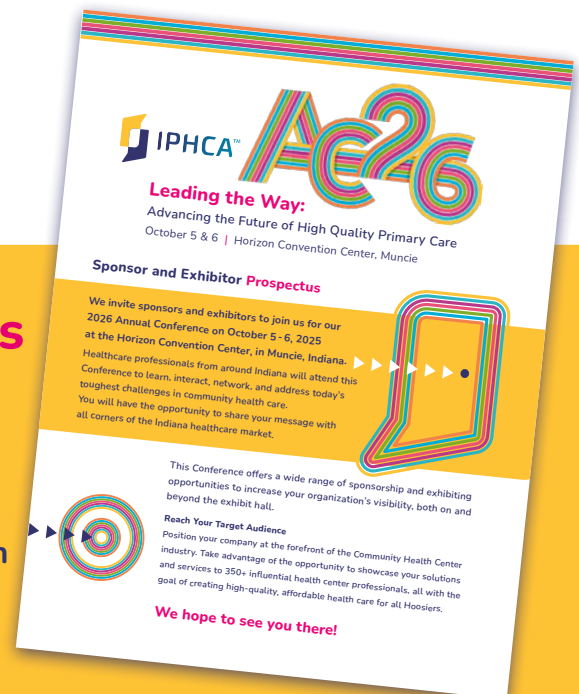


>>> Start your Speaker proposal here

Sponsor and Exhibitor Prospectus

Healthcare professionals from around Indiana will attend this Conference to learn, interact, network, and address today's toughest challenges in community health care. You will have the opportunity to share your message with all corners of the Indiana healthcare market.

Find out what our conference offers sponsors and exhibitors - **download our prospectus today!**



A clearer vision



Marc Hackett, Chief Executive Officer,
Jane Pauley Community Health Centers

Launching Optometry services at Jane Pauley



with Marc Hackett, CEO, Jane Pauley Community Health Centers

At the **Jane Pauley Community Health Center**, making high-quality, affordable healthcare accessible to our patients is always our top priority. We are proud to continue expanding our services to better meet the needs of the communities we serve. With that commitment in mind, we are excited to announce the addition of a brand-new service line to our care offerings.

In addition to our existing services, including **Primary Care, Women's Health, Pediatrics, Behavioral Health**, and **Dental**, we are now adding **Optometry** services. This new service line will initially launch at our **Arlington Avenue location**, with first appointments anticipated by the end of February.

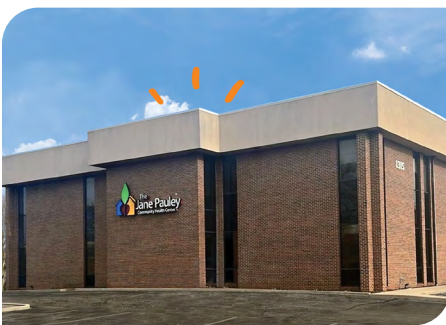
Our new optometrist, **Dr. Anna Slemp**, has already joined the Jane Pauley team and is actively preparing to welcome patients. Optometry services will include comprehensive eye exams for both adults and children, as well as an on-site glasses display that allows patients to conveniently select and order eyeglasses during their visit.

The addition of optometry services will be especially impactful for our patients living with diabetes, as routine eye exams are a critical part of managing the condition and identifying potential vision-related complications early. By integrating vision care into our comprehensive approach, we are further strengthening our ability to support patients' long-term health and well-being, all in one trusted location.

We are looking ahead to even more progress in 2026, including plans to launch new pharmacy locations and open a new whole-health facility in our network. Another exciting development already



Dr. Anna Slemp, Optometrist at
Jane Pauley Community Health Centers



Arlington Avenue location

of the future

Celebrating with Jane Pauley's
Dr. Brendon Smith at the IBJ Awards

Caring for CKM patients



underway is the start of our partnership with the American Heart Association as a **CKM Health Groundbreaker**. This designation reflects our commitment to advancing care for patients with Cardiovascular-Kidney-Metabolic (CKM) Syndrome and supporting improved health outcomes for this population. We are proud to join the American Heart Association in this important work, and to be the first health center in the state to participate in this innovative program. We have also been making huge strides in expanding our Behavioral Health services. In recognition of this outstanding work, our Executive Director of Integrated Behavioral Health Services, **Dr. Brendon Smith**, received the **Indianapolis Business Journal's Excellence in Healthcare** award for Mental Health Advocacy. We are proud of the work Dr. Smith and the rest of the Behavioral Health leadership team have done to increase access to these services for our patients.

Optometry is a crucial service line for our patient populations living with chronic illness, especially diabetes. We know that in addition to pharmacy services we offer, our diabetic patients need regular eye care. Our goal is to be a medical home for patients, providing as many services as possible in one building. **We are grateful to care for the people of Central Indiana!**



American
Heart
Association®



**Jane Pauley
Community
Health Center**

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Indianapolis, IN 46229**

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janepauleychc.org/

IPHCA™ Policy & Advocacy

NEWS & UPDATES



To give feedback or provide resources for this section please contact **Julia Ketner MPA** or call: 317.630.0845

Julia Ketner is currently on maternity leave (congratulations Julia!).

If you have any Policy questions **please use our contact form** and we will get back to you asap.



>>> **Visit our Policy and Advocacy pages**



A day of advocacy in the Capitol

Representatives of IPHCA and our member CHCs including TCA Health made the trip to Washington in February for the annual NACHC Hill Day P&I Forum. The teams visited the Capitol building to meet with Indiana Senator Todd Young and Representative Frank Mrvan - among others - to discuss vital issues facing the community health system.



Left: Hoosier Huddle with Sen. Todd Young



Making the day count!



Dr. Manoj Mathew (TCA Health) with Sen. Todd Young



TCA Health with Rep. Mrvan



Above: Gladys Montemayor (TCA Health), Dr. Manoj Mathew (TCA Health), Ben Harvey (IPHCA CEO), and Veronica Clarke (TCA Health CEO)



TCA Health, HealthLinc, and Heart City Health Center with Rep. Mrvan



Left: Dr. Manoj Mathew (TCA Health) with Todd Young Aide

Stay up to date with all NACHC Fly-in Days and Policy papers - [Click here!](#)



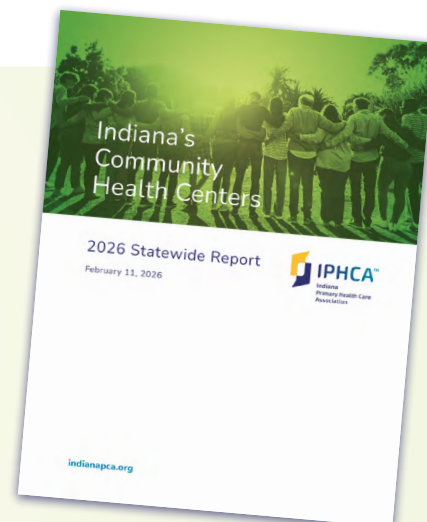
New IPHCA Hill Day brochure

The 2026 IPHCA Hill Day booklet serves as a comprehensive resource highlighting the impact and importance of Indiana's Community Health Centers (CHCs).

This packet includes an overview of CHCs, their role in providing affordable and accessible healthcare to underserved communities, and key statistics on patient demographics, services offered, and economic contributions.

>>> [Click here to view online flipbook](#)

>>> [Click here for all Policy and Advocacy resources](#)





RESOURCE BULLETIN



To give feedback or provide resources for this section please contact **Nicole Stilianos** or call: 317.630.0845



Be the Energy Driving a Cure — Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month



Colorectal cancer is the deadliest cancer for adults under age 50 and the second deadliest overall. This March, during **National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month**, we join the call to say “Enough” and support urgent action to expand prevention, increase screening, and push for innovation that meets the scale of this disease.

Indiana’s Community Health Centers (CHCs) are frontline partners in this effort. Colorectal cancer is highly preventable with early screening, yet many eligible patients remain unscreened. CHCs are uniquely positioned to educate patients, reduce barriers, and provide access to evidence-based screening—such as FIT/FOBT tests and colonoscopies—especially for those age 45 and older.

To support your work this month, consider using these resources:

Colorectal Cancer Awareness & Toolkits (Media, Social, Print)

- **March CRC Awareness Month Communications Kit** – ready-to-use messaging, facts, and social media templates for awareness campaigns:

Free Awareness Brochures & Print Materials

- **Free Colorectal Cancer Brochures** available to order or share in your community and waiting rooms (includes patient awareness and support materials):

Social Media & Outreach Content

- **Ready-to-share social posts and tips** to spread awareness and encourage screening:

Provider & Clinical Resources

- **Colorectal Cancer Alliance Provider Resources** – guidance, materials for clinics, and

ways to partner to reduce colorectal cancer incidence:

CDC Screen for Life Resources

- **CDC Colorectal Cancer Communication Resources** – print materials, posters, fact sheets, and social media images that can be downloaded and used freely:

Alternative Educational Materials

- **CRC Community Education Toolkit (ACG)** – patient-focused flyers, infographics, and social media banners promoting screening and awareness:

By promoting awareness, sharing resources, and actively encouraging screening, Indiana CHCs can help save lives and move closer to a future without colorectal cancer. Early detection matters; getting screened can prevent cancer or catch it at its most treatable stage.

March is ...

National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Every March, communities across the United States come together to observe **Developmental Disability Awareness Month**, a dedicated time to raise awareness, promote quality care, and celebrate the unique strengths and contributions of individuals with developmental disabilities.

This observance provides an opportunity for advocacy, education, and action to foster understanding and acceptance. According to the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC), developmental disabilities encompass a broad range of conditions that result from impairments in physical, learning, language, or behavioral functions. These conditions typically become noticeable during early childhood and may begin before, during, or after birth. The spectrum of developmental disabilities is diverse, with varying degrees of severity, often affecting individuals' abilities to engage in daily activities and maintain lifelong functioning.

Recent statistics from the CDC underline the critical need for early diagnosis and intervention. Approximately 1 in 6 children in the United States aged 3 to 17, are diagnosed with one or more developmental disabilities.



This group includes a wide variety of conditions, such as autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), hearing loss, and learning disabilities. These conditions can have profound impacts on children's social interactions, educational experiences, and overall quality of life.

Developmental Disability Awareness Month serves to highlight not only the challenges that individuals with disabilities and their families face but also the necessity of early diagnosis to enhance quality of life. Access to early intervention services, tailored educational support, adequate healthcare, and community resources can profoundly influence the long-term outcomes for these individuals. Early detection and intervention are key to helping children reach their full potential.

[>>> Read more here](#)



[>>> Read more here](#)

March 3 is World Birth Defects Day,

Each year on March 3, we observe **World Birth Defects Day**, a time dedicated to increasing awareness of birth defects and strengthening support for the individuals and families affected by them.

Birth defects, also referred to as congenital anomalies, congenital disorders, or congenital conditions, include a wide range of structural or functional problems that occur during fetal development. These conditions can affect any part of the body and often have lifelong impacts on health, development, and quality of life.



To give feedback or
provide resources for this
section please contact

Alexis Stewart
or call: 317.630.0845

National Endometriosis Awareness Month

March is recognized as National Endometriosis Awareness Month, a time dedicated to increasing understanding of a condition that affects more than **11% of American women** between the ages of 15 and 44. Endometriosis occurs when tissue similar to the endometrium, the lining of the uterus, begins to grow outside the uterine cavity. These tissue growths most commonly develop on the ovaries, fallopian tubes, and the pelvic lining, though they can occasionally appear in other areas of the body.



While these growths are non cancerous, they can still lead to **significant health challenges**. Because the tissue behaves similarly to uterine lining, it may thicken, break down, and bleed during the menstrual cycle. However, unlike menstrual blood, this tissue has no way to exit the body. As a result, it can cause swelling, inflammation, and the formation of scar tissue. These changes may contribute to chronic pelvic pain, painful menstrual periods, discomfort during intercourse, and gastrointestinal symptoms. For some, endometriosis is also linked to fertility difficulties.

Diagnosis typically begins with a healthcare provider performing a pelvic exam to check for abnormalities or tenderness. If endometriosis is suspected, additional tools may be used to gather more information. Ultrasound imaging can help visualize pelvic organs, while MRI offers more detailed views of soft tissues. In some cases, a laparoscopy, a minimally invasive surgical procedure, may be recommended. This allows a provider to directly observe the pelvic organs and collect tissue samples if needed. Using these methods together helps ensure an accurate diagnosis and guides the development of an individualized treatment plan.

The **exact cause of endometriosis** is still unclear, though several theories exist, including retrograde menstruation, immune system dysfunction, and genetic factors. Diagnosis can be challenging because symptoms often overlap with other conditions, and

[Click here to browse
Maternal and Child
Health resources](#)

many individuals experience delays in receiving a clear diagnosis. Increased awareness helps promote earlier recognition of symptoms, encourages individuals to seek medical evaluation, and supports ongoing research aimed at improving treatment options.

National Endometriosis Awareness Month is a reminder of the profound impact this condition has on millions of people. Many individuals with endometriosis go on to build families, sometimes naturally, sometimes with medical support. What matters most is that people feel informed, empowered, and supported as they navigate their choices. Through education, advocacy, and open conversation, we can help break down stigma, stand with those affected, and work toward healthier outcomes for generations to come. For additional resources or support, please visit the [Endometriosis Association](#).



March 10 is

National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

Each year on March 10, communities across the United States recognize National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.

Observance is more than a symbolic moment; it is a call to deepen public understanding of HIV/AIDS prevention, encourage regular testing, and advocate for accessible healthcare for those affected. It reminds us that HIV/AIDS is not only a medical condition but a broader public health challenge that continues to shape the lives and well-being of women and girls, demanding sustained community attention and action.

The impact of HIV/AIDS on women in the United States remains significant. Currently, **women make up roughly one in four people living with HIV**, a statistic that underscores the need for education, resources, and support tailored specifically to women's experiences. Although HIV/AIDS affects women of all backgrounds, the burden is not evenly shared, and some communities face far greater risks than others.

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), women accounted for 18% of new HIV diagnoses in 2022 across the United States and its dependent areas. Even more striking is the disproportionate impact on Black and African American women, who represent about 54% of all women living with HIV nationwide. These numbers highlight how race, gender, and health intersect, and they point to the urgent need for targeted strategies that address longstanding imbalances.

As we observe National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, we honor the resilience of those affected and reaffirm our commitment to building a more thorough and supportive future. That future depends on ensuring that prevention tools, treatment options, and community resources are accessible to all. By working together, we can create an environment where every woman and girl has the knowledge, support, and care needed to navigate HIV with dignity and confidence.

[>>> Read more here](#)



[>>> Read more here](#)

Recognising the teams who make our health centers amazing!



Celebrating **National Doctors' Day** in Indiana Community Health Centers

Each year on March 30, National Doctors' Day provides an opportunity to recognize the physicians who dedicate their careers to improving the health and well-being of our communities.

Across Indiana's Community Health Centers (CHCs), doctors serve on the front lines of care, ensuring access to high-quality, patient-centered services for individuals and families regardless of income, insurance status, or background.

From preventive care and chronic disease management to maternal health, behavioral health integration, and oral health collaboration, CHC physicians play a vital role in advancing health equity throughout the state. Their commitment extends beyond clinical care, fostering trust, compassion, and continuity for the patients and communities, both urban and rural, they serve every day.

This National Doctors' Day, IPHCA extends our sincere gratitude to the physicians whose expertise, empathy, and unwavering commitment continue to make healthier communities possible across Indiana.



Dr. Joe Banks MD

Dr. Joe Banks currently serves as the Associate Medical Director for Primary Care at Adult & Child Health. He is a skilled and compassionate physician who is deeply committed to teaching students and collaborating with

Adult & Child's nurse practitioners.

Dr. Banks provides high-quality primary care services to individuals living with complex medical comorbidities that are often complicated by severe mental illness, doing so with both grace and clinical expertise. He consistently goes

above and beyond for his patients, often adjusting his schedule to accommodate individuals who arrive at the clinic in urgent need.

In addition to his clinical work, Dr. Banks plays an integral role in advancing primary care initiatives across the agency, supporting accreditation efforts, ensuring regulatory compliance, and promoting excellence in quality care.

ADULT & CHILD
HEALTH

National Doctors Day **March 30**



Rachael Steinken MD- HealthNet

Dr. Rachael Steinken is board certified in pediatrics and psychiatry and sees patients of all ages in-person and virtually at HealthNet People’s Health & Dental Center and HealthNet Martindale–Brightwood Health Center.

Dr. Steinken’s clinical interests include child and adolescent mental health, with a focus on ADHD, depression, anxiety, eating disorders, trauma, and addiction. She is also passionate about supporting women’s mental health during pregnancy and the postpartum period.

Beyond her clinical work, she also serves as HealthNet Psychiatry Co-Leader. Dr. Steinken works collaboratively with other providers at HealthNet to integrate behavioral health and psychiatric care with primary care for better health outcomes and improved mental health. Dr. Steinken’s leadership is grounded in compassion and empathy to ensure that patients receive the highest quality, patient center care.



In March, Indiana Health Centers, Inc. proudly celebrates National Doctors Day and National Dentist Day—an opportunity to recognize the extraordinary dedication of our IHC physicians and dentists.

Every day, they bring compassion, clinical excellence, and a deep commitment to whole-person care to the patients and communities we serve across Indiana. Your expertise not only improves health outcomes but also builds trust, dignity, and belonging for those who rely on IHC as their patient-centered medical home. We are grateful for your leadership, your teamwork, and the heart you bring to our mission.

For National Doctor’s Day we are higlighting our Medical Leadership team.



**Dr. Addison Haynes,
Chief Medical Officer**



**Dr. Ahmad Soliman,
Lead Pediatrician**



**Dr. Bethany Wait,
Deputy Chief Medical Officer**



Rachel Huffman, MD

Rachel Huffman, MD exemplifies compassionate leadership and an unwavering commitment to patient-centered care. She takes the time to truly understand her patients, building strong relationships grounded in trust and respect. Dr. Huffman

consistently goes above and beyond to ensure access to care, often working through administrative time to accommodate additional patients when needed. Her timely follow-up and attention to detail reinforce continuity and high-quality outcomes.

Beyond direct patient care, Dr. Huffman strengthens the broader healthcare community through education and mentorship. She is passionate about teaching and actively supports those aspiring to enter the medical field, helping cultivate the next generation of providers. Her dedication, accessibility, and commitment to education make a lasting impact on both her patients and the communities she serves.



National
Doctors Day
March 30



**Dr. Megan App -
NorthShore**

Dr. Megan App is a dedicated OB/GYN at NorthShore Health Centers who brings more than two decades of experience to NorthShore's expert women's health team.

Throughout her career, including leadership roles at Stroger Hospital in Cook County and serving at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Dr. App has provided comprehensive care to women from adolescence through menopause. She is known for her thoughtful, patient-centered approach and her ability to guide women through complex health decisions with clarity and compassion.

Beyond clinical care, Dr. App is deeply committed to continually educating the community, using media, outreach, and patient conversations as opportunities to share evidence-based information and empower women to better understand their health through every stage of their life. Her experience, leadership, and passion for education make a lasting impact on patients and families across Northwest Indiana.



Celebrate
together



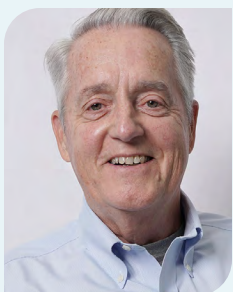
Dr. Hua Luo, Psychiatrist

Dr. Hua Luo serves as a staff psychiatrist at Aspire's Hoak Health Center in Anderson, Ind. He started at Aspire in 2003 and after some time with another organization in 2017, he returned to Aspire in 2023.

He provides dedicated, tireless service to the Aspire clients and community at Aspire's Anderson location. He is always willing to help and support Aspire's newer nurse practitioners (NPs) and is the consummate teammate.

Dr. Luo is a reliable, compassionate psychiatric provider who consistently goes above and beyond, also going onsite to Aspire's group home, continuing to care for Aspire's clients with serious mental illness (SMI).

"I have always enjoyed working with the SMI population, and what I am most proud of is the fact that everyone on my team is caring, dedicated and willing to take an extra step to help out our patients," Dr. Luo says.



**Dr. James Meacham
Medical Director, Addiction
Services**

Dr. James Meacham serves as Aspire's Medical Director of Addiction Services. A well-regarded leader in addictions medicine in Indiana, Dr. Meacham brings a depth of clinical knowledge

and experience that is an incredible asset as Aspire further develops its addictions treatment and recovery services.

Since he began his work at Aspire, Dr. Meacham has brought clinical standardization workflows to the health center embedded within Mockingbird Hill, Aspire's 28-day residential substance abuse disorder (SUD) treatment program, helping ensure the medical treatment and screening needed for populations with SUDs happens consistently.

In addition, Dr. Meacham developed training offerings for all Aspire providers including onboarding training for SUDs medical needs and ongoing case-based discussion groups.



**Dr. Jerry Sheward
Medical Director, Psychiatry**

Dr. Jerry Sheward began his service at Aspire in June of 1990. Since then, he has served in various roles, including Vice President and Chief Medical Officer. He currently serves as Aspire's Medical Director of Psychiatry.

He was tapped by the State of Indiana in 2016 to serve in state leadership as Chief Medical Officer overseeing the state's psychiatric hospitals and leading the integration of the NeuroDiagnostic Institute into the network as well as spearheading the integration of the state hospital's electronic medical record.

Dr. Sheward is truly the kind of leader who will roll up his sleeves to "do the work to get it done."

More recently, Dr. Sheward has been instrumental as the medical leader establishing psychiatric care in Aspire's new Rely Center — a psychiatric urgent care and stabilization center for people experiencing a mental health and/or substance use crisis — as well as launching psychiatry services in Aspire's two new counties, Shelby and Hancock, where Aspire serves as the new Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) provider.

National
Doctors Day
March 30





Neighborhood Health is proud to recognize team members whose leadership, compassion, and commitment to community-based care strengthen our mission and expand access for the patients we serve.



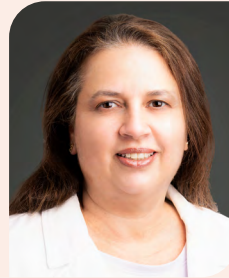
Dr. Amy Dawson, MD
Chief Medical Officer

Dr. Dawson brings over twenty years of experience in healthcare leadership and recently stepped into the role of Chief Medical Officer, where she has already made a meaningful impact.

In her first year as CMO, she has hit the ground running by strengthening clinical alignment, elevating quality standards, and reinforcing a culture centered on access, accountability, and patient centered care.

She has demonstrated decisive leadership, strong collaboration with frontline teams, and a clear vision for expanding our impact across the communities we serve.

We are nominating Dr. Dawson in recognition of the momentum she has created in a short period of time and the strong foundation she is building for the future. We are excited about the work ahead under her leadership and the measurable improvements we are confident will follow.



Dr. Goldy Carbanaru, MD
Pediatrician

Dr. Carbanaru brings over 30 years of experience in pediatric medicine and exemplifies our organization's deep commitment to maternal and child health.

Her decades of service reflect both clinical excellence and unwavering dedication to families in our community. Her work supports our focus on reducing maternal mortality and ensuring children receive comprehensive care during their critical first year of life.

She is committed to helping families not only access care but thrive, working intentionally to ensure every child sees their first birthday and beyond.

Through prevention, education, and relationship centered care, Dr. Carbanaru advances long term wellness for some of our most vulnerable patients and strengthens the health of the next generation.

National Doctors Day **March 30**



Celebrate
together



Dr. Zelahem Amare, Dentist

Dr. Zelahem Amare demonstrates leadership through consistency, compassion, and a clear commitment to long-term service within our organization. He has committed to serving our community for the foreseeable future, providing stability and continuity of care for the patients and families who rely on us.

Dr. Amare builds meaningful, trusting relationships with patients, creating an environment where they feel heard, respected, and comfortable. The appreciation expressed by families reflects the impact of his patient-centered approach.

As we continue strengthening our dental leadership structure, Dr. Amare stands out as a strong future team lead candidate. His dedication to growth, clinical excellence, and sustained service positions him as an emerging leader within our dental program.

National Dentists Day March 6

Celebrating National Dentist Day in Indiana Community Health Centers

By Karla Marin Muskus, IPHCA Oral Health Program Director,

Each year on March 6, we celebrate National Dentist Day, a time to recognize the dedication, expertise, and compassion of dentists who work tirelessly to improve the oral and overall health of our communities.

Across Indiana's Community Health Centers (CHCs), dentists play a vital role in advancing access to quality dental care for individuals and families who might otherwise face significant barriers to treatment.

Dentists serving within Indiana CHCs go beyond clinical care. They are leaders, educators, mentors, and advocates who are deeply committed to improving health equity and expanding access to preventive and restorative oral health services. Their work helps prevent disease, reduce emergency visits, and support whole-person care, recognizing the strong connection between oral health and overall wellness.

IPHCA proudly celebrates and thanks the dentists across our state for their leadership, service, and unwavering commitment to community health. On National Dentist Day, we honor your impact and the countless smiles you help restore and protect throughout Indiana.

Thank you for being champions of oral health and trusted providers in the communities you serve.



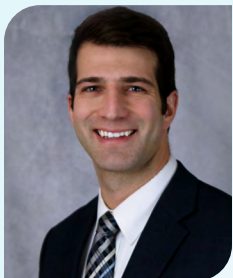
**Dr. Rachael
Gandolph -
HealthNet**



Dr. Rachael Gandolph serves as Executive Director for HealthNet's Dental Service line, in addition to seeing patients at People's Health & Dental Center.

Dr. Gandolph is passionate about serving patients of all ages and backgrounds, specifically medically compromised patients. Her patient-centered approach emphasizes safety, compassion, and accessibility – ensuring that even the most complex cases receive coordinated, high-quality care.

As a leader, Dr. Gandolph fosters a culture of collaboration and continued improvement across all of HealthNet's dental locations. From onboarding new providers, to championing innovative new projects, she is dedicated to the professional growth of dental team members and improving patient outcomes.



**Dr. Isaac Zeckel,
Chief Dental Officer, HealthLinc**

Dr. Isaac Zeckel, MS, DDS, has dedicated more than ten years to improving oral health and broadening access to innovative dental care at HealthLinc, a federally qualified health

center serving communities throughout northern Indiana. His commitment to both patients and the organization earned him a promotion to Chief Dental Officer in 2015. In this role, he leads efforts to integrate dental care into the broader healthcare system, guided by his belief that oral health is essential to overall well-being. Through his leadership, dental and medical providers work more collaboratively to enhance patient outcomes.

A graduate of Indiana University, Dr. Zeckel earned both a Master of Science in Cellular and Integrative Physiology and a Doctor of Dental Surgery. While at IU, he researched new methods to identify and classify dental caries and developed an electronic training program for early caries detection that is still used to educate dental students. His commitment to early intervention and prevention continues to guide his work.

Dr. Zeckel has led groundbreaking initiatives that redefine the



National Dentists Day March 6



**Dr. Jerra Sharp-Williams,
DDS – IHC Deputy Chief
Dental Officer**



role of dental providers in preventive care. Recognizing that human papillomavirus (HPV) is linked to approximately 70% of oropharyngeal cancers, he partnered with the American Cancer Society to pilot a program offering HPV vaccinations during dental visits at HealthLinc's Valparaiso clinic and have since expanded HPV vaccines to all HealthLinc clinics. By reviewing immunization records, educating families and coordinating on-site vaccinations, his team has expanded cancer prevention opportunities for youth ages 11–18. In 2021, he received the American Cancer Society's Coaches vs. Cancer Innovation Award.

Beyond HealthLinc, Dr. Zeckel collaborates with the Indiana Immunization Coalition and the Indiana Cancer Consortium and advocates for legislation allowing dentists to administer immunizations statewide, positioning dental practices as key partners in whole-person preventive care.



Dental Assistants Recognition Week March 1–7

Celebrating Dental Assistants in Indiana Community Health Centers

By Karla Marin Muskus, IPHCA Oral Health Program Director,

Each year, Dental Assistants Recognition Week (March 1–7, 2026) provides an important opportunity to celebrate the dedicated professionals who serve as the backbone of dental teams across Indiana’s Community Health Centers (CHCs). This year’s theme, “**Superheroes Behind the Smiles**,” perfectly reflects the invaluable role dental assistants play in delivering high-quality, patient-centered oral health care.

Across Indiana, dental assistants are often the first welcoming face patients encounter and the steady support behind every successful dental visit. From assisting chairside procedures and managing infection control to educating patients and ensuring clinical efficiency, their versatility and compassion help create safe, comfortable, and positive care experiences, especially for underserved and vulnerable populations served by CHCs.

Dental assistants do far more than support clinical operations; they strengthen care teams, improve patient access, and contribute directly

to better oral health outcomes in our communities. At IPHCA, we proudly recognize and thank dental assistants across the state for their dedication, resilience, and passion for service. Your work truly embodies the spirit of community health, improving lives one smile at a time.

This week, we celebrate Indiana’s dental assistants as the true superheroes behind every healthy smile.



Kiara Herring, Dental Assistant

Kiara Herring exemplifies emerging leadership in community dentistry. She has intentionally advanced her career from Dental Assistant to Preventative EFDA, expanding her clinical skillset and strengthening the care we provide to patients.

Through her work in our Mobile Dental and Comprehensive Care Programs, Kiara increases access to care while building strong, trusting relationships with patients. She creates a welcoming environment that helps patients feel comfortable and supported.

Now serving as an instructor with Accelerated Academy, our onsite dental assistant training program, Kiara is helping develop the next generation of dental professionals.

Her continued growth, mentorship, and commitment to excellence position her as a future leader within our dental team.



Dental Assistants Recognition Week **March 1–7**



Lita Gamez,
Dental Assistant Educator,
HealthLinc

Every morning, before the first patient is seated and before the clinic comes alive with activity, Lita Gamez is already teaching.

Lita joined HealthLinc in June 2021, stepping into a role that would soon become foundational to the organization's Dental Assistant Training Program. As a dental educator, she brings far more than technical instruction into the clinics, she brings patience, structure and a deep commitment to building careers from the ground up.

HealthLinc's Dental Assistant Training Program offers hands-on, on-the-job learning in primary care clinics throughout northern Indiana. With small class sizes and an accelerated four-month timeline, students receive the support they need to gain real-world experience, advance into a high-demand profession and do so debt-free. The program focuses on building competencies, productivity and confidence, values Lita embodies every day.

Since joining HealthLinc, Lita has conducted six dental assistant training cohorts and helped shape the future of the

organization's dental workforce. Today, HealthLinc employs 17 dental assistants, 12 of

whom were trained by Lita, starting with no dental experience and progressing to active staff members with radiograph licenses. She has also helped approximately 23 people obtain their X-ray licenses as part of the dental assistant training and 3 additional people joined the program and were brought up to speed. Each success story represents hours of instruction, mentorship and encouragement.

In 2025, Lita expanded that impact even further by successfully training three dental assistants to become Expanded Function Dental Assistants. All three received their full training at HealthLinc, a testament to the strength of the program she helps lead and refine.

"The program would not be functional without her," says Dr. Isaac Zeckel, HealthLinc's chief dental officer. It's a simple statement that reflects a profound truth.

Through her dedication, Lita is increasing the number of skilled dental assistants within HealthLinc and across the communities it serves, one cohort, one career and one confident graduate at a time.



Many thanks to all our member organisations who participated in this feature!

*If you would like to celebrate your teams in future issues of IPHCA Monthly, please reach out to **Caity Miller**.*

**Happy Doctors Day,
Dentists Day and Dental
Assistants Week!**



Customized benefit solutions for CHCollective members

CHCollective is thrilled to announce a dynamic new offering, the CHCollective Insurance Program, administered by Lockton Affinity.

Through this partnership, community health centers can now access exclusive perks on essential ancillary benefit coverages—including life, disability, accident and critical illness, hospital indemnity, and more—ensuring your employees have the best possible protection and benefits:

- A meaningful discount. Get an average of 10% or more off your current employer-paid benefit rate.
- Matched Terms: Your current coverage terms will be matched or upgraded.
- 4-Year Rate Guarantee: Your rate will be locked in for four years, compared to the two-year industry average—offering stability for your budget and protection from market fluctuations.

See how Lockton Affinity's solutions compare to your current benefits offerings today.

[Explore the solutions](#)



Contact Alex Vactor for more information

avactor@chcollective.com 412.612.0593

chcollective.com



RESOURCE BULLETIN

IPHCA is committed to supporting Oral Healthcare provision across all community health care settings for our membership and throughout Indiana.



For help, to give feedback or provide resources for this section contact:

Karla Marin Muskus
or call: 317.630.0845



World Oral Health Day
20 March

Celebrating World Oral Health Day 2026:

A Lifetime of Healthy Smiles

Each year, **World Oral Health Day**, celebrated on March 20, serves as a global reminder of the importance of caring for our mouths at every stage of life, from infancy through older adulthood. In 2026, the campaign highlights how oral health supports not only our smiles but our overall health, well-being, and quality of life.

Every day, we rely on our mouths to speak, eat, smile, and connect with others. A healthy mouth allows individuals to enjoy everyday moments, sharing meals with family, communicating confidently, and laughing freely with loved ones. Oral health is deeply connected to whole-person health, influencing chronic disease management, nutrition, mental health, and overall wellness.

Across Indiana, Community Health Centers (CHCs) play a critical role in advancing oral health equity by providing preventive, restorative, and educational services to patients of all ages. From early childhood oral health visits to care for older adults, CHC dental teams work collaboratively to ensure that Hoosiers receive accessible, patient-centered care throughout their lives.

The Indiana Primary Health Care Association (IPHCA) encourages health centers to use World Oral Health Day as an opportunity to promote prevention, patient education, and community engagement. By raising awareness and empowering patients with knowledge and resources, we can help make every smile healthier and happier.

Together, let's continue working to ensure that oral health remains an essential part of overall health, today and for generations to come.

Join the FDI World Dental Federation in celebrating World Oral Health Day and explore **their campaign resources, educational materials, and outreach tools to support your community efforts.**

#HAPPYMOUTH 20 MARCH #WOHD26

TOOTHIE THE BEAVER IS BACK

A HAPPY MOUTH IS...
a happy life

A HEALTHY SMILE MAKES EVERY DAY BETTER, AT EVERY AGE.
EAT LESS SUGAR, BRUSH TWICE A DAY WITH FLUORIDE
TOOTH PASTE, GET REGULAR CHECK-UPS.

CELEBRATE A HEALTHIER, HAPPIER LIFE WITH US.

fdi World Oral Health Day 20 March

World Oral Health Day 20 March

World Oral Health Day 20 March

World Oral Health Day 20 March





RESOURCE BULLETIN

Advancing Oral Health Through Dental Sleep Medicine Training

National Sleep Awareness Week – Supporting Whole-Person Care in Indiana Community Health Centers



Sleep Awareness Week® 2026
powered by the National Sleep Foundation

Each March, **National Sleep Awareness Week** highlights the critical role sleep plays in overall health and well-being. Increasingly, dental professionals are becoming essential partners in identifying and managing sleep-related breathing disorders, particularly obstructive sleep apnea (OSA).

Dental Sleep Medicine training equips dentists with the knowledge and clinical skills to screen, treat, and manage patients with sleep-disordered breathing using evidence-based approaches such as oral appliance therapy. Because many signs of sleep apnea are first visible during routine dental visits, dental providers are uniquely positioned to help identify at-risk patients who may otherwise remain undiagnosed.

For Indiana Community Health Centers, expanding dental team expertise in sleep medicine strengthens

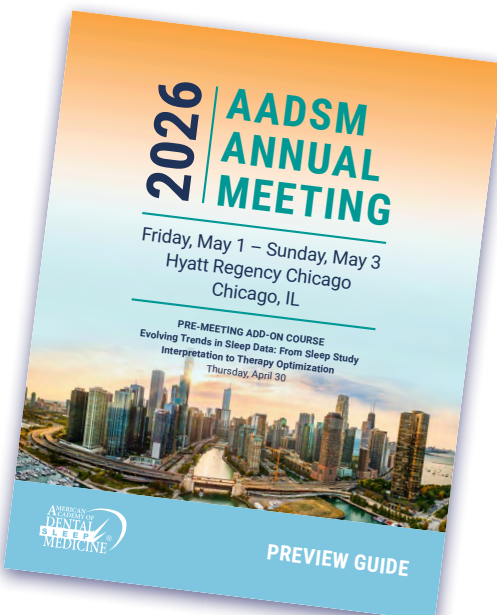
integrated care by improving collaboration between dental, medical, and behavioral health providers. Early identification and treatment of OSA can reduce risks associated with cardiovascular disease, diabetes complications, fatigue-related injuries, and poor quality of life, all conditions disproportionately affecting underserved populations.

The American Academy of Dental Sleep Medicine (AADSM) continues to lead national education efforts supporting dentists in this growing field. Providers interested in expanding their clinical impact are encouraged to explore advanced training opportunities at the **2026 AADSM Annual Meeting**, which offers hands-on education, clinical protocols, and interdisciplinary collaboration focused on dental sleep medicine.

Resources and upcoming training information are available here:

[AADSM 2026 Annual Meeting Information](#)

By investing in dental sleep medicine education, Indiana Community Health Centers can further advance whole-person care, ensuring healthier sleep, healthier smiles, and healthier communities.





Indiana Department of Health Shares Infection Prevention Updates

The [Indiana Department of Health webpage on injection safety](#) has been redesigned.

While transmission of infectious diseases in dental facilities is rare, it does occur. Common infection prevention and control (IPC) lapses identified in dental facilities include unsafe injection practices and improper disinfection and sterilization of dental equipment. The updated IDOH is helpful and strives to keep dental workers and patients safe.

[>>> View the flyer](#)



New Self Paced Courses

Dental Therapy: Examining the Misconceptions and Opportunities

Our newest 60-minute, person-centered self-paced course, “Dental Therapy: Examining the Misconceptions and Opportunities,” examines how dental therapists integrate into collaborative dental teams to provide high-quality, cost-effective care.

The course explores the evolving legislative landscape, the scope of practice for dental therapists, and the role these professionals can play in expanding access to equitable oral health care.

Earn 1 Free ADA CERP credit.

[>>> Find out more here](#)

Caring for Individuals with Disabilities: Practical Considerations for Dental Professionals

“Caring for Individuals with Disabilities: Practical Considerations for Dental Providers,” another course in CareQuest Institute’s growing educational library, explores practical strategies to help dental providers deliver equitable, high-quality care for individuals with disabilities.

Earn 1 Free ADA CERP credit.

[>>> Find out more here](#)

Interaction of Sleep and Emotion in Women

Thursday, March 12, 2026 / 7 pm ET

This webinar explores the complex interaction between sleep and emotional health in women. The webinar will provide a high-level review of how sleep patterns, hormonal influences, stress, and mood regulation intersect across different stages of a woman’s life. Drawing on current evidence, the presentation will highlight key factors that shape sleep–emotion dynamics and discuss clinical considerations for supporting women experiencing sleep-related emotional challenges.

Presented by: Jessica Meers, PhD

Moderated by: Rebecca Metzger, DDS

Expected Duration and CE credit(s): Up to 1.0 hour

[>>> Read more and register here](#)





WEBINARS & TRAINING



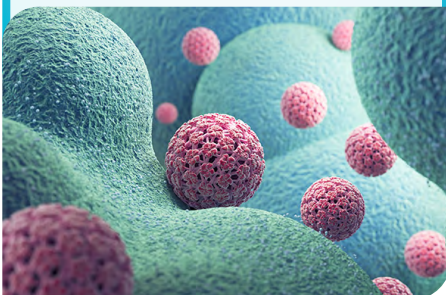
CDE Opportunity:

Shaping Smiles, Preventing Cancer: A Free CE Opportunity for Oral Health Professionals

Join a powerful on-demand learning series designed to empower dental professionals in the fight against HPV-related oropharyngeal cancers. This free ADA-CERP accredited course, brought to you by the American Cancer Society and partners, covers everything from HPV basics to best practices for incorporating HPV vaccinations in your practice.

4.0 CDE is available upon completion.

**>>> Complete survey
here to join the series**



2026 National Learning Series:

Treating More than the Disease:

Whole Person Approaches to Managing Chronic Conditions

March - April 2026

This 4-part webinar series will highlight promising practices that improve the prevention, treatment, and management of chronic conditions among health center patients through case studies on health literacy, co-occurring morbidities, patient experience, and food as medicine. Session materials and objectives will provide practical information and enhance participants' skills.

>>> [More information and registration here](#)

- March 18: **Clear Communication, Better Outcomes: Universal Health Literacy Strategies for Chronic Condition Management**
- March 25: **Nourishment as Wellness: The Importance of Food in Chronic Conditions Management**
- April 1: **Comorbidities: A Journey through Care**
- April 8: **Leveraging Technology to Enhance the Patient Experience**



Webinar Series

Optimizing Dental Hygiene in Health Centers

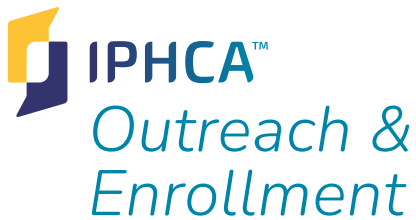


Join us for a three-part FREE webinar series geared towards dental hygienists! The webinars will explore key topics to improve dental hygiene practice in health centers, including leadership, periodontal classifications, and infection prevention and control. *1.0 CDE is available for each webinar.*

All webinars in the series will be held at 2pm ET

More info and Register using the links below:

- Thursday, April 2 /
Dental Hygienists Leading Healthier Communities
>>> [Register Here](#)
- Thursday, April 16 /
Evidence-Based Infection Control in Dental Hygiene Practice
>>> [Register Here](#)
- Thursday, April 30 /
Breakin' Down the 2018 AAP Classification System for EASY Practice Integration
>>> [Register Here](#)



NEWS & UPDATES



For help, to give feedback or provide resources for the O&E section of this newsletter please contact:

Jenny Walden
or call: 317.630.0845



Breakfast, lunch, and snacks are provided, with networking opportunities and continuing education credit!

>>> [Click here for full details and to register](#)

Get your tickets today. Space is limited.

For questions / details please **[contact Jenny Walden](#)**

Navigator Monday 2026 May 11th

The Indiana Primary Health Care Association proudly presents
Our 4th Annual Navigator Monday

Monday May 11, 2026, 8:00 am – 4 pm

**The Founders Lodge at Camp Dellwood,
7201 Girl Scout Lane, Indianapolis**

One of the cornerstones of navigator training in the state of Indiana, Navigator Monday provides the most thorough training for community health center navigators and all those working in the Medicaid arena.

Topics we plan to cover:

- Policy Updates,
- CE Credits*
**pending IDOI approval*
- Motivation Interviewing,
- FSSA Panel
- Networking

FSSA Panel DEADLINE EXTENDED

FSSA will participate in the FSSA panel as part of Navigator Monday. This panel provides a valuable opportunity to submit questions directly to FSSA program directors and gain insight into key programs and initiatives. Even if you are not sure if you can attend, **please submit your questions as all responses will be shared after Navigator Monday.** There is no limit to the number of questions that may be submitted. All questions must be submitted by end of day on March 6, 2026.

[Click here now to complete the survey!](#)

Nominate your Navigator of the Year



Krista French receiving her award from IPHCA's Jenny Walden at Navigator Monday 2025

The Navigator of the Year Award is presented in May every year at our Navigator Monday training day.

IPHCA's Navigator of the Year Award recognizes the person who exemplifies the best skills in patient-centered healthcare navigation.

The award winner will be announced during Navigator Monday, and will also be recognised at our Annual Conference in October.

>>> Get started on your nomination forms now!

Nominations must be received by April 10, 2026.

Krista French of NorthShore Health Centers was our 2025 winner:

"Krista has been a vital part of NorthShore Health Centers, and her impact is felt every day by our patients, community partners, and colleagues. With over a decade of experience, Krista is known for providing clear, compassionate guidance to patients—ensuring they leave feeling confident and supported."

Help get the word out and support your Navigator!

This handy poster includes a QR code so that patients, staff and community can nominate your Navigator.

Great places to post are in patient rooms, navigator office areas, waiting rooms, break rooms, bathroom doors and check in.

You can add your CHC logo if you wish.

Just click the image to view/download (PDF).





Webinar

Immigration Developments and Associated Changes to Healthcare Coverage

March 25th at 11am

Sarah Burrow with Lewis Kappes will discuss recent or upcoming Immigration Policy changes are impacting access to health coverage.

Sarah has spent more than 15 years working in the immigration law field. A passionate litigator, she has defended hundreds of families and individuals in immigration disputes.



[Register here](#)

March Awareness for CHWs

Daylight Saving Time Sunday, March 8

Changing your clocks twice a year disrupts your body's internal biological clock (circadian rhythm), leading to both immediate and long-term health risks. Many experts from organizations like the **American Academy of Sleep Medicine** and the **American Medical Association** advocate for permanent standard time because it aligns better with human biology.

As a Community Health Worker (CHW), your role is to bridge the gap between clinical health data and the everyday lives of your community. Daylight Saving Time (DST) is a unique opportunity to address preventative health and the social determinants of health in a very practical way.

Immediate Health Risks (The “Spring Forward” Effect)

The transition in March is typically the most dangerous because losing an hour of sleep causes a “shock” to the system.

- **Heart Attacks and Strokes:** Studies show a 24% increase in heart attacks on the Monday following the spring shift. Stroke rates also rise by about 8% in the first two days.
- **Fatal Accidents:** Sleep-deprived drivers have slower reaction times, leading to a 6% spike in fatal car crashes during the first week of DST.
- **Mental Health:** The shift can trigger mood disturbances, including increased rates of depression, anxiety, and even suicide in the weeks following the change.

Long-Term Health Consequences

Living under DST for eight months a year causes a chronic “mismatch” between your internal clock and the sun.

- **Chronic Sleep Deprivation:** Extra evening light delays the brain's release of melatonin, making it harder to fall asleep at a healthy time.
- **Metabolic Issues:** Circadian misalignment is linked to higher rates of obesity, diabetes, and slowed metabolism.
- **Cognitive Decline:** Long-term sleep issues are associated with memory loss, difficulty focusing, and a higher risk of cognitive decline in older adults.

Vulnerable Groups

- **Teenagers:** Puberty naturally shifts melatonin release later, so teenagers are particularly prone to sleep deprivation when forced to wake up in the dark for early school starts.



- **Western Edge Residents:** People living on the western edge of a time zone (where sunset is latest) have higher rates of cancer, obesity, and heart disease compared to those on the eastern edge.
- **Dementia Patients:** Clock changes can worsen “sundowning” symptoms, increasing confusion and agitation in the evenings.
- **Chronic Disease Management:** Since DST triggers a 24% spike in heart attacks and an 8% increase in strokes, use the week before the time change to check in on clients with hypertension or heart disease.
- **Low-Income & Shift Workers:** Many of your clients may work irregular hours. The time shift can exacerbate sleep debt, leading to higher rates of workplace injuries. You can provide tips on “circadian hygiene” specifically for those who can’t easily change their schedules.
- **Elderly & Memory Care:** The change can worsen “sundowning” in dementia patients. You can educate caregivers on using morning light exposure and consistent routines to stabilize their loved ones.

Tips to Minimize the Impact

To help your body adjust, the [Mayo Clinic](#) and other experts recommend:

1. **Gradual Shifting:** Move your bedtime and wake time 15–20 minutes earlier each night starting three days before the change.
2. **Morning Light:** Get at least 15 minutes of sunlight immediately after waking up to reset your internal clock.
3. **Limit Stimulants:** Avoid caffeine after 2:00 PM and reduce alcohol intake, as both disrupt sleep quality.
4. **Evening Wind-Down:** Avoid blue light from screens (phones/tablets) at least one hour before bed to allow melatonin production.

Don't miss:

Outreach and Enrollment Peer Calls

This is a bi-weekly call that includes Navigators, SHIP Counselors, CHW and Certified Application Counselors who share best practices.

March dates:

March 5 / 11am - 12 pm

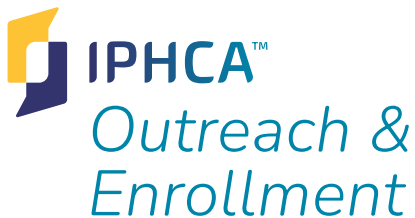
March 19 / 11am - 12pm

Thank you for these comments - we really appreciate them!

“Greatly appreciate these outreach meetings. They allow me to build my network and resources to better serve our clients.”

“It is informative for me to talk to our staff about patient challenges, as I am more aware of what they are talking about and can see what, if anything, our organization is doing to help our patients.”

“Jenny does a GREAT job with our meetings. She is very knowledgeable and a great resource! If she does not know the answer right away she will look into and get back with an answer. We all appreciate her very very much!”



NEWS & UPDATES

Medicaid Enrollments

Indiana Medicaid
Enrollments down 35,278
from December 2025 to
January 2026

[Click here to view FSSA's
Enrollment Dashboard](#)

New Presumptive Eligibility Training Guide and Video available

Certain Indiana Health Coverage Programs (IHCP) specialties are eligible to enroll as qualified providers (QPs) for Presumptive Eligibility (PE) or Presumptive Eligibility for Pregnant Women (PEPW). To find out if you are eligible to be a QP, see the Presumptive Eligibility page.

[View this training video from FSSA on Presumptive Eligibility](#)

SNAP Work Requirements

Effective Jan 12, 2026

Some individuals who were not previously subject to the work requirements are now subject. Notices went out to those who were impacted-ABAWD (Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents)

Below is a table that explains the changes that are in place because of the HR 1 changes. Exemptions from work registration can be found in the [online policy manual for SNAP and TANF at 2438.15.00](#)

What it was	What changed
An ABAWD was someone 18-54 and not exempt from general work requirements	An ABAWD is someone 18- 64 and not exempt from general work requirements <i>except for 60 and older.</i>
Excepted from ABAWD rules if a child under 18 was in the assistance group	Excepted from ABAWD rules if <i>responsible for the care of a child under 14</i> in the AG
Excepted from ABAWD rules if homeless; veteran; under 25 and aged out of foster care	These exceptions have been eliminated
-----	Excepted from ABAWD rules if verified as <i>Indian; Urban Indian; California Indian</i> according to the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA)
Excepted from ABAWD rules if physically or mentally unfit for work. This allowed for a state eligibility staff person to make a determination based upon observation.	Must provide <i>medical verification</i> of mental or physical unfitness for work.

Share your success!



IPHCA would love to highlight the amazing things your center is doing.

If you have something you would love to share with us,

[... please click here and complete the form.](#)

Story Telling

Stories are vital in healthcare because they foster empathy and trust, improve communication and understanding, and empower both patients and providers.

By sharing personal experiences, patients feel heard and can lead to more personalized care, while healthcare providers gain deeper insights into their patients' lives beyond medical data, leading to better treatment plans and increased well-being for all involved.

If you would like to share a story, please [complete the form here](#)



Alita Yoder, Director of Operations at Maple City Health Care Center

VBC Strategic Pillar

Well Child Visits with Maple City Health Care Center

Maple City was identified as a high performer for the HEDIS measure “Well Child Visits in the First 30 Months of Life (W30A). Below is their explanation of success.

“Well child visits in the first 15 months of a child’s life are vital for their development and health. Not only that, these well visits are key opportunities to provide education for parents, crucial vaccination for the child, and foster a relationship between the primary care provider (PCP), the parent, and the child.

At Maple City Health Care Center (MCHCC), the relationship aspect of care is one of the keys to success of our well visits. Whenever possible, we pair the child with the same PCP as the parent(s) and the rest of the family, which means the healthcare they receive is built on an already established and trusting relationship. We have seen time and again that when trusted relationships are core to patient care, patients are more likely to seek and receive the care they need.

Along with foundational relationships, we do everything we can to ensure children are coming to the office for their well visits. This starts immediately after birth when our OB Nurses follow up with families when newborns miss their initial visits. Providing OB services to patients is another way that we can ensure children are getting their well visits, since we are seeing parents before the birth of their child, providing consistency in care that again builds trust and relationships with patients.

We also schedule the next well visit at check out whenever the parent is agreeable. After that appointment is scheduled, we send reminders out to the patients 2 weeks, 3 days, and 1 day in advance of their appointment. And, when appointments are missed and care is overdue, we have a robust recall system which involves running reports ever 3 weeks on overdue well visits. Any overdue patients identified get reminder text messages to call and schedule an appointment.

Finally, each day during our team huddle, care gaps for patients coming into the office that day are reviewed, and the team follows up with and offers the needed care to the patient who is in the office whenever it is possible. While relationships remain foundational for the success of well visits for children under 15 months at MCHCC, it is truly the combination of an interdisciplinary team working together to ensure our youngest patients get the care they need.”

Upcoming 2026 VBC Learning Series Events:

- **Friday, April 24 / Noon**
PCMH Concept “Care Coordination and Care Transitions”
- **Friday, June 26 / Noon**
PCMH Concept “Knowing and Managing Your Patients”

>>> [Bookmark our Events Calendar here](#)



Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

AI Streamlines Colon Cancer Screening and Reduces Physician Burden



RESOURCE BULLETIN

IQIN is a constituent network of community health centers within IPHCA, who work together to improve the quality and value of care provided to Indiana’s most vulnerable residents.

By using health information technology and data, health centers are able to change the way they deliver care to produce better health outcomes for their patients.

Learn how Sanford Health from South Dakota is using artificial intelligence to tackle rising colorectal cancer screening demands following new USPSTF guidelines. By developing AI driven risk scores and piloting an ambient listening tool, the system has improved screening efficiency, reduced an 18 month colonoscopy backlog, and significantly eased physicians’ cognitive workload—all while enhancing patient experience.

[>>> Read more here](#)



For further help or to give feedback or provide resources for IQIN please contact:

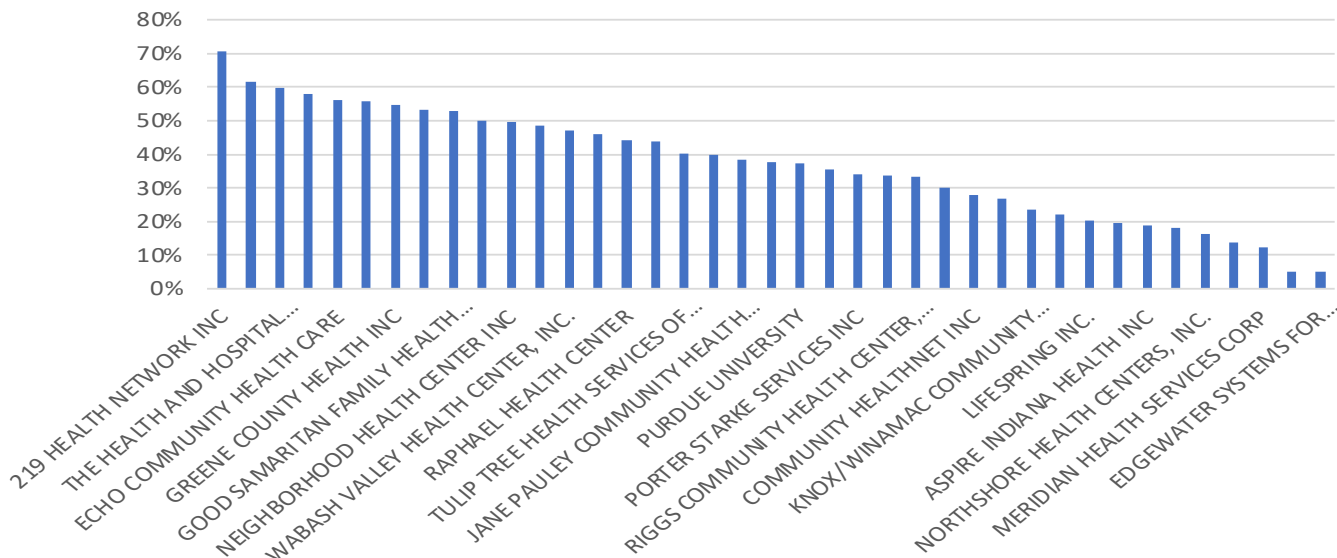
Laura Totten
or call: 317.630.0845

UDS Data Spotlights: Each month, IQIN will highlight metrics from the recently released UDS 2024 data. In honor of Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, we are highlighting data on Colorectal Cancer Screenings.

[Click to view data.](#) See the full dashboard [here](#).



Colorectal Cancer Screening (UDS 2024)



Context: This graph shows the percentage of eligible patients who were seen in 2024 and received a colorectal cancer screening. The denominator includes patients 45-74 who had a medical visit during 2024. The numerator includes patients with one or more appropriate colorectal cancer screenings as defined by the following criteria: 1) FOBT during 2024, 2) FIT-DNA between 2022-2024, 3) flexible sigmoidoscopy between 2018-2024, 4) CT colonography between 2020-2024, or 5) colonoscopy between 2015-2024. Patients with a diagnosis of colorectal cancer or previous total colectomy were excluded. In addition, patients who were in hospice, 66 years old or older who were in living in an institution for more than 90 days, and patients 66 years old or older with advanced frailty were also excluded.

To view more UDS data at the center level, [visit the PowerBI Dashboard](#)



RESOURCE BULLETIN

About the HRSA-Required Spring 2026 IQIN/HCCN Survey & April Engagement Calls

As we step into spring, the IQIN team has been busy preparing the HRSA required Spring 2026 IQIN/HCCN Survey and finalizing the structure for next month's Engagement Calls. We appreciate your ongoing partnership and are looking forward to meeting with each of you in April.

The survey—originally sent out on January 30, 2026—asks Health Centers to provide an update on progress toward the FY25–28 IQIN/HCCN objectives for the period August 1, 2025 – January 31, 2026.

Your feedback is essential for helping us understand what's working well, where additional support may be needed, and how we can strengthen our collaboration moving forward.



To make completion easier this cycle, we've streamlined the process:

- All numerator/denominator items have been removed, greatly reducing reporting burden
- Estimated completion time is now 20–30 minutes
- A Reference Tool is included with your previous responses plus descriptions, examples, and guidance for each objective component

If your Health Center has not yet submitted the survey, this serves as a friendly reminder to complete it as soon as possible, even though the deadline has passed.

Scheduling Your April Engagement Call

At the start of the survey, you will be asked to select your preferred dates and times for your April Engagement Call. Please choose at least four options so we can accommodate scheduling on a first come, first served basis.

These conversations are an important opportunity to review progress, identify support needs, and align next steps—and we're looking forward to meeting with each of you next month.

For Health Centers Participating in the CINI

If your organization participates in the Clinically Integrated Network (CINI):

- We will review your CINI performance and Get Great Plans as part of the HEDIS Performance Workgroup during your Engagement Call
- Your HEDIS representative should plan to attend
- To streamline scheduling, we recommend coordinating with your HEDIS representative before selecting your call times

Thank you for your continued engagement and partnership. If you need support with the survey or have questions about the upcoming Engagement Calls, the IQIN team is here to help - please contact [Laura Medows](#).



Indiana Quality Improvement Network

RESOURCE BULLETIN



[Click to see all upcoming IQIN Events in our Calendar](#)

Wellness and health promotion

Defining Best Practices in Wellness and Digital Patient Engagement:



This month's feature explores how the health care industry is redefining best practices in wellness and digital patient engagement. As wellness and health promotion become central to care delivery, NCQA convened a diverse working group—spanning payers, employers, vendors, clinicians, and patients—to examine how organizations can more effectively support individuals in managing their health.

The article highlights the growing need for evidence based digital wellness tools, the challenges of data lag and measurement, and the importance of keeping human connection at the heart of engagement strategies. Early insights from the group emphasize simplicity, personalization, responsible use of AI, and a stronger focus on behavior change over technology metrics. With wellness seen as a continuum rather than a fixed state, the work aims to create a shared vision for high quality programs that empower people to make meaningful, lasting improvements in their well being.

[Read the full article here](#)



Telehealth - Emergency Preparedness Basics

This toolkit provides an overview of emergency preparedness and the vital role telehealth plays before, during, and after crises. It explains the basics of preparedness planning, highlights unique challenges faced by rural communities, and reflects on lessons learned from COVID 19—including the rise of telehealth as a tool for continuity of care, remote triage, and public health surveillance. The piece also underscores both the potential and limitations of telehealth in disaster response, offering a forward looking perspective on how technology can strengthen community resilience in future emergencies.

[>>> Access the full toolkit here](#)



The KLAS Corner

Register using your community health center's provided email address, and you will have access to all the resources KLAS provides.

[>>> Click here for more](#)



KLAS Arch Collaborative Physician Guidebook 2025

The 2025 Arch Collaborative Physician Guidebook highlights insights from more than 35,000 physicians who shared their EHR experiences through the KLAS Arch Collaborative between 2022 and April 2025. Drawing from this extensive feedback, the guidebook outlines proven best practices that healthcare organizations can use to improve physician satisfaction with their EHR systems. It explores the connection between EHR usability and physician burnout, offers strategies for strengthening EHR infrastructure, training, governance, and personalization, and demonstrates how these improvements support physician well being. Designed for organizations of all sizes and EHR platforms, this resource serves as a roadmap for creating a more efficient, supportive, and satisfying EHR experience.

[>>> Read more here](#)



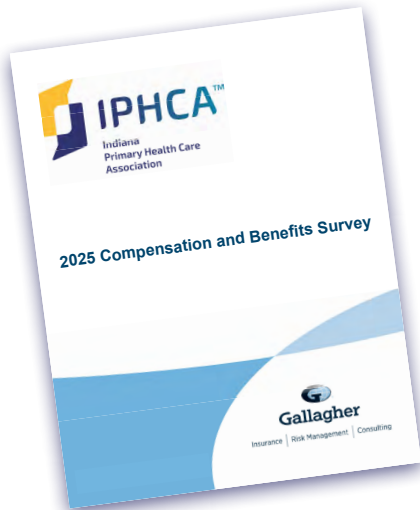
Building a Culture of Engagement, Governance & Excellence Through Shared Ownership 2025

This Case Study: **Building a Culture of Engagement, Governance & Excellence Through Shared Ownership** highlights how **UTHealth Houston** transformed its clinician experience by building a culture rooted in engagement, shared governance, and organizational excellence. After receiving low Arch Collaborative scores in 2019, the academic institution—which supports more than 2,000 providers across 100 locations—undertook a rapid improvement journey. Following its 2021 Epic implementation, UTHealth Houston achieved significant gains in user satisfaction by strengthening physician involvement, establishing clear governance structures, and fostering transparent, actionable communication.

While the initiative took place in a large hospital setting, the strategies offer valuable lessons for any organization seeking to help providers navigate shared governance—especially in developing strong ownership, alignment, and collaboration across teams. The story demonstrates how deliberate engagement and clinician partnership can elevate both the provider and patient experience.

[>>> Read the full case study:](#)





New resource

Compensation and Benefits Survey Report

Our February Workforce Call featured Thomas Cummins from Gallagher, who presented the final 2025 Compensation and Benefits Report along with current labor market trends.

You can find his presentation here: *(click image right).*

The full 2025 Compensation and Benefits Survey was distributed following the call and is **available in our resource center here.**

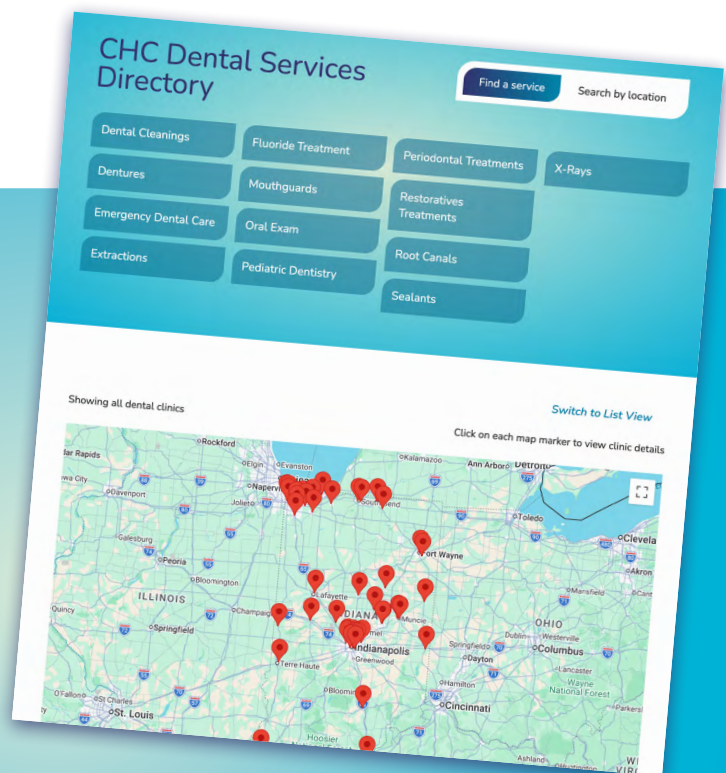
(The surveys from 2018 and 2022 are available at the same link.)

If you have any questions, or if you would like to request the recording of the call, please contact **Natalie Morrison.**



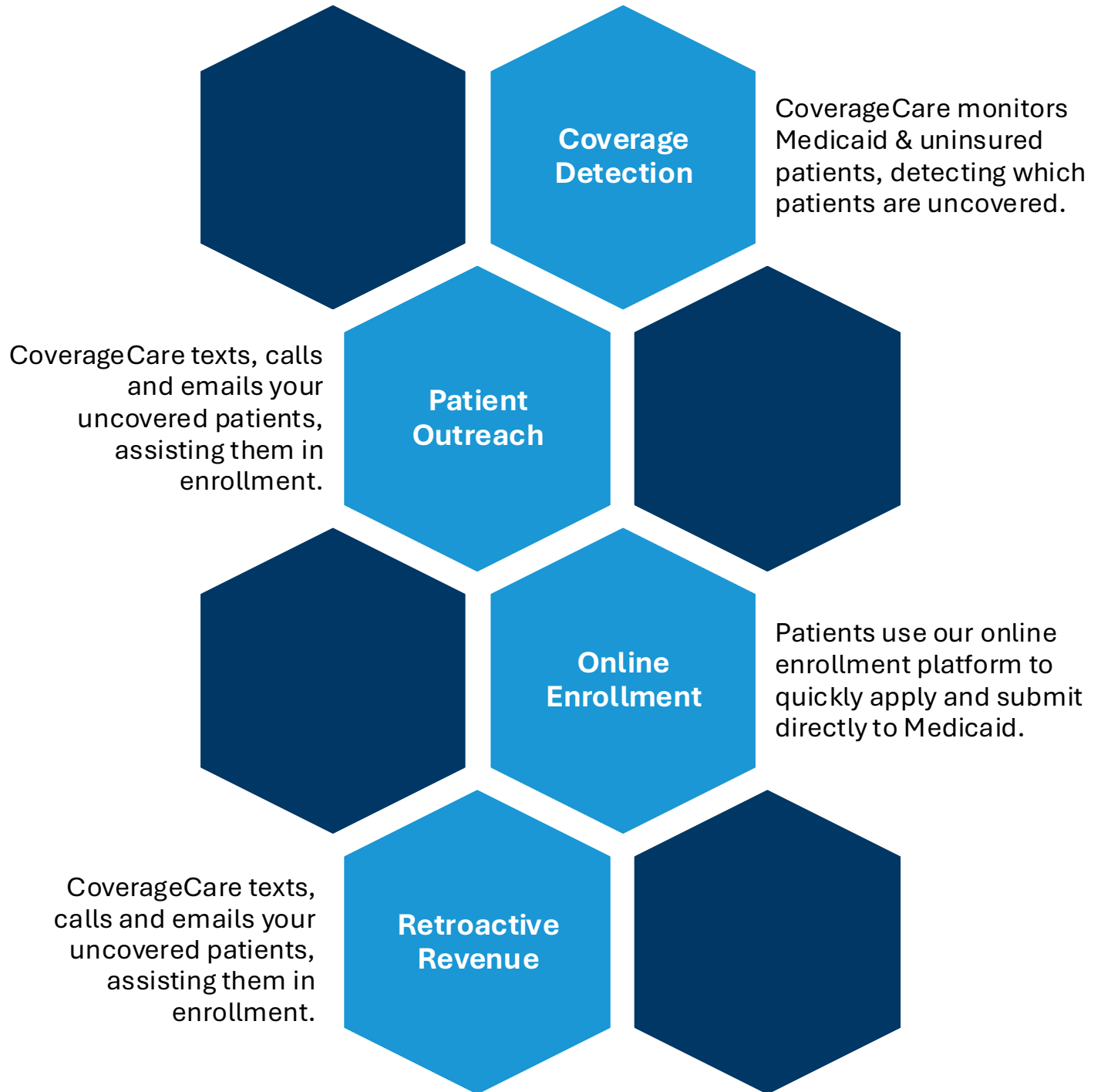
Don't forget to try out our CHC Dental Services Directory - giving you, your colleagues and patients a fast easy way to search for oral health services across Indiana, by location, by service or by CHC.

If your center has Oral Health services not shown in our directory please **contact Karla Marin** to provide updates.



Click the image to get searching!

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