

NETWORK NEWS

Summer 2026

APP Training Needs on the Rise

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Muskingum Valley Health Centers, Zanesville, Ohio



Over the past year, I've noticed something shifting in the way new NPs and PAs arrive in primary care. They are bright, motivated, and deeply committed to community health, but they're also stepping into practice with less hands on experience than we used to see — especially in pediatrics. Some of this seems tied to the COVID era disruptions that limited clinical rotations, and some comes from the changing pathways people take into NP and PA programs. Whatever the reason, it's clear that new graduates often need more structured support during their first year than they might have needed a decade ago.

At the same time, most of the formal training dollars — especially Teaching Health Center funding — still center on physicians and dentists. That leaves advanced practice providers in an odd spot: they're essential to the primary care workforce, but they don't always have access to the kind of fellowship style training that would help them feel confident and supported early on. Even when they qualify for loan repayment, that doesn't replace the value of guided clinical time, mentorship, and a safe space to grow.

For health centers, this reality shows up in very practical ways. New grads sometimes need more time with preceptors to build confidence. Pediatric exposure varies widely depending on where they trained, so some arrive needing refreshers before they feel ready to manage a full panel. And more than anything, I've seen how strong onboarding and mentorship can make or break retention. When early career clinicians feel supported, they stay. When they feel overwhelmed or isolated, they start looking elsewhere.

Because of that, many FQHCs are getting creative. Some are partnering with nearby health centers or universities to share costs and rotations. Others are building structured onboarding tracks — three to six months of intentional precepting, case reviews, and pediatric refreshers that function like a "mini residency." I've also seen health centers strengthen their relationships with universities so rotations better reflect the realities of community health. And on the retention side, things like mentorship stipends, protected learning time, and clear advancement pathways are becoming more common.

There are also helpful tools out there, including the STAR² Center workforce resources, the HRSA NP/PA residency directory, and the Teaching Health Center program overview, all of which can support planning and conversations with leadership.

In the end, what stands out to me is that new APPs aren't lacking talent or commitment — they simply need more structured support to thrive in community health settings. When we invest in early career mentorship, build thoughtful training pathways, and strengthen partnerships, we're not just helping individual clinicians succeed. We're stabilizing the workforce pipeline and strengthening the future of primary care.

Jeanie | MWCN President

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Patient & Employee Surveys

Click this box to see patient & employee surveys available through MWCN. Customizable survey options for your employees, board members or stakeholders.



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“The Midwest Clinicians’ Network, Inc.’s (MWCN) fosters a collaborative learning environment for member organizations, empowering them to navigate the dynamic healthcare landscape and enhance health outcomes nationwide.”

On **June 17**, MWCN members joined **Joe Rivera**, Founder and Principal Consultant at **Enroll IQ Consulting**, for a session on *Enrollment Practices to Mitigate the Impact of HR I on Health Centers*. Joe Rivera outlined how upcoming **Medicaid policy changes**—including **work requirements** and **twice yearly redeterminations** beginning in 2027, plus **immigrant eligibility restrictions** in 2026—will significantly affect health center operations, finances and patient access.

States will need to verify work status using data sources and short look back periods, with exemptions for children, volunteers, and those who self attest medical frailty. These changes could result in over **\$32 billion in Medicaid revenue losses over 10 years**, more uninsured patients, and disrupted continuity of care.

Joe Rivera urged centers to act now by:

- **Assessing Medicaid exposure** and identifying at risk populations
- **Strengthening enrollment functions** and staff education
- **Using data analytics** to track self pay and sliding fee trends and eligible but not insured patients
- **Developing proactive workflows** for intake and front desk teams
- **Implementing retention strategies** to prevent coverage loss

The message: **use your data now** to understand who’s at risk, right size enrollment teams, and prepare for higher demand. Early planning and staff readiness will help mitigate HR I’s impact on both revenue and patient care.

Get the Support You Need

Enroll IQ Consulting • Joe Rivera, Principal Consultant

<p>Enrollment Review</p> <p>Assess Workflows & Data</p>	<p>Data Analysis</p> <p>Spot Self-Pay & Medicaid Gaps</p>	<p>Policy Updates</p> <p>Create Clear SOPs</p>	<p>Staffing Solutions</p> <p>Right-Size Your Team</p>	<p>Training & Support</p> <p>Develop Skilled Enrollers</p>
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Recording Available for Responding to Staff Satisfaction Surveys

Responding to Staff Satisfaction Surveys

Sydney Axelrod, MA, Associate Director of Workforce Development
Association of Clinicians for the Underserved (ACU) STAR² Center

Thursday, December 4, 2025

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Watch on YouTube





Recent patient experience surveys show a clear pattern: **patients often have trouble reaching their local health center by phone.** Long waits, confusing menus, and full voicemail boxes are showing up across sites. Because the phone is still the primary access point for many patients, improving this experience directly improves care.

This quarter, we are sharing **quick assessment steps, best practices,** and a few **helpful online resources.**

Quick Phone System Testing

- **Weekly call through test** — Call the main line as if you were a patient. Track time to answer and routing accuracy.
- **Peak time test** — Call during 8–10 AM or Mondays to see what patients experience at high volume.
- **Voicemail audit** — Confirm boxes aren't full, greetings are clear, and callbacks meet your standard.
- **Menu clarity check** — Ensure options are short, intuitive, and available in multiple languages. Does the end of the menu land you somewhere to leave a message or give you an option to talk to someone?
- **Monthly signature check** — Staff verify that the phone number and extension in their email signature are correct and up to date.

These tests take minutes and reveal exactly what patients experience.

Best Practices for Stronger Phone Access

- **Set a service standard** — Many centers aim for “90% of calls answered within 60 seconds.”
- **Simplify the phone tree** — Keep to 3–5 options and avoid jargon.
- **Use call back queues** — Let patients hold their place without staying on the line.
- **Cross train staff** — Add phone support during peak hours.
- **Monitor call analytics** — Track abandoned calls, wait times, and volume patterns to guide staffing.

Small operational changes can significantly improve patient experience.

Helpful Online Resources

- [HRSA Access & Quality Resources](#) — Guidance on access standards and patient experience.
- [NACHC Call Center Best Practices](#) — Practical tools for phone workflows and staffing.
- [IHI Patient Access Tools](#) — Templates for testing, PDSA cycles, and workflow redesign.

Challenge

We encourage each site to complete **one phone test this month**, verify email signature accuracy, and identify **one quick win** to improve phone access. Even small improvements help patients reach the care they need.

Healthy Recipe: *Mediterranean Bean Salad*

Mediterranean Bean Salad is a fresh and healthy side dish, made with three types of beans, a delicious vinaigrette, tons of vegetables and fresh herbs. It's perfect for potlucks and as a side dish during grilling season. Enjoy it on its own for a vegetarian meal!



FOR THE DRESSING:

- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 3 tbsp fresh squeezed lemon juice
- 3 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 2 tbsp dijon mustard
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp oregano
- 1/2 tsp sea salt (plus more to taste)
- Freshly ground black pepper (to taste)

FOR THE SALAD

- 19 oz cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 19 oz kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 15 oz chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- Half an English cucumber, quartered
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, sliced
- 1 bell pepper, diced (red, orange or yellow)
- 1/2 cup kalamata olives, sliced
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1/2 cup small-diced red onion
- 2 tbsp roughly chopped fresh basil
- 3/4 cup crumbled feta cheese

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together all the ingredients for the dressing.
2. In a large bowl, gently mix together the beans, cucumber, tomato, bell pepper, olives, parsley, red onion and basil.
3. Pour the dressing onto the salad and toss until everything is evenly coated. Fold in the crumbled feta. For best flavor, cover the salad and let it rest in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours. Store leftovers in a sealed container in the fridge and eat within 4 days.

Resource:
<https://therecipewell.com/mediterranean-bean-salad>

Connecting Patients to Fresh Food and Practical Nutrition Support

The Family Health Care team in Baldwin, Michigan enrolled 100 community members (90 of whom are FHC patients) in the FARMacy Rx (Produce Prescription Program), which is part of the Pure Market Farmers & Makers Marketette. The FARMacy Rx program supports healthier living by improving food access and lifestyle habits, and by participating each week, they receive vouchers to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables, and other healthy foods at the Pure Marketette.

The Pure Marketette is a community health and farmers' market initiative in partnership with local organizations in Baldwin. It is a seasonal outdoor market located in downtown Baldwin that operates Wednesdays from 3pm to 6pm. (June 10 to September 2, with a closure on July 15 for Troutarama). The market features local vendors and includes more than 30 nonprofit organizations that offer classes, demonstrations, special events, and children's programs throughout the season. In addition to FARMacy Rx, the market participates in multiple food assistance programs that increase access to healthy food in the community.

The BFHC team participates in weekly Pure Marketette activities and provides ongoing support to FARMacy Rx throughout the program.



Thank you to all MWCN members who joined this year's **Walk@Lunch**. Your enthusiasm, photos, and team spirit turned a simple midday walk into a network wide celebration of wellness. We're grateful for your leadership in showing patients and coworkers that small steps truly add up.

Sawtooth Mountain Clinic



Sixteenth Street Community Health Center



Renee & Amanda

8

Transformational Modules



Blended Learning Approach

- Online content released over 8 weeks
** Self-paced: participants work through content each week at their own rate **
- Group Coaching & Discussion (once/week)
- Two Private Coaching Sessions
- Quarterly Q&A Sessions



I have not found this level of practical wisdom in any textbook or college class. I am convinced that this formula is essential for creating a positive patient experience, successful business, and a culture that employees can thrive in.

— Jessica Bush, Director of Patient Experience



<https://leadership.baird-group.com/>

(920) 563-4684

Scan to Learn More/Register

Be the Leader Course Weekly Timeline



Communication tools for executives to introduce the course and build excitement



Weekly talking points for executives to reinforce managers' learning and follow through



Quarterly Q&A Sessions for course graduates provide leaders with additional ongoing support

ILLINOIS

Various Positions

[The Illinois Primary Health Care Association](#) represents all the FQHCs in IL and helps Medical Directors, Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, Certified Nurse Midwives, Dentists, Dental Hygienists, LCSWs, LCPCs and Clinical Psychologists find rewarding careers at community health centers throughout Illinois. With over 430 locations in urban, rural, and suburban communities, IPHCA can help you find the job that fits your personal and professional needs. To take advantage of IPHCA's complimentary recruitment assistance service please visit their brand new [Career Center](#).

Various Positions

[Hamdard Health Alliance \(HHA\)](#) (a FQHC) is seeking mission-driven, full-time or part-time candidates for multiple openings in Family Medicine Physicians, Nurse Practitioners (with full practice authority), and Licensed Social Worker/Professional Counselor roles. HHA offers a competitive salary and benefits package, flexible work schedules, and a student loan forgiveness program with the NHSC. Contact Dr. Zun, CMO, at lzun@hamdardhealth.org or by mail at 228 E. Lake St., Addison, IL 60101 for more information.

Various Positions

[Family Christian Health Center](#) in Harvey, IL, a federally qualified, state-of-the-art health center, has multiple openings: Wellness Physician, Family Practice Physicians, Pediatrician, Family Practice Nurse Practitioners, OB/GYN Physician, Dentist, Quality Coordinator/Risk Manager and Certified Medical Assistants. Excellent benefit package, competitive salary, student loan forgiveness programs. Please contact Regina Martin, HR Manager at rmartin@familychc.org or 708-589-2017 for more information.

Behavioral Health Counselor

Knox County Health Department in Galesburg, IL is seeking a motivated Licensed Behavioral Health Counselor (LCPC or LCSW) for our community-based health center. KCHD offers a competitive salary of \$74,984 to \$85,715 working 35-40 hours a week plus excellent County benefits. Responsibilities include providing behavioral health counseling services, conducting assessments, developing treatment plans, and collaborating with an interdisciplinary care team to support patient well-being. Send resume to hr@knoxcountyhealth.org or apply at www.knoxcountyhealth.org. Contact Conner Brinson, HR Director, at cbrinson@knoxcountyhealth.org or (309)344-2224.

INDIANA

Various Positions

Raphael Health Center (FQHC) is seeking a motivated full-time Scheduling Representative, Medical Assistant, Patient Access Supervisor, Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Behavioral Health Supervisor! We offer a competitive salary and a great benefits package! Contact Chanta, Operations and HR Specialist at bluiett@raphaelhc.org or apply on our website at <http://www.raphaelhc.org>.

IOWA

Mental Health Counselors

[The Iowa Primary Care Association](#) is seeking motivated full-time Licensed Mental Health Counselors at various Federally Qualified Health Centers within the state of Iowa. Our FQHCs offer competitive salaries with benefits, including opportunities for student loan repayments. Contact Michaela Shriver at mshriver@iowapca.org or visit this link for more information.

KANSAS

Medical Director

[Hunter Health Clinic \(HHC\)](#) is seeking a Medical Director! This is more than a physician role—it is an opportunity to help shape the future of primary care in our community while combining direct patient care with clinical leadership, partnering with executive leadership to advance quality, innovation, provider growth, and development. As a FQHC, HHC is a qualifying employer for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program. 30 days of PTO per year, plus 10 paid holidays. [Apply to Medical Director!](#)

MICHIGAN

Various Positions

[Metro Detroit's Western Wayne Family Health Centers \(WWFHC\)](#) is seeking vibrant Physicians, Psychiatrists, Behavioral Health Therapists, Medical Assistants, Dental Hygienists, Dental Assistants, Billers and Customer Service Representatives. Forward your CV/resume to humanresources@wwfhc.org. Please see our "jobs" on our website at <https://wwfhc.org/>. We offer competitive salaries and a full benefit package including (medical and dental 100% free for employee only coverage, vision, and 403B with 4% match) 4 weeks PTO and 12 Holidays.

Various Positions

[MidMichigan Community Health Services \(FQHC\)](#) in Houghton Lake is currently recruiting two full time Primary Care Physicians and one Behavioral Health Therapist. We offer competitive salaries, a visit based bonus structure, and comprehensive day one benefits including Medical, Dental, Vision, STD, LTD, Life/AD&D, along with generous PTO and CME. Interested candidates can apply at www.healthynorth.org/careers.

Submit your postings for our next newsletter to Renee Ricks at rricks@midwestclinicians.org

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Various Positions

Great Lakes Bay Health Centers (GLBHC) is seeking to fill multiple positions, including Behavioral Health, Physician, Optometrist, Psychologist, and Pharmacist roles. GLBHC offers a competitive salary and comprehensive benefits package. For more information, please contact the GLBHC Recruiting Team at Jobs@glbhealth.org or visit Careers - Great Lakes Bay Health Centers .

Various Positions

MyCare Health Center is seeking to hire the following positions in Macomb County: Clinical Therapist, Accounting Manager, Medical Assistant, SUD Therapist and Registered Dietitian. We offer competitive wages, a generous PTO and benefits package. To apply, please go to "Careers" on our website at www.mycarehealthcenter.org

Various Positions

Alcona Health Center (AHC) is seeking to hire for various full-time positions, including Physicians in our Alpena, Cheboygan, Indian River, and Ossineke health centers as well as a Dentist in our Alpena dental clinic. AHC is located in beautiful Northern Michigan and offers a competitive salary, comprehensive benefits, loan repayment, and generous PTO package. For more information, please contact Kayla Dietz, Director of Provider Relations, at kdietz@alconahc.org, or view our opportunities at alconahealthcenters.org/careers/.

MISSOURI**Medical Director**

Missouri Ozarks Community Health is seeking a qualified Medical Director to join our growing upbeat, positive team with focus on providing high quality care. Our Medical Director provides oversight to the medical program and leads quality initiatives while actively treating patients in a clinical setting. Competitive salary/benefit package. Being nestled in the heart of the Ozarks, we enjoy the small town, slower pace lifestyle and outdoor activities while still near larger communities within a short drive. Join our team by emailing your resume to jowens@mo-ozarks.org or apply via <https://mo-ozarks.org/apply>

Various Positions

Join a talented healthcare team and find a "Career That Counts" across the Show-Me State! Missouri's Community Health Centers offer purpose-driven roles where you can make a lasting impact on local communities while qualifying for valuable financial incentive and loan repayment/forgiveness programs. Opportunities include, Primary Care Medical, Dental, Behavioral Health Professional, Administration, and other clinical opportunities available throughout our great state. Browse our jobs at www.mhpps.org or contact ayeager@mo-pca.org to learn more.

Various Positions

Central Ozarks Medical Center (COMC) is currently seeking two full-time dentists, one General Practitioner (DO or MD), and an OB/GYN. COMC offers a competitive salary, full benefits, and a generous time off package. Learn more about us: [Central Ozarks Medical Center | Compassionate Healthcare in the Lake of the Ozarks](http://CentralOzarksMedicalCenter.com) Contact Denise Vogeler, Director of Human Resources at dvogeler@centralozarks.org.

NEBRASKA**Various Positions**

The Health Center Association of Nebraska is seeking compassionate, mission-driven individuals for immediate openings in our health centers across the state. We are hiring in the areas of General Dentistry, Family Practice Medicine, Dental Hygiene, Clinical Psychology, Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, and Pediatrics. Our health centers offer competitive salaries, comprehensive benefit packages, and potential for student loan repayment programs. If you are looking for a fulfilling career where you will impact lives while enjoying work-life balance, contact Becca Usher at bmu@hcanebraska.org / 402.657.4076 for additional information.

OHIO**Family Physician**

Third Street Family Health Services is seeking a motivated full time or part time FAMILY PHYSICIAN. Our patient centered medical home provides comprehensive primary care across all ages in a collaborative, mission driven environment. We offer competitive compensation and a full benefits package. For more information, contact HR at hr@thirdstreetfamily.org or call 419 522 6191 ext. 2201.

WISCONSIN**Various Positions**

Scenic Bluffs Community Health Centers is seeking to hire motivated full-time General Dentists, Dental Hygienists, MD/DO, Behavioral Health Counselors and Family Nurse Practitioners. We have several worksite locations including Cashton, Reedsburg, Prairie du Chien, Norwalk and La Crosse with sufficient space, updated equipment and space and friendly, mission driven staff. SBCHC offers a competitive salary, loan repayment options and benefit package. Contact Sara Cook, CDO, by e-mail scook@scenicbluffs.org, phone 608-654-5100 ext. 2092 or visit our website www.scenicbluffs.org to find out more about our health center and our current open positions.

Submit your postings for our next newsletter to Renee Ricks at
ricks@midwestclinicians.org