



To: Special Committee on Medicaid Expansion/Chair Rep. Brenda Landwehr
From: Denise Cyzman, CEO, Community Care Network of Kansas
RE: Testimony to support KanCare expansion
November 12, 2019

Community Care Network of Kansas (Community Care) whole-heartedly supports expanding KanCare. All Kansans should have equitable access to high quality health care. Toward that end, we serve a network of clinics that make up one of the largest primary care systems serving all Kansans, regardless of who they are, how much money they make, where they live, or if they have health insurance. The clinics serve 1 in 10 Kansans, many of whom are underserved and overlooked. In 2018, the clinics provided care to 305,000 patients; 91% had reported income levels at or below 200% FPL; 36% were uninsured; and 30% were Medicaid beneficiaries.

The clinics provide integrated, proactive care for the mind, mouth and body. Their value is greatest when care includes prevention and reducing health risks; identifies disease early and provides comprehensive treatment; and includes ongoing care management and services to reduce social and economic barriers to health. Yet, this model of care is not equitably available to all Kansans. Many patients served by Community Care member clinics experience unacceptable barriers to care solely because they lack health insurance. Patients delay treatment when they do not have insurance and lack financial resources to pay for care. When they do seek care, they require more expensive and complex care – and their outcomes are worse. The real-life consequences of being uninsured result in real-life heart-breaking consequences. Medicaid expansion saves lives. Delays in expanding Medicaid does not.

Previously, we have shared rationale for why expanding KanCare is essential to Community Care clinics, their patients, and their communities. Expansion increases access to care and saves lives. This is first and foremost. We ask you to also consider the following.

Expansion makes economic sense in your communities.

Community Care clinics are critical local resources, especially in underserved communities. Because they serve all who come through their doors, the amount of uncompensated care compared to their budgets is staggering; \$46 million in 2018.¹ While expanding KanCare would not cover all uncompensated care, we know it would reduce this bill dramatically. For example, federally qualified health centers (CHCs) in expansion states were more likely to report improvements in their financial stability (69% vs. 41%) and their ability to provide affordable care to patients (76% vs. 52%), when compared to CHCs in non-expansion states.² We see no reason why the Kansas experience would be different. Without doubt, expansion would shore up the network of Community Care clinics, allowing them to improve their economic viability.

¹ Data self-reported by Community Based Primary Care Clinic Program grantees to Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2018

² Lewis C, et.al. The Role of Medicaid Expansion in Care Delivery at Community Health Centers. The Commonwealth Fund. 4/4/19.

The economic value of expansion is even greater when you consider impact on employment. KanCare expansion is projected to create more than 13,000 new jobs in Kansas by 2021.³ In the case of Community Care clinics, these are health care jobs, providing good wages and benefits. The jobs are local and will remain local. Employees live in the communities they serve. Further community economic growth occurs as the new health care jobs generates jobs in other industries, including retail and construction.⁴ Currently, the economic activity resulting from CHCs in Kansas communities is \$297.4 million.⁵ This economic activity would increase exponentially with KanCare expansion.

Expansion boosts the State's investment in primary care.

Since 1992, the State of Kansas has invested millions to establish and sustain a network of community-based clinics serving uninsured and underinsured Kansans.⁶ The investment has been substantial and has made a difference. The return on the State's investment is greater when you consider how the clinics impact Medicaid. In 2018, the clinics served more than 90,000 Medicaid enrollees, accounting for 23% of all Medicaid beneficiaries. Research has shown that CHCs – the majority of community-based clinic grantees - will help Medicaid economically. Using national data, the University of Kansas estimated Kansas CHCs would save the Kansas Medicaid Program \$140 million per year, with \$60 million of that being state funds⁷.

The benefits continue. Community health centers in Medicaid expansion states have greater operational capacity, serve more patients, and achieve better health and utilization outcomes than CHCs in non-expansion states.⁸ Improvements were seen in asthma treatment, body mass index screening and follow-up, and hypertension control. Mammograms and follow-up visits for abnormal results increased, as did visits related to alcohol-related disorder and other substance use disorder. Another study, published in 2017, demonstrated Medicaid expansion was associated with improved quality of care provided by CHCs.⁹ A recent study demonstrated the positive impact was especially high for health centers serving rural areas.¹⁰

Strengthening the Community Care network of clinics pays huge dividends to the State's investment to serve our most vulnerable Kansans through the Community-based Primary Care Clinic Program.

Expansion improves the Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder crises.

Without doubt, Kansas is in the midst of a behavioral health crisis. Treating behavioral health conditions has been shown to reduce rates of disability, increase employment productivity, and decrease criminal

³ KU et al. Economic and Employment Effects of Expanding KanCare, George Washington University and Regional Economic Models, Inc., November 2014.

⁴ Leatherman. Preliminary Estimates of the State and Local Tax Revenue Generated by the Expansion of Medicaid Expenditures, Kansas State University, March 2019.

⁵ Kansas Health Center Fact Sheet. National Association of Community Health Centers. January 2019

⁶ All but three community-based clinic grantees are members of Community Care Network of Kansas.

⁷ Data from a contracted study conducted by Laura Howard, KU Public Management Center, 2017

⁸ Rosenbaum, S, et. al. Community Health Centers: Growing Importance in a Changing Health Care System. Kaiser Family Foundation. March 2018.

⁹ Cole, MB, et. al. At Federally Funded Health Centers, Medicaid Expansion was Associated with Improved Quality of Care. Health Affairs, January 2018.

¹⁰ Cole, MB, et. al. Medicaid Expansion and Community Health Centers: Care Quality and Service Use Increased for Rural Patients. Health Affairs, June 2018.

justice costs. This crisis requires a multi-level approach with several solutions. The time to invest in the collective response is now. Continuing to employ the same solutions will yield the same results, and the crisis will continue to worsen. Expanding Medicaid is one solution that no longer can be ignored. Its benefits impact many parts of the safety net system serving Kansans with behavioral health conditions. Expansion will strengthen Community Care clinics, Community Mental Health Centers and Substance Use Disorder providers. The collective network of safety net providers will grow only stronger when KanCare is expanded.

Of the Community Care clinic members, 26 provide behavioral health services. Their capacity to serve individuals with mental health or SUD conditions has increased dramatically and will continue to grow. Providing behavioral health care in the primary care setting yields significant benefits. First, it is typically the place where patients initially seek care for behavioral health concerns. When services are provided within Community Care clinics, several barriers to accessing behavioral health care are overcome. These barriers include stigma, affordability, and availability of needed care. Kansans who need services for mental health and SUD disorders make up a substantial share of the uninsured who would gain coverage from KanCare expansion. Many of these individuals already receive services in Community Care clinics. Because Medicaid provides comprehensive health care coverage, newly enrolled beneficiaries would also have costs related to other care needs – medical, dental, pharmacy – covered. Along with meeting behavioral health needs, the comprehensive set of services provided by KanCare through expansion would create a pathway to optimal health.

Members of the Special Committee on Medicaid Expansion, this is our time to give Kansans – hard-working Kansans – the health care they need and deserve. We cannot afford further delays. Let us strengthen our families, communities, and this great state. Let us have no further delays in expanding KanCare. Thank you.