



CHARITABLE HEALTHCARE NETWORK

Ohio: Stronger. Healthier. Together.

Jason Koma, MHA

House Finance, Subcommittee on Health and Human Services

Testimony on HB 33 (SFY 2024-25 Operating Budget)

March 15, 2023

Chair Carruthers, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the House Finance, Subcommittee on Health and Human Services thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 33, Governor DeWine's executive budget proposal for state fiscal years 2024-2025. I am Jason Koma, the executive director of the Charitable Healthcare Network.

Formerly known as the Ohio Association of Free Clinics, the Charitable Healthcare Network is the statewide association of free and charitable providers in Ohio. Our mission is to support our 52 members by working to strengthen and ensure high-quality healthcare for people who are vulnerable in our state. Our membership is diverse including free clinics, charitable clinics, rural health centers, charitable pharmacies, and counseling centers, among others. As of 2023, our 52 member organizations serve 70 of Ohio's 88 counties.

Our member clinics and charitable providers are the backbone of the safety net in Ohio. As a nonclinical professional who has spent the last 15 years supporting healthcare delivery in Ohio, I have often used the mantra, both with colleagues I have worked with and external stakeholders, that those we serve are not having their best day. No one wakes up, wants to be sick and wants to have to seek care. It's just not a great day. Now imagine that day if you have no idea where you can go for care and you certainly can't pay for it. That is where Ohio's free and charitable providers come into play. When you have nowhere else to go, we are there for you. That is why, Ohio's free clinics and charitable providers are an essential part of the healthcare delivery system

We also could not do this without the support of the Ohio General Assembly, the Ohio Department of Health and the governor's office. This support includes general revenue funds through the Free Clinic Safety Net line item with the Ohio Department of Health. This funding is currently at \$1.5M per fiscal year and it is a lifeblood to our members.

With the support from that funding, in 2022, Ohio's free and charitable providers delivered nearly 560,000 healthcare services – primary care, specialty care, prescriptions, education and social services, among others, and that care was valued at approximately \$200M worth of



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healthcare services delivered to the most vulnerable in our state for little to no cost to those patients. These providers cannot do so without your support so it is essential that the state of Ohio continues to partner with CHN to keep our healthcare safety net as strong as possible. We are asking for your continued support of the Free Clinic Safety Net Services line item.

I'd like to close with two quick stories from those who we helped in 2022:

An individual who walked into the clinic on a Saturday morning, his eyes lowered, face red, and embarrassed to ask for help. He described that he had ignored his health conditions to the point of no return. He recently began falling asleep at his job... a job that is operating heavy equipment. His employer had no choice but to remove him and place him in a lesser position, but that meant losing his health insurance. He came in desperate to find out why he is so tired and hoping for help to get his job back. Our clinical staff was able to get him connected for a sleep study. The results revealed that he stopped breathing numerous times through the night, and could not recover from the loss of oxygen and sleep throughout the day. Again, we prayed for the supplies we needed for this gentleman, a BIPAP can be thousands of dollars without insurance, and one came in donated. We were able to set him up at home with this device and he was able to get his life back

A female patient came to us for STD testing. She was homeless, addicted to drugs, and in very poor health. She tested positive for almost every STD possible and began treatment immediately. While the treatment is intense and painful, we were able to use this time to get to know her and build a relationship with her. After almost three months of weekly visits with Jill, she broke down in tears and confessed that she was being trafficked. We called the police immediately along with our county victim advocate. Together, we worked with Jill to get her into protective custody while she received treatment and worked with the police to identify her traffickers. Her bravery has resulted in several arrests and at least six other women saved from this trafficking operation.

These are just two brief examples of lives saved based on the work of the members of the Charitable Healthcare Network. That work cannot happen without your support.

Thank you and I'd be happy to answer any questions.

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CHARITABLE HEALTHCARE NETWORK

ABOUT

WHO WE ARE:

Charitable Healthcare Network's (CHN) purpose is to be the voice and connector for Ohio's free and charitable providers by providing resources, education, and advocacy to strengthen and ensure quality health care for vulnerable individuals across our state.

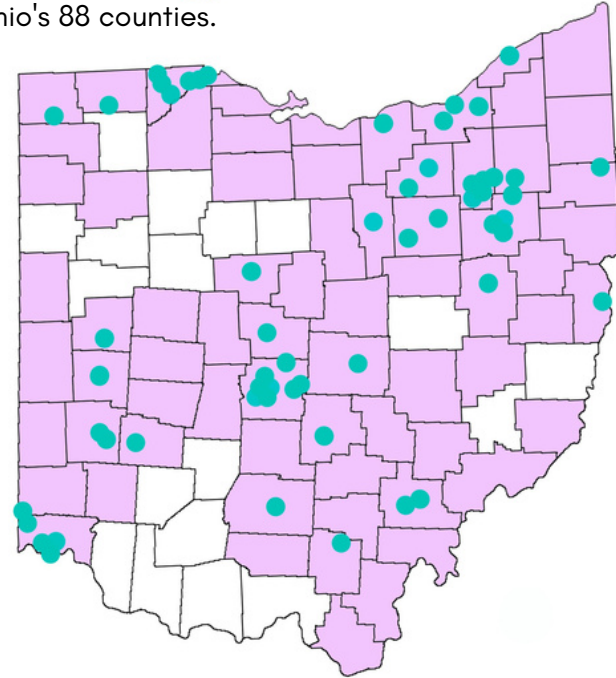
OUR MEMBERS:

Our membership is diverse including free clinics, charitable clinics, rural health centers, charitable pharmacies, counseling centers, and more! As of 2023, our 52 member organizations serve 70 of Ohio's 88 counties.

THE VALUE OF CARE



	2022 Services	Value of Services
Primary Care Visits	35,463	\$14,397,978.00
Specialty Visits	12,302	\$10,210,660.00
Vision Visits	7,155	\$2,547,180.00
Dental Visits	15,866	\$7,234,896.00
Behavioral Health	5,329	\$1,513,436.00
Social Services/ Case Management	10,839	\$1,820,952.00
Pharmacy Education	63,654	\$11,139,450.00
Lifestyle/ Prevention Education	15,455	\$2,318,250.00
Disease Management Education	21,630	\$3,655,470.00
Prescriptions	285,301	\$99,855,350.00
Laboratory Tests	69,661	\$20,898,300.00
Diagnostic Tests	14,855	\$22,282,500.00
TOTAL	557,510	\$198,452,522.00



● Clinic Locations
■ Counties Served

STATEWIDE IMPACT & SUPPORT

CHN works directly with ODH to support free and charitable providers in Ohio with general revenue funds through the Free Clinic Safety Net line item. This funding is currently at \$1.5M per fiscal year. With the support from that funding, Ohio's free and charitable providers delivered nearly \$200M worth of healthcare services to the most vulnerable in our state in 2022. It is essential that Ohio continues to partner with CHN to keep our healthcare safety net as strong as possible. We are asking for your continued support of GRF 440431 Free Clinic Safety Net Services.

PATIENT IMPACT

"We were able to provide antihypertensive and insulin therapy to a young pregnant woman that recently lost her job due to her health conditions. As a result of losing her job, she also lost her insurance coverage but is currently in a coverage gap as she navigates enrolling in Ohio Medicaid. The patient had uncontrolled blood pressure and gestational diabetes that put her and her unborn child at great risk for serious complications."

Sarah Adkins, Executive Director of Rising Suns Charitable Pharmacy

CONNECT WITH A FREE CLINIC

CHN is available as a resource for your office to help answer questions from your constituents seeking services from a free or charitable provider. Please contact us at **(614) 914-6458** and we can help connect anyone to this care. Also, our website www.charitablehealthcarenetwork.org has an interactive map of all these providers in Ohio.