

## Community Clinics and Health Centers & Mental Health Services

### Highlights

- There are **779 Community Clinics & Health Centers (CCHCs)** in California.\*
- **3,390,785 patients** are served in CCHCs every year.\*
- CCHCs report **809,928 mental health encounters** every year.\*
- **82% of CCHC patients** have incomes under **200% of the federal poverty level**.\*
- **70% of all primary care visits** have psychosocial drivers. (Stroshal)

*“Primary Care is the provision of continuous, comprehensive, and coordinated care to populations undifferentiated by gender, disease, or organ system, including the provision of accessible, integrated, biopsychosocial health care services (Institute of Medicine).”*

Primary care is often the first line of defense for detection and treatment of mental illness. Ninety percent of primary care providers report providing mental health services in California’s 779 Community Clinics and Health Centers (CCHCs).\* \*\* Mental health services vary by clinic and range from highly developed & integrated systems of care to on-site mental health assessments & treatment to reliance on outside providers. Annually, CCHCs report 809,928 mental health encounters, with 553,283 of those encounters by mental health professionals and the remaining by primary care providers.\* \*\*\* Four-hundred and forty-seven mental health professionals are employed by just under a third of CCHCs.\* \*\*\*

- **1 in 4** persons suffers from a diagnosable mental illness. (Surgeon General Report)
- Of all persons suffering from mental illness, more than **50% never seek help**. (Stroshal)
- Only **1 in 4** patients who are referred to specialty mental health or substance abuse services ever make the first appointment. (Stroshal)
- **80%** of those with mental illness who do not seek help have had a primary health care visit in the last 6 months. (Stroshal)
- Stigma in seeing your primary care provider is practically non-existent. (Stroshal)
- Most people see their primary care provider, including at CCHCs, about **4 times a year**, allowing for monitoring and treatment of co-existing conditions. (Stroshal)
- Primary care providers (including CCHCs) prescribe **67%** of all psychoactive agents and **80%** of all antidepressants. (Stroshal)

Primary care providers play a critical role in treating low-income individuals with mental health issues in California and are the ultimate safety net for those most in need.

\*Numbers based on 2004 OSHPD data.

\*\*Primary care providers include physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners.

\*\*\*Mental health professionals include psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, and marriage, family, and child counselors.