

Trends and Impact of Vertical Integration on Community Health Center on Workforce

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ABSTRACT

As the nation seeks to strengthen primary care and enhance health equity, we must understand how changes in the health care marketplace affect community health centers and their patients. One such trend has been vertical integration, widespread among physician practices, which led to increased utilization. Using multiple data sources, including Uniform Data Systems, National Plan and Provider Enumeration System, Medicare Provider Enrollment, Chain and Ownership System public use files, Internal Revenue Service Form 990 Nonprofit Tax Returns, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and Medicare Accountable Care Organization participant lists, we identified 258 integrated CHCs between 2014 and 2021. The percentage of CHCs that were vertically integrated grew from 13% in 2014 to 18% in 2021. In 2021, we found that integrated CHCs were larger and relied more on physicians and nurses than their non-integrated counterparts.

Key Words:

Community Health Centers, Vertical Integration