COLORADO
Safety Net Collaborative

IMPACT REPORT · 2026 · CALENDAR 2024 DATA

What our clinics accomplished in 2024

Colorado's independent safety net clinics delivered care to tens of thousands of people at a fraction of what the same needs cost in emergency rooms and hospitals.

56,832
patients served
At least; counts from 15 clinics

165,779
patient visits
Counts from 15 clinics

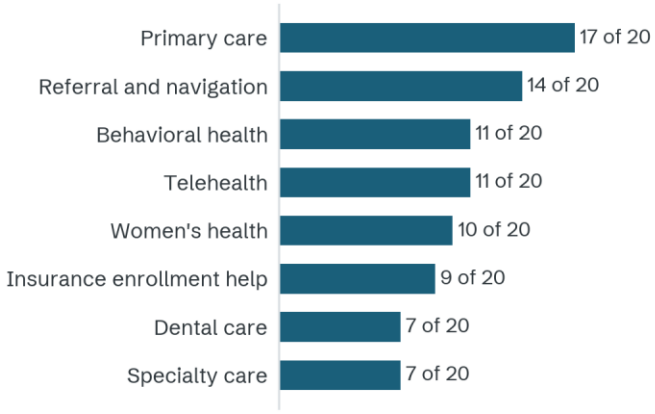
25,800+
children and teens
58% of patients with age reported

$27M
in avoided costs
Low-end estimate of emergency and hospital savings

Care where people need it

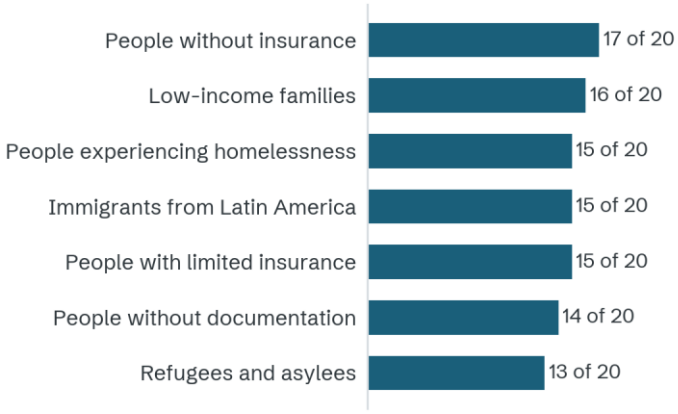
Twenty CSNC member clinics reported 2024 data. These community-grown clinics deliver primary care, pediatric, dental, behavioral and women's health care, much of it free or on a sliding fee, to people who may not otherwise get care. **Nine provide all care at no charge**, delivering 13,640 visits to 8,319 patients.

SERVICES MEMBER CLINICS OFFER



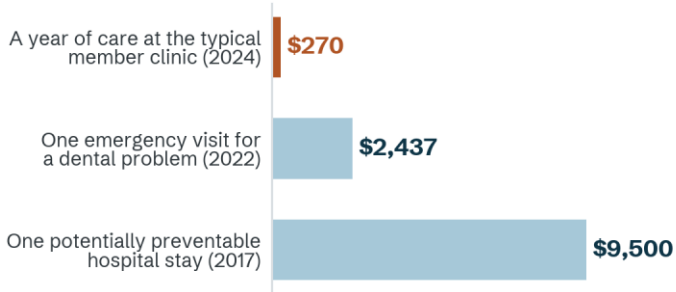
Number of the 20 reporting clinics offering each service.

PEOPLE MEMBER CLINICS SERVE



Number of the 20 reporting clinics serving each group.

CLINIC CARE VERSUS HOSPITAL COSTS



Typical member clinic: median 2024 revenue per patient, 15 clinics. Comparisons: CareQuest Institute; AHRQ.

POWERED BY VOLUNTEERS AND COMMUNITY

969 volunteers at 16 clinics, 453 of them clinicians

493 paid staff at 19 clinics

13 of 19 clinics run on budgets under $500,000

Volunteers outnumber paid staff nearly two to one (969 to 493).

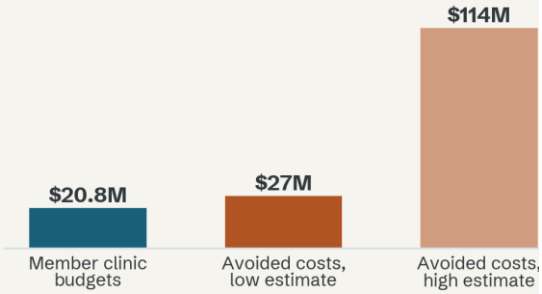
Savings to Colorado's health system

Primary and preventive care in the community keeps people out of emergency rooms and hospital beds, where the same needs cost far more.

$27 million to $114 million

in estimated avoided emergency and hospital costs in 2024

Published studies of safety net clinics estimate $1.30 to $5.50 in avoided emergency and hospital costs for every dollar spent on clinic care.[1] Member clinics' combined 2024 budgets were at least $20.75 million (19 clinics, using the bottom of each reported revenue range). Applying the published range to that conservative base gives $27 million at the low end. The low-end study counted only heart attacks and strokes prevented through blood pressure control, plus avoided emergency visits.



WHAT MEMBER CLINICS DELIVER, AND WHAT THE EVIDENCE SHOWS IT RETURNS

Service	Member clinics, 2024	Documented return
Primary care	17 of 20 clinics; 165,779 total visits	Uninsured patients not referred to a free clinic after a hospital stay had 1.8 times the odds of returning within 90 days, at 2.3 times the cost.[2]
Children's health	25,800+ children and teens; 7 clinics give Vaccines for Children immunizations	Children with the fewest well-child visits had twice the risk of preventable hospitalization.[3] Childhood immunization returns about $3.30 per dollar.[4]
Oral health	7 clinics; 28,759 visits at the two dental clinics alone	An emergency visit for a dental problem costs $2,437 on average.[5] Fluoride varnish in primary care saved $75 per child in Medicaid.[6]
Behavioral health	11 clinics	Depression care in primary care cost $522 per patient and lowered total costs by an estimated $3,363 over four years.[7]
Women's health and family planning	10 clinics	Publicly funded family planning saved $7.09 in government costs per public dollar.[8]

A growing record

- More than 508,000 patient visits reported by member clinics from 2021 through 2024.
- More than $2.6 million in grants secured since 2020, including $876,000 from The Colorado Health Foundation for a direct primary care pilot.
- Written confirmation from HCPF in October 2026 that comprehensive women's health and oral health clinics qualify as primary care for the Provider Stabilization Fund.

Who we serve

- 17 of 20 clinics serve people without insurance; 15 serve people experiencing homelessness.
- About 6 in 10 patients with a recorded ethnicity are Hispanic or Latino (10 clinics).
- 14 clinics serve people without documentation, and 13 serve refugees and asylees.

About the data. CSNC 2025 Member Survey (calendar 2024 activity), organized with the Colorado Health Institute. Twenty member clinics responded; each figure states how many clinics stand behind it, and totals count only clinics that reported. Revenue is reported in ranges; budget and cost-per-patient figures use the range bottoms or midpoints, and the top range ($5 million or more) is counted at $5 million. The savings estimate applies published per-dollar findings to member budgets and is illustrative, not a measured result. Age figures exclude one pediatric dental clinic whose age data could not be reconciled. Visits since 2021 sum each year's reporting clinics.

Sources. [1] Song et al., Health Affairs 2013; Oriol et al., BMC Medicine 2009; Dion et al., J. Community Health 2025. [2] Wallace et al., Am. J. Medicine 2021. [3] Tom et al., Am. J. Managed Care 2013. [4] Zhou et al., MMWR 2024. [5] CareQuest Institute, 2025 (2022 data). [6] Scherrer and Naavaal, J. Pediatrics 2019. [7] Unützer et al., Am. J. Managed Care 2008. [8] Frost et al., Milbank Quarterly 2014. Hospital stay cost: AHRQ HCUP Statistical Brief 259 (2017 data). Full citations: CSNC, From Dollars to Care (October 2026).