

# Governor Christie Announces \$50 Million in Funding For New Jersey's Community Health Centers

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## Highest-Ever Funding Commitment in Fiscal Year 2013 Budget to Care for State's Most Vulnerable Announced at Zufall Health Center in Dover

**Trenton, NJ** – Recognizing the comprehensive services New Jersey's 105 community health care centers provide to nearly half a million of the state's most vulnerable residents, Governor Chris Christie and Health Commissioner Mary E. O'Dowd announced a \$10 million increase in funding for these facilities in the Governor's Fiscal Year 2013 Budget – bringing funding to an all-time high of \$50 million this year for these critical health facilities. The Governor and Commissioner made the announcement at the Zufall Health Center in Dover Township, a community health center serving the health care needs of some of the most vulnerable New Jerseyans in the Morris and Hunterdon communities.

"The Zufall Health Center and more than 100 others like it throughout the state form a critical part of New Jersey's health care safety net for those who otherwise would go without medical care," said Governor Christie. "They serve as the neighborhood doctor in many communities, reducing the burden on hospital emergency care, and providing access to critical, sometimes lifesaving preventative care for our residents who need it most. I know that community health centers save lives and reach our families in indispensable ways, and that is why we've increased health care center funding by \$10 million since 2010 to an all-time high today."

Statewide, more than 450,000 patients receive medical and dental care, women's health, pharmacy and other services in New Jersey's 105 community health center sites. These patient visits total more than 1.4 million visits each year. Last year alone, Zufall Health Center served 15,000 patients with 46,000 visits for medical, dental and behavioral health services – meeting the needs of some of the most vulnerable residents in the community. More than 70% of Zufall's patients are uninsured, while another 30% are insured under Medicare, NJ Family Care or Medicaid. 61% had household incomes equal to or below 100% of the federal poverty level.

"This funding increase is more than just a reflection of Governor Christie's commitment to our most vulnerable residents – it is a recognition of the important role our health centers play in the health of their community, reaching our families close to home," said Health Commissioner O'Dowd. "Health centers deliver primary care that keeps residents healthy and also invests in primary care which can prevent illness and reduce costs related to chronic disease."

The Zufall Health Center, which started as a one-room, one night a week community clinic more than 20 years ago by Dr. Robert Zufall and his wife Kay, served 15,000 patients last year. Currently, there are 46,000 patient visits a year to Dover and satellite sites in Morristown and Hackettstown, as well as a mobile van that serves rural areas of Hunterdon, Warren and Sussex counties. The Zufall Health Center is supported with more than \$2 million in State funds to care for the uninsured residents in the community.

"Since the early days of Zufall Health Center, funding from the State of New Jersey has supported our efforts to bring quality primary medical and dental care to the underserved residents of northwest New Jersey," said Eva Turbiner, president and chief executive officer of Zufall Health Center. "Over the past five years, the number of our uninsured patients has almost doubled to more than 10,000 in 2011, now representing almost 70 percent of our total patient population. Our state funding, the single largest source of revenue in our operating budget, has allowed the health center to expand its services to meet this growing, critical need."

Kathy Grant Davis, executive director of the New Jersey Primary Care Association, which represents the 20 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), thanked Governor Christie "for his record increase in funds and for his belief in the work that FQHCs do. We know that Governor Christie understands our mission and we thank him for these increased funds."

For additional information about FQHCs please visit <http://nj.gov/health/fhs/cphc/index.shtml>

For additional background on the Zufall Health Center please see: [http://nj.gov/health/documents/zufallhealthcenter\\_background.pdf](http://nj.gov/health/documents/zufallhealthcenter_background.pdf)

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