



Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS OF DELAWARE DEMOGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT AND IMPACT ON COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

Delaware Community Health Centers (CHCs) will have to take these demographic trends into account when conducting operations and strategic planning.

The major trends occurring in Delaware are as follows:



- The state is becoming increasingly diverse.
- New Castle County is becoming more diverse in three out of four PUMA¹ districts, mirroring the state overall.
- The state's median incomes are not on pace with inflation.
- In New Castle County, incomes are growing the greatest in the already better-off areas, and stagnating in other areas leading to widespread stratification.
- Despite being the fastest growing group in the state, Latinos/Hispanics are not visiting CHCs in greater numbers.
- CHC patients in Delaware are becoming less economically diverse, as fewer patients over 150 percent of the poverty line are being seen at centers.

The above changes will have many impacts on CHCs in Delaware. With the upcoming PPACA implementation, CHCs should monitor the situation of residents who will likely still be uninsured in 2014. Stagnating incomes provide opportunities to bring new patients in through Medicaid enrollment. With increasing high unemployment and stagnating incomes, Delaware CHCs need to attract nontraditional patients who are above the poverty line but still in need of services. Income stratification illustrates that many communities are showing increases in relative need. CHCs need to identify these areas and provide services for their residents. Furthermore, there is an increasing need for greater outreach and language services for Latino/Hispanic populations.

Community Health Centers must examine how these changes will impact how they function and plan to address future challenges. Delaware CHCs face many challenges in the future brought on both by demographic changes and public policies. To remain prosperous, it is vital that CHCs examine how to adjust to these changes to increase their share of the health care market.

The Mid-Atlantic Association of
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¹Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA) data is a census designation that divides counties up into areas of at least 100,000 residents.

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