



NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR ACTION

to End Health Disparities



Continuing Health Care for All: The Southwest Regional Health Equity Council Releases An Issue Brief on the Affordable Care Act

The **Southwest Regional Health Equity Council** has released an Issue Brief that identifies gaps in the access and availability of Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and community clinics under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). FQHCs are organizations that provide comprehensive health services for the medically underserved area or population in the United States.

Highlights of key findings:

- Patients who have been using FQHCs and community clinics may not be able to continue their relationships with their preferred health care provider under the plans provided through the state health exchanges under the ACA. As a result of this, low-income patients may delay care for minor and/or chronic health care conditions and this will ultimately lead to the increase of emergency room visits, thus straining vital first responder services.
- Due to reimbursement rate models that are allowable through the ACA, FQHCs and community clinics may no longer be able to compensate primary care providers at their current rates. The unintended consequence is a decrease in service capacity and therefore a decrease in access to care for patients.

The Southwest RHEC will use this information to support and stimulate dialogue on significant policy issues to end health disparities and to ensure that all residents have equal access to their long-standing health care providers.

The [Southwest Regional Health Equity Council \(Southwest RHEC\)](#) is one of ten regional health equity councils formed in 2011 as a part of the National Partnership for Action to End Health Disparities (NPA). The NPA is a national movement with the mission to improve the effectiveness of programs that target the elimination of health disparities through coordination of leaders, partners, and stakeholders that are committed to action. The Southwest RHEC is a coalition of leaders and health disparities experts representing several sectors and the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. The Southwest RHEC envisions a region free of disparities in health and healthcare, where all people attain the highest level of health.

Please visit the website for more information: <http://region6.npa-rhec.org/>



Southwest Regional Health Equity Council