



Family Health Center  
of Worcester

# Better Together

Family Health Center's Strategic Go-Forward Plan

## FINAL REPORT

### ABOUT BETTER TOGETHER

The Better Together 120-Day Go Forward Plan was a significant undertaking that required the collaboration of key stakeholders throughout the health center and our wider community. With a strong focus on increasing engagement, transparency, and providing a roadmap for our organization's future growth and development, the plan served as a crucial framework through which we are charting our course for a stronger future.



### TOP 10 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Despite facing challenging circumstances, our team's unwavering commitment enabled Family Health Center to achieve significant milestones throughout the 120-day plan.

-  **Pay Increase for All Staff**  
FHCW executed a significant cost-of-living adjustment for all staff.
-  **Onboarded New Finance Team**  
Including Revenue Cycle Manager, Controller, and a new CFO
-  **Hired 10+ Medical Providers**  
Hired over 10+ new providers including physicians and nurses
-  **Onboarded 37+ New Staff Members**  
FHCW has hired over 37 new team members since November 2022
-  **Achieved 30+ Days Cash on Hand**  
FHCW has maintained 30+ days cash on hand since January 2023
-  **New Refugee Health Program Leadership**  
FHCW appointed Amber Sarkar, MD to spearhead our Refugee Health Services
-  **Created Cross-Functional Committee Structure**  
Improving committee, work group, and advisory council collaboration with new structure
-  **Fundamental Financial Improvements**  
FHCW's revitalized finance team has improved billing collections from 58% to 85%
-  **Reduced Call Center Wait Time**  
FHCW has reinforced our patient services to reduce call center wait by ~40% in 180 days.
-  **Completed Annual Appeal Fundraiser**  
FHCW hosted its annual appeal fundraiser to close out 2022, raising over \$24,000

### THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The 120-Day Go-Forward Plan was spearheaded by leaders from across the agency and from our partners at Community Care Cooperative and Umass Chan Medical School.



**Philip J. Bolduc, MD**  
Steering Committee Co-Chair



**Hector Pérez, LICSW**  
Steering Committee Co-Chair

**Mary Denman - Committee Co-Chair**  
**Julie Nason - Committee Co-Chair**  
Lou Brady- Chief Executive Officer  
Sue Sleight - Chief Operating Officer  
Rob Zavoski - Chief Clinical Officer  
Yinka Fadahunsi - Chief Financial Officer

Marty Sellers- Board of Directors  
Heather Olson - Development  
Brenda Tsuchiya - Medical Services  
Jordan Howard-Young - Medical Services  
Steven Scott - Data / Analytics  
Nic DiBella - Communications

Darlene James - Human Resources  
Mike Holton - Finance  
Julie Nason - Behavioral Health  
Diane McKee - Umass Chan Medical School  
James Carlise - Community Care Cooperative  
Matt Mullaney - Community Care Cooperative

## THE WORK GROUPS

The process of defining the Center's needs and setting clear goals was led by a powerful congregation of Family Health Center staff organized into 5 high participation Work Groups:



### Billing Optimization

Mike Holton  
Sue Sleigh  
Rob Zavoski  
Brenda Tsuchiya  
Fouzi-Mohamed Raheb  
Ivy Marinelli-Velez  
Claudia Pierre  
Mary Denman  
Martha Sullivan

Matt Mulaney  
Kaitlin McColgan  
Liz Denver  
Steven Scott  
James Carlise  
Muhammad Xhemali  
Danielle O'Brien  
Lisa Wynne



### Grant Health

Heather Olson  
Danielle LaRiviere  
Lou Brady  
Sue Sleigh  
Rob Zavoski  
Hillary Mislan  
Jen Moffitt

Yinka Fadahunsi  
George Odoi  
Mary Ellen McIntyre  
Susana Rodriguez  
Steven Scott  
Carlos Zambrano



### Work Force

Shawna Hershberger  
Liz Denver  
Sue Sleigh  
Krystal Ortega  
Darlene James  
Betty Morse  
Sara Casey

Lisa Carter  
Laura Peterson  
Becca Blumhofer  
Carlos Zambrano  
Martha Sullivan  
Claire Porterfield



### Clinical Operations

Yaritza Roman  
Laurel Banach  
Katharine Barnard  
Brenda Tsuchiya  
Tia Strong  
Muhammad Xhemali  
Irma Torres  
Nathan Chiem

Dawn Perry  
Rebecca Blumhofer  
Gladys Rivas  
Jennifer Clark  
Jordan Howard-Young  
Susana Rodriguez  
Sue Sleigh



### Educational Mission

Hector Perez  
Faith Tendo  
Rob Zavoski  
Rebecca Thal  
Terry Burke  
Martha Sullivan

Laura Sturgill  
Robin Christian  
Chris Hwang  
Rob Rioux  
Ginny Van Duyne  
Tai Dinh

## THE INITIATIVES IDENTIFIED

The work groups have outlined clear goals to revitalize Family Health Center of Worcester's position, including enhancing staff benefits and improving financial performance.



### Billing Optimization

GOAL	STRATEGY	TIMELINE
Ensure FHCW is setting the standard with best-in-class financial practices that are efficient, transparent, and lean.	Refine billing procedures to reduce interactions, empower lean practices, and maximize reimbursement.	06/23
Implement robust quality control, comprehensive training, and innovative technology to increase clean bill rates.	Identify and mitigate the error(s) in billing practices through a monthly review of billed and rejected claims.	12/23
Develop efficient collections processes and collaborate with payers to reduce Account Receivables Days.	identify areas where billing practices and processes must be optimized. Enhance cash flows and reduce aging.	12/23



### Grant Health

GOAL	STRATEGY	TIMELINE
Maximize efficiency and scalability of grant financial management.	Develop process in collaboration with finance department for grant budgeting, reporting, accounting, and billing.	06/23
Improve grant and donor management processed and amplify data insights.	Vet, purchase, and transition donor and grant data to an improved fundraising management software.	12/23
Position FHCW as gold standard of organization-wide grant compliance.	Develop process with HR and Finance departments to track grant-funded positions, salaries and allocations.	12/23



## Work Force Revitalization

GOAL	STRATEGY	TIMELINE
Recognize and reward the contributions of our dedicated team members.	Ensure our current employees are well compensated through regular compensation adjustments.	02/23
Enhance FHCW's operational efficiency and improve staff support.	Identify and fill currently vacant roles that are critical to achieving optimal operation of the Health Center.	06/23
Position FHCW as a highly competitive, desirable employer in the city of Worcester and beyond.	Implement innovative and appealing non-salary benefits to enhance our overall compensation package.	09/23



## Clinical Operations

GOAL	STRATEGY	TIMELINE
Empower care through unparalleled experience and exceptional patient service for our community.	Increase percentage of answered phone calls and provide patient service through technology, training and staffing.	05/23
Enhance patient service by delivering timely care and support.	Improve real-time data sharing and care coordination to effectively reduce referral and diagnostic backlogs.	09/23
Improve patient journey by ensuring a frictionless appointment process.	Enhance appointment notifications and patient check-in process to reduce confusion and increase kiosk revenues	12/23

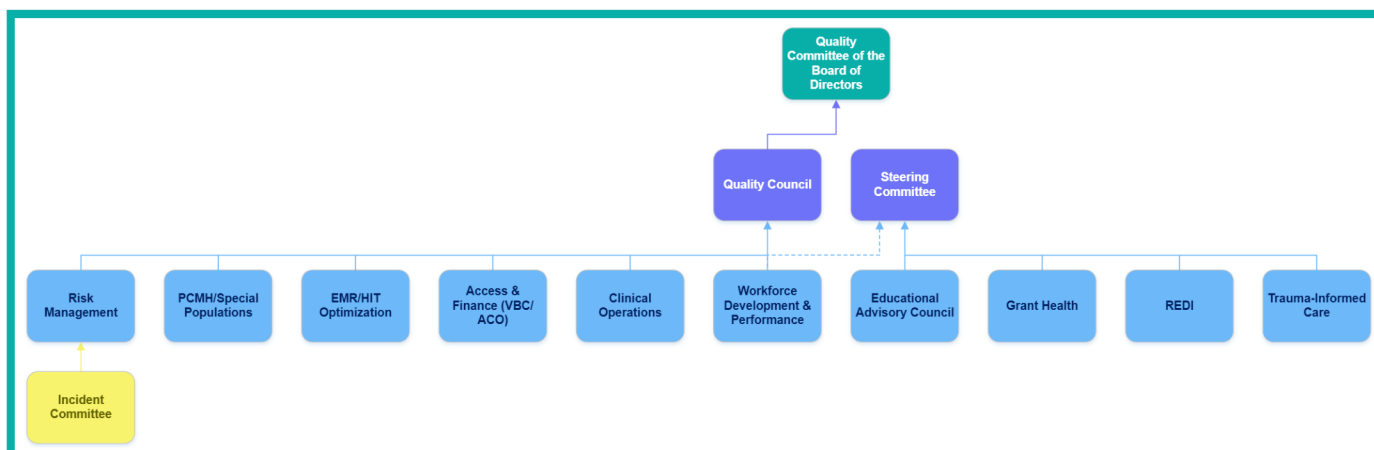


## Education

Educating the next generation of community health workers has long been part of Family Health Center's legacy. As we redouble our commitment to our mission of education, our Education Working Group will evolve into a continuously serving Education Advisory Group, which will provide valuable insights, guidance, and recommendations on our educational initiatives, helping to shape the future of our organization's residency and development programs. By harnessing the expertise and perspectives of this group, we will ensure that our educational programs remain relevant, impactful, and aligned with the evolving needs of our community.

## THE FUTURE OF OUR WORK GROUPS

We continue improving committee, work group, and advisory collaboration under a new structure.



## THE STATE OF THE CENTER

As the 120-Day Go-Forward Plan came to a close in March 2023, Family Health Center of Worcester, through laser focus, hard work, and meaningful collaboration of our team, has turned the corner on the path to a revitalized future.



# 87%

OF STAFF ARE OPTIMISTIC  
ABOUT FUTURE OF FHCW

FAMILY HEALTH CENTER  
DAYS CASH ON HAND



# 30+

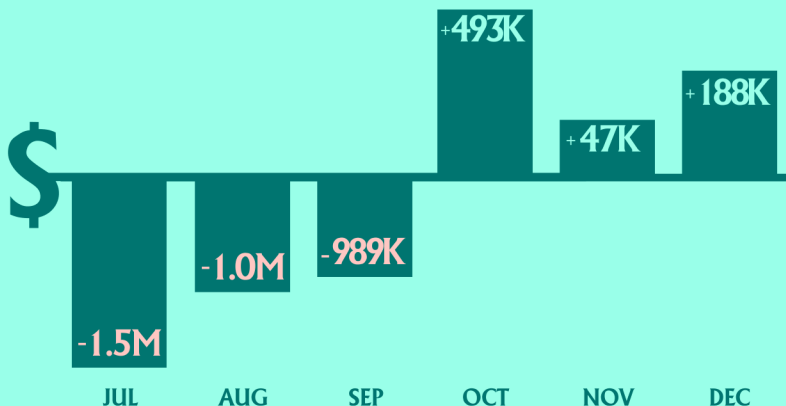
FAMILY HEALTH CENTER  
HIRED 38 FTE'S



# 76%

OF STAFF FIND THEIR WORK  
MEANINGFUL/VERY MEANINGFUL

FINANCIAL MOMENTUM CLOSES OUT 2022



# 84%

OF STAFF BELIEVE 120-DAY  
PLAN WAS BENEFICIAL



## TARGETED CHALLENGES

Our path to improvement is not yet done, we've identified 5 key focuses that require our dedicated commitment and additional investment.



**PAY PARITY**



**TECHNOLOGY**



**INFRASTRUCTURE**



**PATIENT SATISFACTION**



**STAFFING**

## PATHFORWARD

Nested within these top 5 focuses, we have identified our top 3 critical initiatives on which we are collaborating with our partners at the local, state, and federal levels to realize:



**Recruit and Retain**

To benefit our patients, our staff and generate additional revenue.



**Upgraded EMR System**

To increase efficiency and improve the experience for our patients.



**Improve Infrastructure**

To maximize investments and evolve our care model for our patients

## REVITALIZED, READY TO REPOSITION

As we reflect on the success of the Better Together 120-Day Go Forward Plan, our attention shifts to repositioning the Family Health Center for long-term financial and operational sustainability and better serving our patients in the years to come.

### RECRUITMENT = REVENUE

By increasing provider pay to market rate, we not only pay our existing staff what they deserve, but we can also more fully compete in recruiting additional providers. Empowering us to achieve a care team model that is revenue-generating.

### FINANCIAL EXPERTISE

We are leveraging insights uncovered by our Billing Optimization work group, we are improving financial processes, staffing, and technology to reduce costs, improve reimbursements, and ensure financial health.

### INVESTMENT IN EFFICIENCY

We are investing every dollar to improve staff resources and technology, such as a new best-in-class Electronic Medical Records software to reduce staff burden, improve patient experience, and optimize operations.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING

Our Board of Directors is collaborating closely with Executive Leadership to develop a renewed Strategic Vision for Family Health Center of Worcester that would chart the course for the agency through 2026.

## A DYNAMIC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As we deepen our relationships within our community, we are inviting emerging leaders to join our board of directors and help us further our mission:

Joseph Scardino, Esq - Chairperson  
Margaret L. Sellers - Vice Chairperson  
Theresa "Tess" Arthur  
Ruth Rodriguez Fay  
Nancy Jones

Peter J. Martin, Esq  
Janice MorganJones  
Jason Passell  
Lynda E. Rowe  
Doreen M. Samuels

Blerina Tahiraj  
Esther Faith Tendo  
Rubin M. Williams  
Anna Whitted

### Welcoming our newest Board Member!



**Joseph Kahoro**

Physician Assistant, Harrington Hospital

## FINAL REPORT CONCLUSION

The Better Together 120-Day Plan was a significant undertaking that aimed to enhance participation, transparency, and chart the course for future growth and development at the Family Health Center of Worcester. Despite facing numerous challenges, the dedication of our team empowered the achievement of many significant milestones throughout the plan.

The plan identified areas of improvement, including strategies to better serve patients and the community, resources needed to reduce staff burden, and technology and infrastructure improvements critical to revitalizing Family Health Center of Worcester.

**"FHCW has always been there for residents of Greater Worcester."**



~ Senator Robyn Kennedy

The plan brought together key stakeholders from within the health center and the wider community, enriching critical community relationships and amplifying the voice of our patients. Under the Steering Committee's leadership, the Work Groups deepened collaboration across the agency, improved transparency throughout the organization, and identified key goals to guide the organization's future development.

We are grateful for the support of our incredible staff, our community partners, and the state and federal delegation. But most of all we are grateful to the patient community we serve, for their patience, their understanding, and their belief in getting better together.