



# Health Clinics of Utah Transition

Utah Department of Health and Human Services  
Clinical Services Section  
October 18, 2022

To: Social Services Appropriations Subcommittee  
From: Michelle Hofmann (DHHS) , Executive Medical Director  
Subject: Transition of the Health Clinics of Utah

## Overview and Recommendation

During the 2022 Legislative Session the Social Services Appropriations Committee passed intent language that requires the Utah Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to transition the operation of the state-run health clinic to another provider by July 1, 2023. Along with this action, they discontinued ongoing funding for the clinic from the General Fund. The sole remaining Health Clinics of Utah (HCU) location in Rose Park was historically part of a larger statewide network of public health and dentistry clinics that has contracted over many years. The Rose Park clinic formerly offered side-by-side locations for physical and dental health services and 2 years ago the dental clinic was transitioned to the University of Utah.

The following provides an update to the Social Services Appropriation Subcommittee of DHHS's progress moving forward with the HCU transition prior to July 1, 2023. DHHS has engaged in a collaborative and patient-focused process and has made the decision to transition the HCU to the University of Utah to create a Population Health Center over the next 6 months.

## Proposal

Phase One in the development of the Population Health Center will include the expansion of University of Utah Health's existing Intensive Outpatient Clinic (IOC), which cares for some of the state's most medically, socially, and behaviorally complex patients in the Medicaid program. The IOC delivers comprehensive, coordinated, integrated care that improves the health and quality of life of patients while simultaneously reducing utilization of higher cost emergency and hospital settings. In addition, the University of Utah School of Medicine will co-locate a trainee preceptor model that will continue to deliver a critical primary care access point to underserved populations, including the uninsured, as the HCU has historically done.

The University of Utah shares the vision of DHHS to advocate for, support, and serve all individuals and communities in Utah through a seamless system of services and programs. The Population Health Center will partner with DHHS to develop novel clinical programs that tackle some of the most pressing health needs of our state. Using innovative and financially viable care models, the system will be a 'learning lab' that evaluates pilots that can be scaled to achieve enduring impacts across Utah. They will work in collaboration with DHHS and other stakeholders with the following aims:

- Focus on under-resourced populations

- Improve health outcomes and address inequities
- Align with our community needs
- Reduce total cost of care

Subsequent phases in the development of the Population Health Center will include identification of other challenging patient populations whose needs are not optimally met in typical healthcare settings. Populations already under evaluation for future program development include mother / baby dyads with substance use exposure and complex forensic patients experiencing transitions out of correctional settings.

### **Short Term Performance Outcomes**

1. Relocate and expand IOC
  - Integrate oral health for existing IOC patients using co-located University of Utah Health Rose Park dental clinic
  - Expand Medicaid population served by IOC through collaborative value based care and ACO partnerships
  - Support identification of existing HCU patients appropriate for IOC and trainee preceptor models and transitions for patients that can be appropriately served elsewhere
2. Create a primary care and behavioral health access point leveraging learners across University of Utah
  - Integrate learners from across the School of Medicine, Colleges of Nursing and Social Work and Department of Psychology
  - Provide sliding scale payment mechanism for all patients regardless of insurance status
  - Provide initial health screening exams for refugees

### **Timeline**

The University of Utah has given preliminary projections of an early 2023 timeline for relocation of the IOC. DHHS will begin the process of patient and employee notifications and transition as these timelines are finalized. Future status updates on the HCU clinic transition will be provided as requested by the Social Services Appropriations Subcommittee.

### **Conclusion**

DHHS welcomes the partnership with the University of Utah in tackling some of the most pressing health and human service delivery needs in the state, testing innovative ideas that aim to quell the cost crisis in health care while improving the lives of Utahns and leveraging learners to train the next generation of health professionals with the background and skills to advance our shared vision.