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CFI Supports Bipartisan Legislation Expanding Access to CCBHCs in Wisconsin

MILWAUKEE, WI, (Dec. 11, 2025)—Centers for Independence (CFI), a leading nonprofit provider of behavioral health and crisis services in Wisconsin and Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC), is voicing strong support for proposed bipartisan legislation that would expand access to lifesaving mental health and substance use services nationwide.

CCBHCs provide comprehensive mental health and substance use services to anyone who walks through their doors, regardless of ability to pay. They offer crisis intervention, medication management, housing support, and care coordination—all under one roof. This integrated approach saves lives and reduces costly emergency room visits and incarcerations.

CCBHCs are federally defined, state-driven, and locally achieved, ensuring strong accountability standards while allowing states and communities the flexibility to tailor services to meet unique local needs. This model has already proven effective in expanding access to care, reducing wait times, and easing the burden on hospitals and law enforcement. The proposed bill would make it possible for more communities to establish CCBHCs, ensuring that individuals can access mental health and substance use care, including crisis services, when and where they need it most.

One critical provision of the legislation is the creation of a Medicare CCBHC benefit, which would cover services not currently reimbursed under Medicare. This change is especially vital as America's 65+ population continues to grow, ensuring seniors have access to comprehensive behavioral health care.

Beyond patient care, the bill also addresses the health care workforce shortage. CCBHCs have demonstrated their ability to create jobs even amidst workforce challenges: 98% of CCBHCs increased staff since certification, resulting in more than 11,000 new positions nationwide, including over 3,000 in rural communities. Expanding the CCBHC model will extend these workforce benefits to more states.

This legislation is bipartisan, reflecting broad recognition of the urgent need to strengthen America's behavioral health system. Already, CCBHCs are making a measurable difference in

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48 states and territories, serving more than 3 million Americans and helping reduce hospitalizations and homelessness.

“This bill represents a critical step forward in ensuring that every community has access to the comprehensive, accountable, and locally responsive care that CCBHCs provide,” said Rachel Leahy Hilker, Associate Vice President, Behavioral Health. “We ask everyone who wants to expand access to lifesaving mental health services to urge their lawmakers to support this legislation.”

To add your voice to the campaign and help bring lifesaving care to millions more Americans, visit The National Council for Mental Wellbeing’s website, <https://thenationalcouncil.quorum.us/campaign/143777/>, and complete the online form.

About CFI’s Behavioral Health and Crisis Services

CFI has been a leader in building healthy, hopeful and inclusive communities for over 85 years, specializing in programs and services that help people with disabilities and behavioral health needs thrive. As a CCBHC and one of Milwaukee County’s largest behavioral health care providers, CFI offers evidence-based peer support services with a trauma-informed approach to nearly 3,000 adults living with serious mental illness, addiction or a chronic health condition.

In addition to integrated outpatient clinical services, CFI offers supportive housing to reduce homelessness among people living with mental health challenges and operates four community-based Crisis Resource Centers (CRCs) for people experiencing mental health crisis. Through highly personalized care, stabilization, temporary housing and access to supportive resources, CFI serves as a crucial alternative to incarceration or hospitalization.

About Centers for Independence

Centers for Independence (CFI) is a Milwaukee based nonprofit dedicated to supporting people with disabilities and behavioral health needs through innovative, person-centered programs. Since 1938, CFI has been a leader trauma-informed care, self-direction and removing barriers to help individuals achieve total health and greater independence. Visit cfihope.org to learn more.

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