

CCBHC Transformation

A Year in Review

**Advancing state systems, strengthening clinics
and building the behavioral health workforce**

Advancing the CCBHC Model Nationwide

In July 2025, the National Council for Mental Wellbeing and its partner, the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), embarked on an ambitious effort to transform Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs) in Illinois, Kansas, and Michigan. Generously funded by Ballmer Group, the initiative supports state governments in scaling, strengthening and sustaining their CCBHC demonstrations.

Through this initiative, states and clinics receive comprehensive technical assistance to advance the vision and impact of the CCBHC model—strengthening community-based care, expanding the behavioral health workforce and improving access to high-quality services.

This work ensures more people receive the care they need—when and where they need it—while building a sustainable model for behavioral health systems transformation.

In its first year, this initiative focused on laying the foundation for long-term transformation across three interconnected areas: state systems, clinical practice and workforce development.

Across each area, Year 1 delivered a set of **foundational wins**, creating the conditions for implementation, scale and sustained impact.

CCBHC-T PROGRAM GOALS

- Realize the vision for CCBHC
- Improve behavioral health access through innovative service delivery
- Expand the behavioral health workforce
- Leverage CCBHC financing to expand access to care
- Accelerate and sustain high quality, high-impact CCBHC models

YEAR 1

At a Glance

3

states advancing CCBHC transformation focused on sustainability and quality

900+

clinicians receiving support to achieve licensure or credentials

30+

state leaders engaged weekly across all states to advance CCBHC strategy and sustainability

55+

clinics engaged in practice transformation technical assistance¹

5

mental and behavioral health associations engaged across three states

System-Level Wins: Strengthening State Systems

Soon after launch, state leaders engaged in two days of intensive workshops focused on vision creation, goal alignment and stakeholder identification. Each state produced an actionable roadmap to guide CCBHC sustainability, quality and access.

States also received consultative support to define stakeholders, identify compelling messages and develop their value proposition — resulting in communications strategies that strengthen CCBHC support statewide. The CCBHC Value Proposition Toolkit is now available on our website for all to use to advance state-level CCBHC messaging.

With demonstrations ending in Michigan in 2027 and in Kansas and Illinois in 2028, Financial sustainability is a priority. Each state is receiving tailored technical assistance to identify financial levers to use beyond the demonstration period, which will continue into the next project year.

KEY WINS: State Systems

- 16 state leaders engaged in 2 days of change leaders training
- Financial TA provided at a critical moment as all states are setting up the infrastructure that will allow them to continue their CCBHC model after the demo ends.
- 3 state-specific CCBHC visions and aligned roadmaps

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“CCBHC-T has come at the right time [to examine] the CCBHC payment model. We have [received] really good information that might have taken longer to come together if we didn’t have this opportunity.”

– State leader

¹ 125 clinics expected to be engaged throughout the life of the initiative



KEY WINS: Clinic Transformation

- **Clinic transformation efforts are aligned to state vision**
- **Clinics have strong engagement in TA**, reflecting their recognition of the impact TA can have on their practice
- TA participants feel **confident about their ability to make long-term practice improvement changes** with efforts continuing in year 2

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As a CCBHC leader, we are constantly looking for ways to improve access, reduce wait times, and support provider sustainability. The concepts discussed [in TA] will help inform our ongoing conversations about staffing models, workflow improvements, and data-driven decision making as we work to strengthen our workforce and service delivery.”

- Clinic TA participant

Practice-Level Wins: Advancing Clinical Transformation

CCBHCs are state guided, but implemented at the local level. Over the course of the initiative, transformation efforts will engage 125 current and potential CCBHCs. In Year 1, clinics heard directly from state leaders on the CCBHC vision and the technical assistance available to help achieve it.

Clinics began early-stage transformation through vision and practice transformation workshops with CCBHC state-leaders. This is one of the first times that clinics and states dialogued together on setting and implementing a shared vision for CCBHCs in their state, an opportunity that would not have been realized without this initiative.

This effort translated into practical action: supporting clinic strategic planning, workflow refinement and cross-team implementation. Participants reported confidence in using the materials to clarify priorities, align goals, manage change and guide next steps. This work has aligned state-level strategy with on-the-ground implementation, ensuring that policy, financing and operations support meaningful change.

Workforce Wins: Building the Behavioral Health Pipeline

A core goal of the CCBHC Transformation effort is to strengthen the CCBHC workforce through closing critical care gaps in the mental health and substance use workforce. One way we are doing this is through adapting the [Kaiser Permanente Mental Health Career Accelerator](#) program. In Year 1, the Accelerator generated strong interest, with more than 1,000 candidates applying to participate—demonstrating need to reduce barriers to achieving licensure and certification; which is critical to people receiving high quality behavioral health care.

States also completed workforce diagnostics to better understand the root causes of workforce challenges and identify targeted strategies to address gaps. These insights are informing concrete action plans that will be implemented in Year 2.

Looking Ahead: Year 2 and Beyond

In Year 2, CCBHC Transformation will explore innovative opportunities around the future of work in CCBHCs. These include piloting the [Common Elements Treatment Approach \(CETA\)](#) in select clinics to accelerate screening, diagnosing, and treatment timeline, without sacrificing quality care or recovery. Additionally, we will be exploring CCBHC optimization with AI innovations embedded throughout the patient and workforce experience to create more time for clinicians and other staff to serve patients.

The 923 candidates recruited into the Workforce Accelerator will begin achieving milestones to advance towards licensure and specialized technical assistance, test preparation tools, and supervision support to drive their progress. The 77 Workforce Accelerator employment sites will also receive technical assistance centered on the organization's most pressing workforce needs. At publication time, a second Workforce Acceleration recruitment period is expected in Fall 2026.

Clinics will move into practice improvement opportunities focused on expanding access, improving quality, and bridging the unique CCBHC Prospective Payment System (PPS) payment into operational and clinical changes that benefit patients. In year two and beyond an additional 70 clinics will begin to receive technical assistance through the program to support or prepare for the CCBHC program. States will continue to receive tailored technical assistance aligned to their roadmap.

As implementation accelerates, this work will continue to strengthen behavioral health systems, expand access to care and build the workforce needed to meet growing demand—ensuring more individuals and families receive high-quality, community-based care when they need it most.

YEAR 2 PRIORITIES

- 1** Continue advancing sustainability and financing strategies to prepare for demonstration end in 2027 (Michigan) and 2028 (Kansas and Illinois)
- 2** Provide training and technical assistance that will support all CCBHCs in adoption of same-day/rapid access and redesigning access to continue to meet community needs
- 3** Accelerate state and clinic-level statewide data-sharing and collective engagement on continuous quality improvement
- 4** Support current Workforce Accelerator candidates and clinics in achieving milestones and prepare for additional worksite and candidate recruitment
- 5** Implement [Common Elements Treatment Approach \(CETA\)](#) in clinics in collaboration with the state and other key implementation partners
- 6** Support at least one clinic in workflow redesign to leverage AI tools that allow clinicians and paraprofessionals to spend more time with patients and solve other business challenges
- 7** Expand access, PPS, and other technical assistance to current and additional providers