



PANDEMIC RECOVERY OFFICE

Health Care Facilities: Health Center Assistance

Submitted by State of Rhode Island Pandemic Recovery Office

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<https://pandemicrecovery.ri.gov>

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Health Care Facilities: Health Center Assistance

Project Identification Number: 10047

Pandemic Recovery Office Approval Date: December 19, 2022

Project Completion Date: February 9, 2024

Funding Amount: \$2,500,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 Negative Economic Impacts: Aid to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Problem Statement: Community health centers provide care for approximately 200,000 Rhode Islanders, most of whom live below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL). While health center administrators, physicians, nurses, social workers, community health workers, and front-desk personnel persevered through this pandemic, a significant number of health center employees are leaving their jobs. Across Rhode Island community health centers, the monthly voluntary turnover rate increased from 14% in January 2020 to 16% in January 2022. The average employee tenure dropped 5.9% from January 2020 to June 2022.¹ Several reasons contribute to these departures, including burnout and higher compensation offered by other healthcare providers.

According to a June 2022 report by the Kaiser Family Foundation, “Staff recruitment and retention remain common concerns at health centers nationally.”² Attrition and the struggle to recruit employees jeopardize community health centers’ ability to continue to effectively respond to their patients and communities.

Project Overview: The project provided grants to the eight federally qualified health centers in Rhode Island to restore and support community health center employment through worker retention incentives that were no more than 25% of an employee’s base pay.³ The bonuses did not result in long-term base pay increases. The Rhode Island General Assembly provided a direct award to the Rhode Island Health Center Association (RIHCA) to serve as a subrecipient for this project. As the subrecipient, RIHCA distributed the grants to the eight community health centers. The grant distribution formula was based on the percentage of patients served at each health center out of the total of patients served at all eight health centers using 2021 Uniform Data System data from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration.⁴

Community health centers serve all community members regardless of insurance status or ability to pay. The promotion of economic and racial equity is in their core mission and reflected in the

¹ Data provided by the eight federally qualified health centers in response to a survey

² [How Community Health Centers Are Serving Low-Income Communities During the COVID-19 Pandemic Amid New and Continuing Challenges](#)

³ Community health centers’ designation as “federally qualified health centers” require that they are in health professional shortage areas (HPSA), which have a shortage of primary, dental, or mental health care providers, as defined by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration.

⁴ [Health Center Program Uniform Data System \(UDS\) Data Overview \(hrsa.gov\)](#)

enabling services they provide, including interpreter services and transportation, as well as their sliding fee scales.

According to the National Association of Community Health Centers, the eight federally funded health center organizations in Rhode Island leverage approximately \$31 million in federal investments to serve their patients. In 2021, 9.6% of community health center patients were uninsured; 22.2% were best served in a language other than English; and of patients reporting race, 28% identified as a race other than white.⁵

Financial Overview: All program payments can be found on the [Pandemic Recovery Office’s website](#) by filtering the “Project” box for “Health Care Facilities: Health Center Assistance.” The table below shows planned expenditures by fiscal quarter and actual expenditures by fiscal quarter:

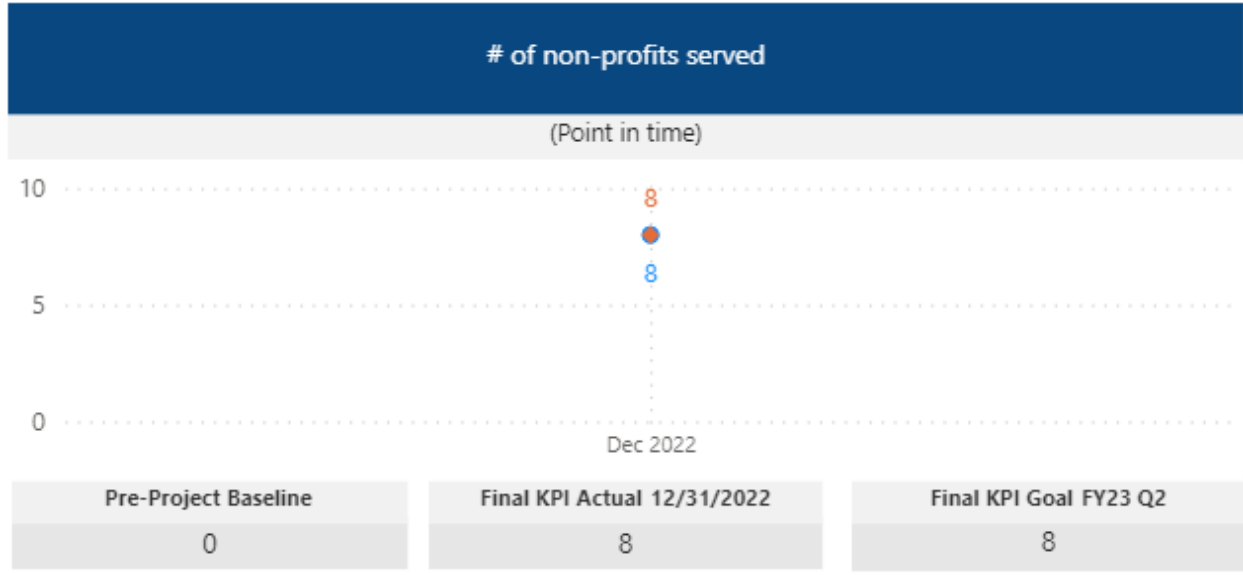
Fiscal Year Quarter	Planned Expenditures	Actual Expenditures
FY 2023 Q2	\$2,500,000	\$2,499,250
FY 2023 Q3	-	\$750
Total	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000
<i>Note: A single audit fee applies to all State Fiscal Recovery Fund projects and accounts for \$750 of the funds shown in the above table.</i>		

⁵ [2021 Rhode Island Health Center Program Uniform Data System Data](#)

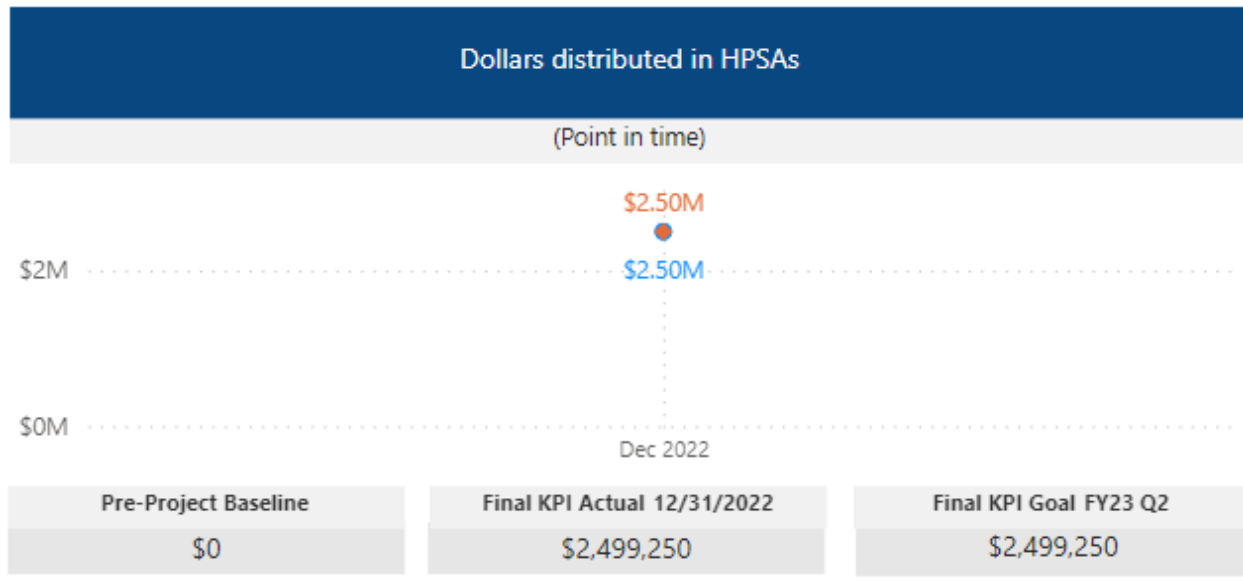
Key Performance Indicators: The following are the key performance indicators based on quarterly goals and monthly data collections.

Legend: ● Actual KPI Value Reported ◆ Quarterly Goals

1. Number of nonprofits served

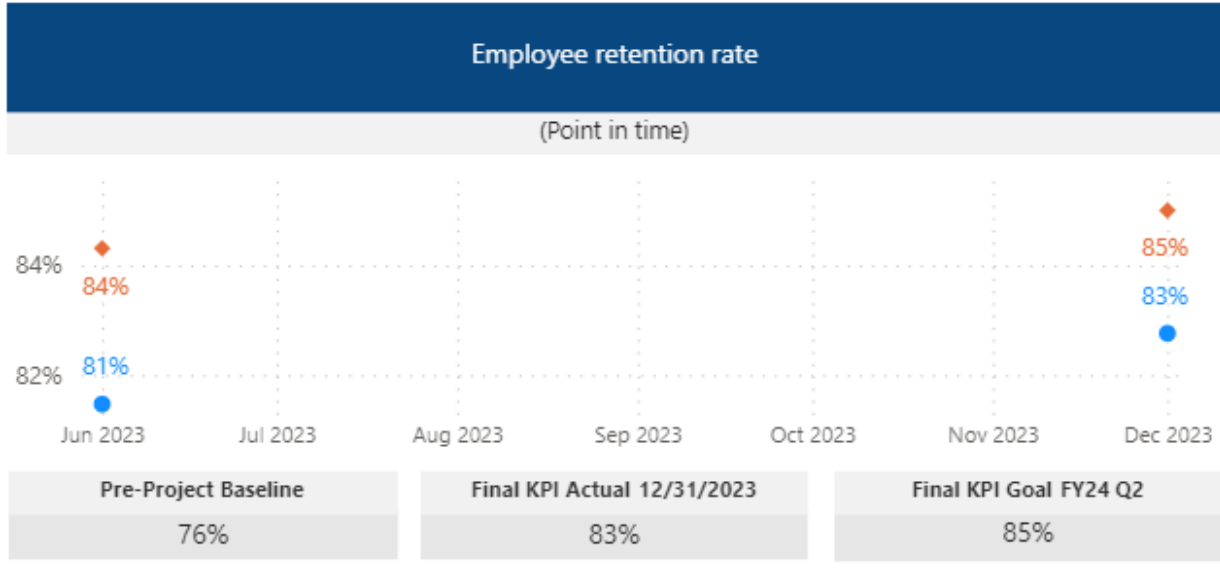


2. Dollars distributed in HPSAs

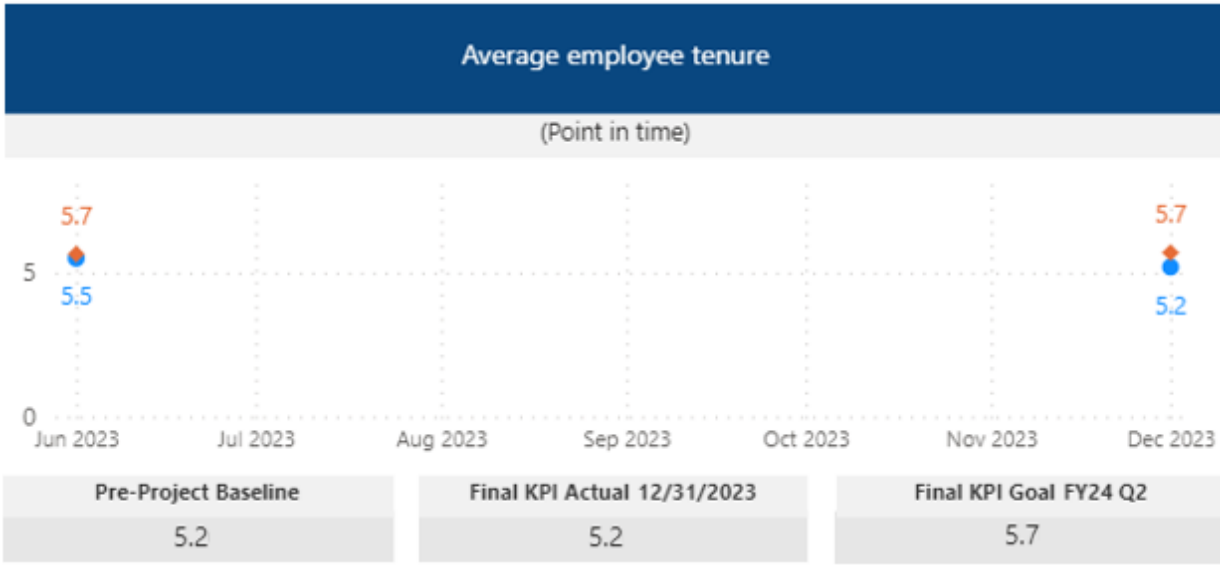


Legend: ● Actual KPI Value Reported ◆ Quarterly Goals

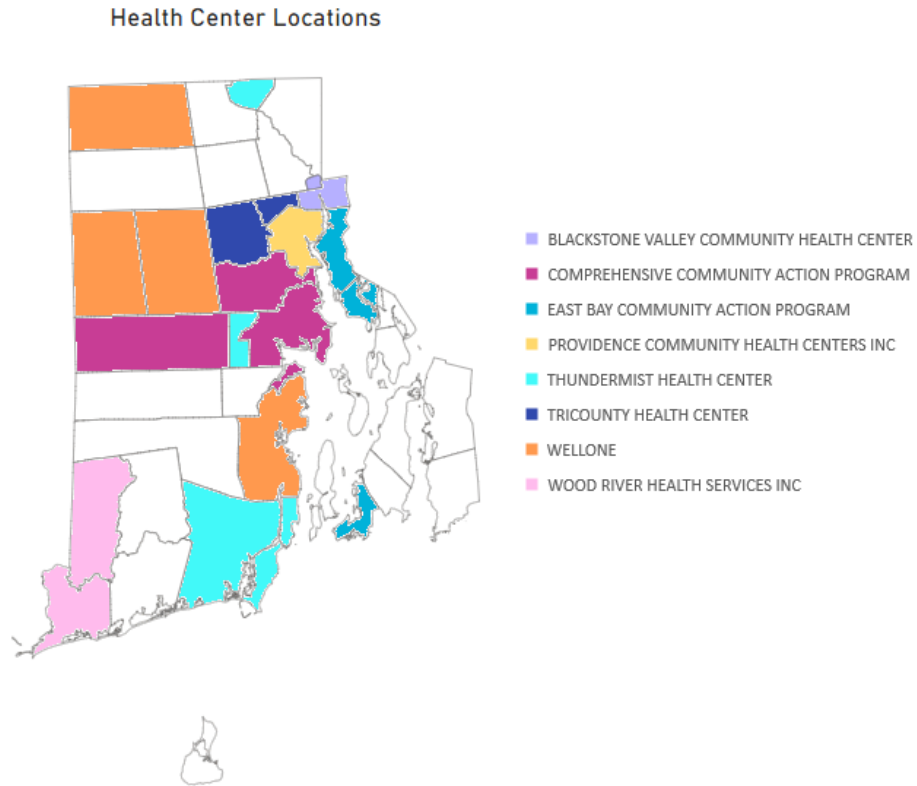
3. Employee retention rate



4. Average employee tenure (measured in years)



Auxiliary Information:



Health Center	Location	Total Grant Amount
Blackstone Valley Community Health Center	Pawtucket	\$265,920
Comprehensive Community Action Program	Cranston	\$231,930
East Bay Community Action Program	Newport	\$131,461
Providence Community Health Centers Inc.	Providence	\$775,517
Thundermist Health Center	Woonsocket	\$688,543
Tricounty Health Center	North Providence	\$94,972
Wellone	North Kingstown	\$216,435
Wood River Health Services Inc.	Westerly	\$94,472
Total		\$2,499,250