

Volunteer and Retired Providers Program
2018 Survey Results

Compiled June 2019



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Summary of Findings

The Volunteer and Retired Providers (VRP) Program supports Washington's healthcare safety net by mitigating common financial barriers to healthcare volunteerism and streamlining volunteers' access to license renewal, liability insurance and support. Administered by Washington Healthcare Access Alliance (WHAA), the 2018 VRP Program Survey demonstrates the value of licensed healthcare volunteers to Washington's healthcare safety net system.

Provider Survey Overview

Over 1,500 healthcare providers in 2018 and over 1,800 in 2019 use the VRP Program to support their volunteer work.

- **1,562** provider surveys were enrolled in the VRP Program when the 2018 survey was initiated.
- **903** providers responded.
- **833** providers confirmed they provided services in 2018.
- These **833** providers contributed **55,580** volunteer hours in 2018. These hours are an underestimation of the total hours contributed by healthcare volunteers across the state.
- Average volunteer hours per respondent was **66.72**.

Site Survey Overview

VRP sites are a variety of free and charitable clinics, periodic health fairs, camps, school-based health clinics, federally qualified community health centers, rural health clinics, homelessness outreach units, and other safety net entities that serve primarily low-income patients.

- **129** site surveys were enrolled in the VRP Program when the 2018 survey was initiated.
- **58** sites responded to the survey.
- **74,232** patient care hours and **265,236** patient visits were reported in 2018 by these **58** sites.

Return on Investment for Washington State

If each of these patient visits had been treated in an emergency room setting as a moderate issue at a "fair cost" of \$720 per visit,¹ the value of this care would be \$190,970,000, based on reported data. Direct costs to the State of Washington to administer the VRP Program are \$110,000 per year. This represents a return on investment of \$1,736.09 for every dollar spent for only those 58 sites that reported.

¹ https://www.healthcarebluebook.com/page_ProcedureDetails.aspx?cftId=239&g=Emergency+Room+Visit+-+Moderate+Problem

Introduction



Volunteers are a vital pillar of the Washington’s healthcare safety net system. Over 1,800 active healthcare volunteers currently use VRP Program support to provide care to low income patients in a variety of settings.

The VRP Program conducts an annual survey of both volunteers and participant sites, which allows the state to measure the impact of healthcare volunteerism. This survey report includes data from VRP Program operating year 2018.

History of the Volunteer and Retired Providers Program

The VRP Program was initiated in 1992, when nine retired healthcare professionals advocated for malpractice insurance coverage to support their volunteer work. The program was written into law that year as [RCW 43.70.460](#), [RCW 43.70.470](#), and Chapter [246-564 WAC](#), with the explicit goal of leveraging the power of healthcare volunteerism to serve low income and underserved patients.

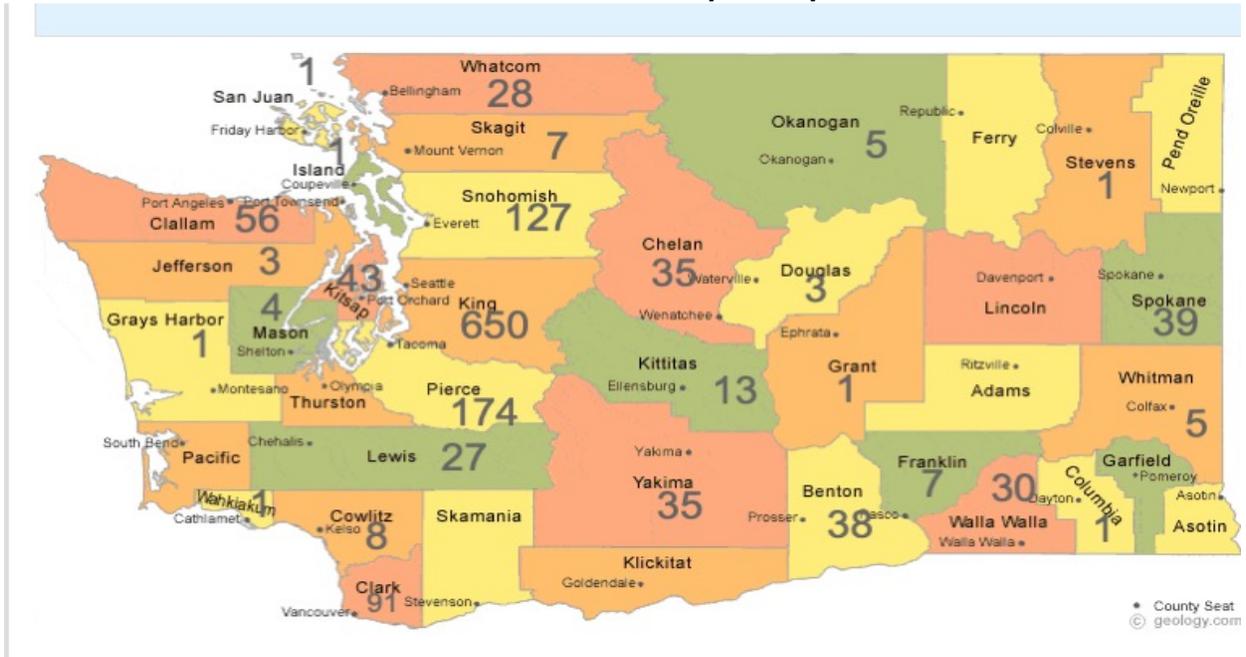
Since its inception, the VRP Program has evolved to include the full spectrum of healthcare providers licensed in Washington State. The program's largest provider groups are nurses, physicians and dentists, who use the VRP Program for malpractice insurance and/or license renewal to support their volunteer activities.

Washington's expanded [Good Samaritan Law](#) provides additional protection from liability for uncompensated healthcare volunteers.

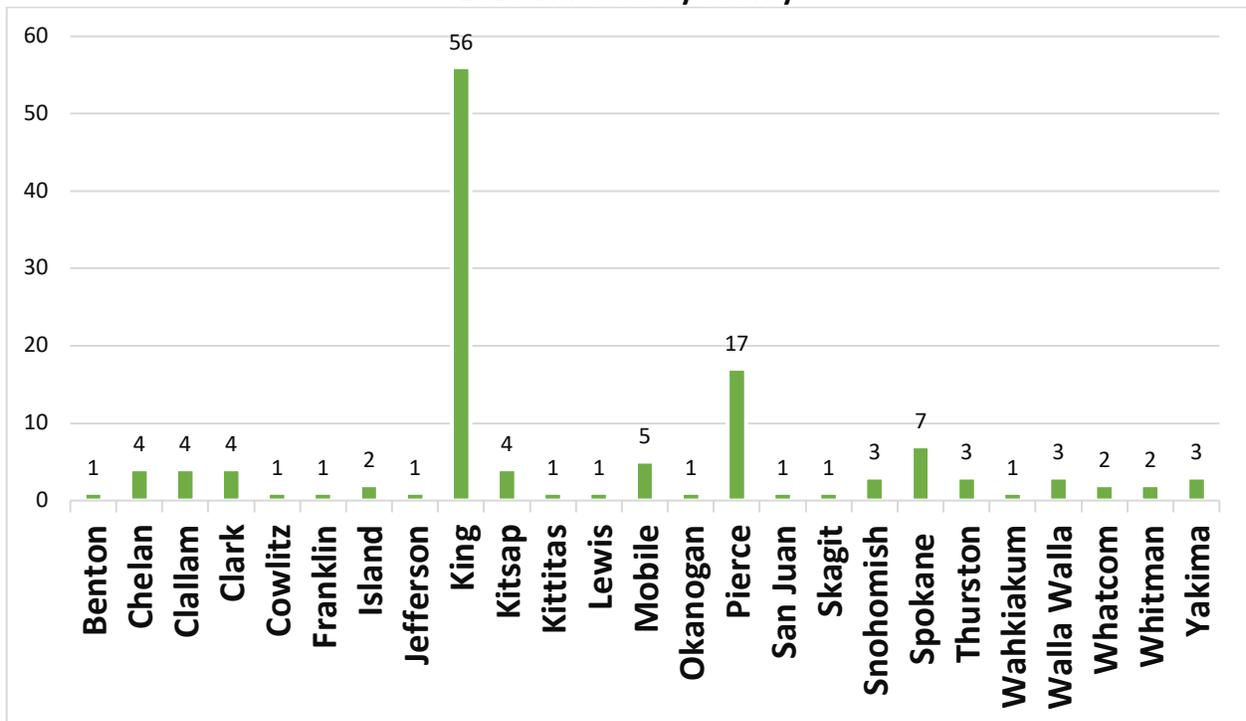
In 2014, the Washington State Legislature passed [Engrossed House Bill 2351](#), authorizing healthcare providers licensed in other U.S. jurisdictions to practice in Washington State as volunteers. Out-of-state volunteers are eligible for VRP malpractice coverage to protect their volunteer work, and may volunteer in Washington State up to 30 calendar days per year. Since 2017, the VRP Program has been administered by [Washington Healthcare Access Alliance \(WHAA\)](#), a nonprofit established to provide leadership and support to the healthcare safety net, prioritizing the work of free and charitable clinics.

VRP Program engagement has steadily increased since the program's inception, with a significant increase in program enrollment over the last 12 years.

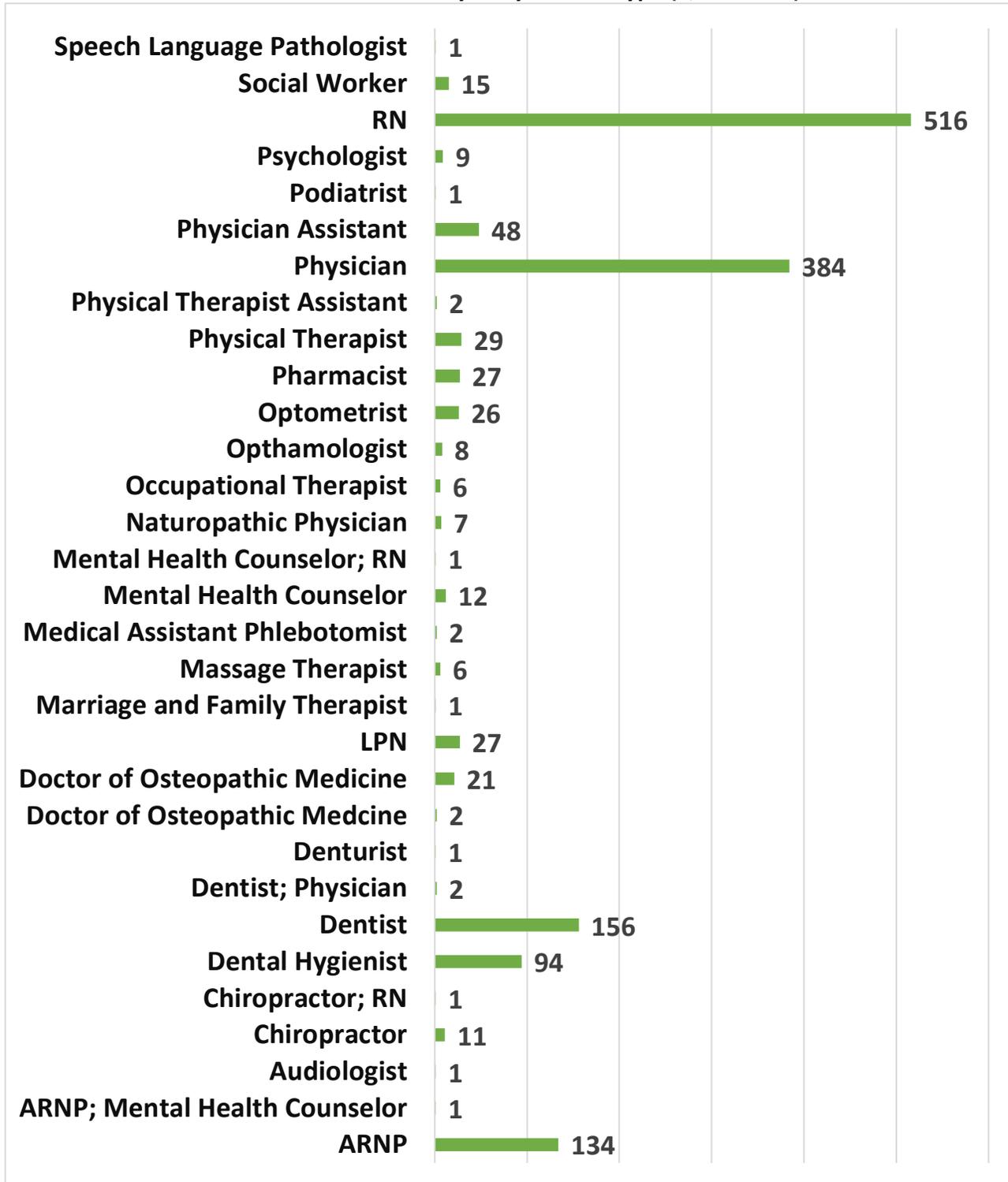
2018 VRP Providers by County



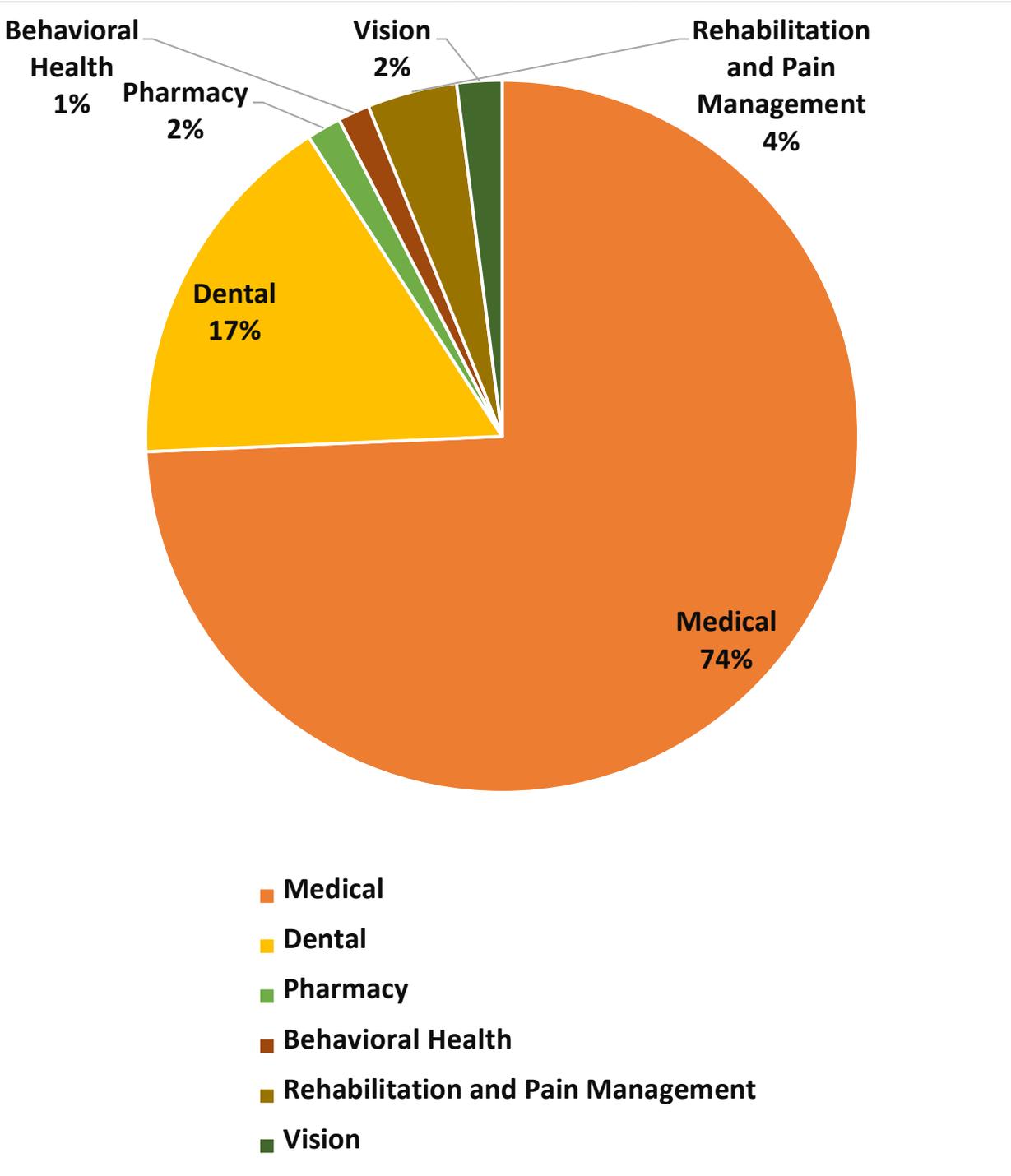
2018 VRP Sites by County



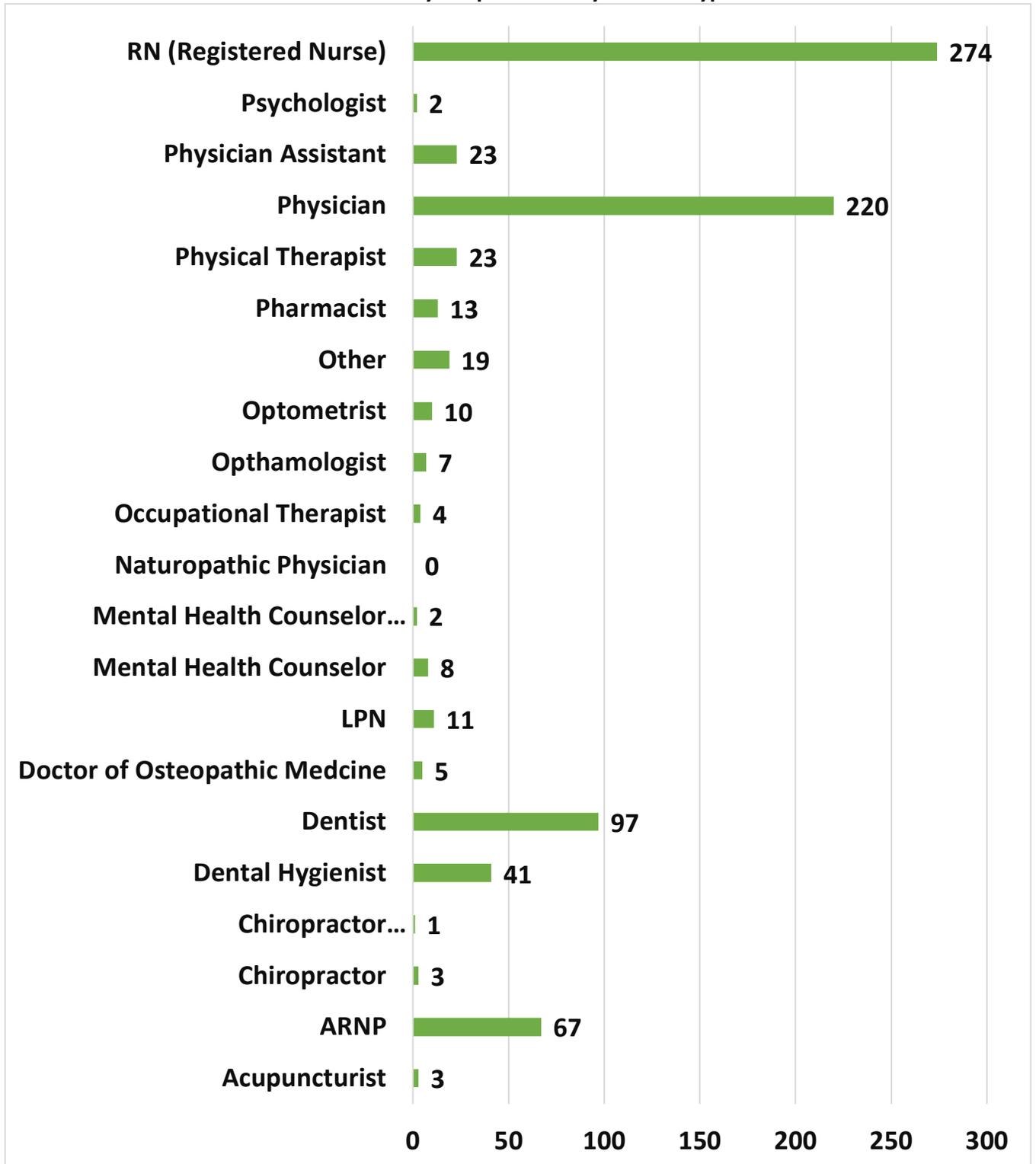
2018 VRP Providers Surveyed by License Type (1,562 Total)

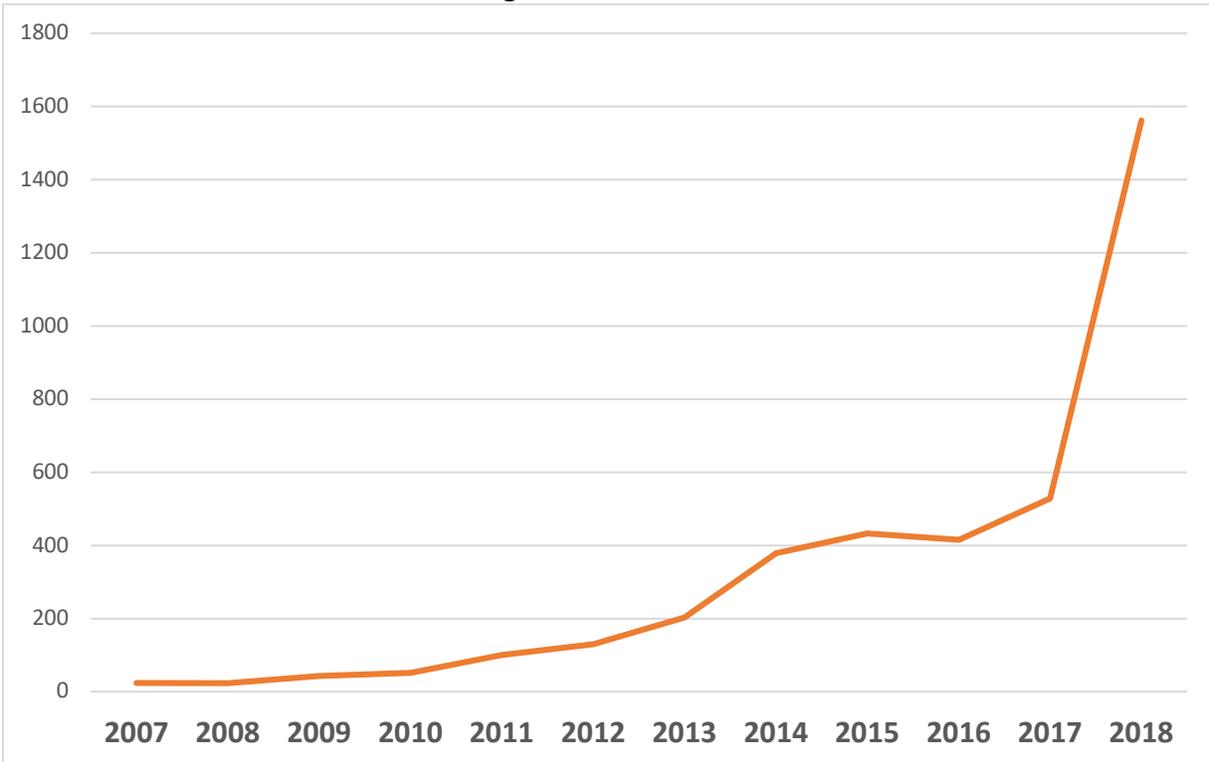


2018 VRP Provider Survey Respondents by Area of Practice



2018 Provider Survey Respondents by License Type



VRP Program Growth 2007-2018

Survey Process & Methodology

The 2018 survey was sent by email to 1,540 active providers in January 2019. Follow up was necessary with the 74 providers who did not have accurate email addresses in the VRP database. Those who opted out of VRP Program newsletter communications (94) were additionally contacted by the program.

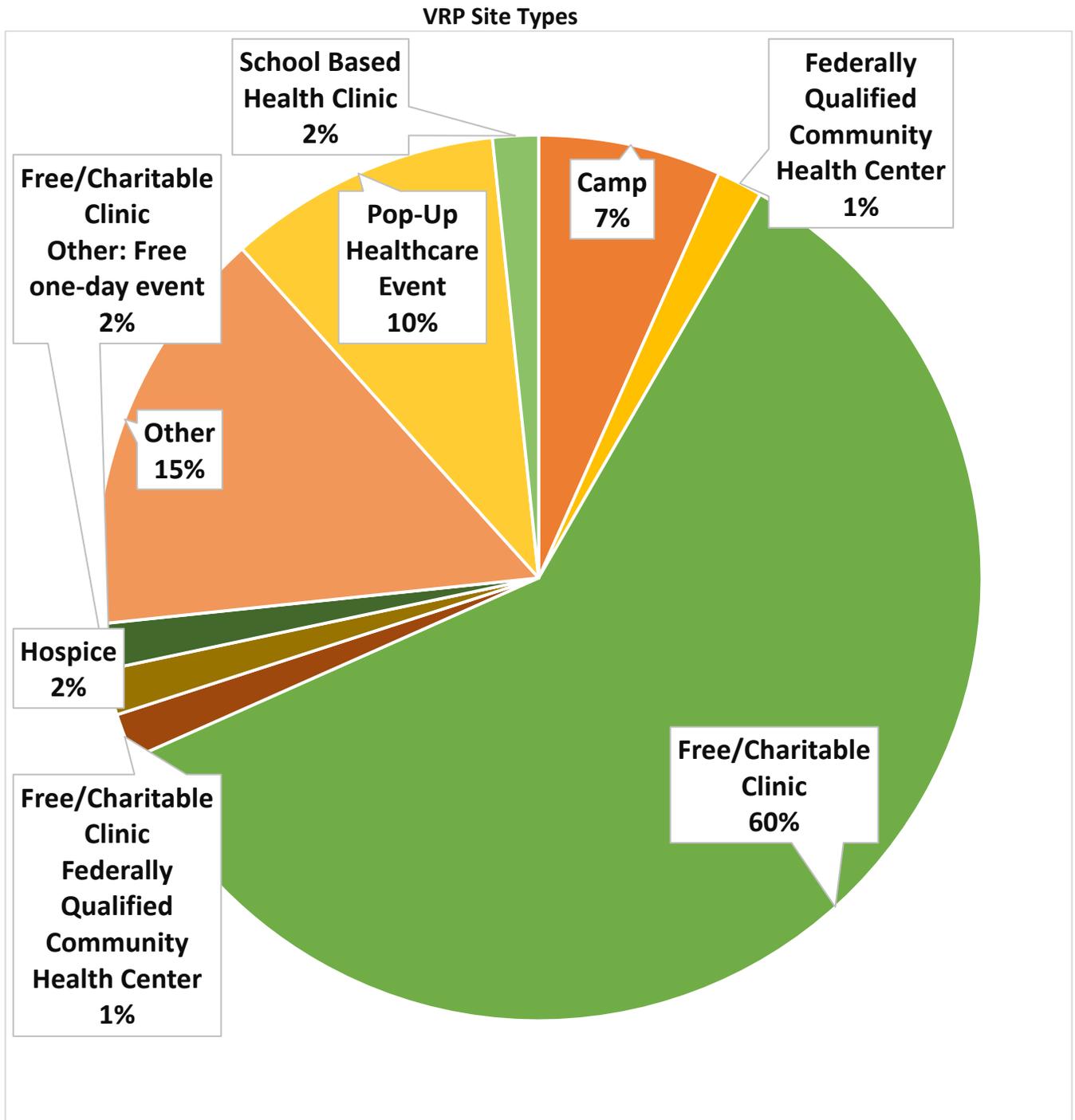
Since beginning administration of the VRP Program in April 2017, WHAA has spent significant time updating program records to maximize program efficiency and database accuracy. Inactive VRP Program records were purged just prior to the survey process.

WHAA has solicited and incorporated feedback from VRP Program constituents in order to achieve maximal provider response. In conducting the 2016 and 2017 survey process, it was discovered that many sites did not have patient data prepared early in the year. In response, WHAA moved the 2018 site survey to the latter half of the survey period to avoid a gap in data. The site surveys were therefore sent in March 2019.

Although opportunities for improvement to the survey processes are ongoing, the data collected clearly demonstrates the value of and need for this program.

Site Survey Results

Of the 129 active sites surveyed, 58 responded to the 2018 survey, representing a 45% response rate.



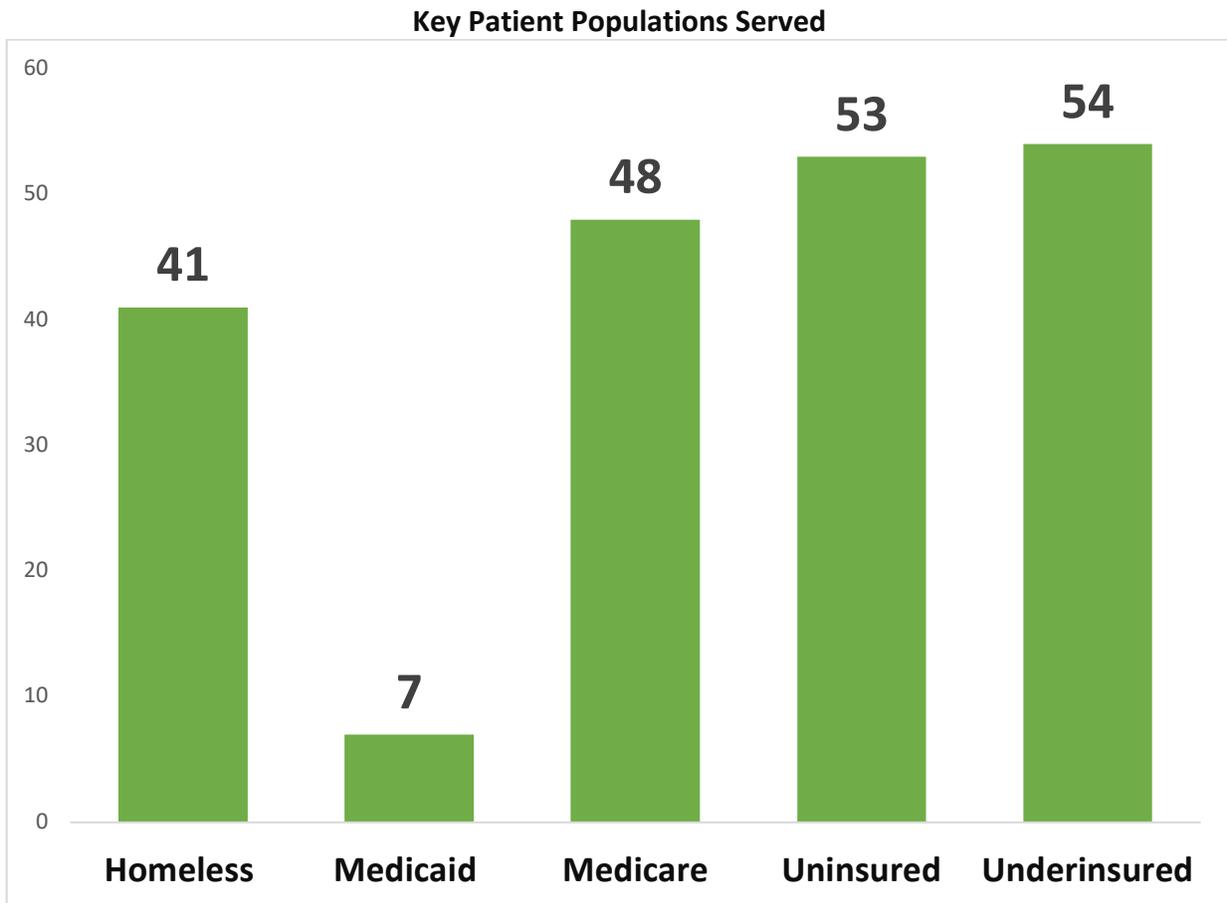
Two federally qualified community health centers responded to this year's survey that use VRP volunteers to supplement paid staff. These sites have longer operating hours and serve a much larger patient population than is typical of most VRP sites. The data included below were thus calculated both including and excluding federally qualified community health center responses.

Numbers of Patients Served

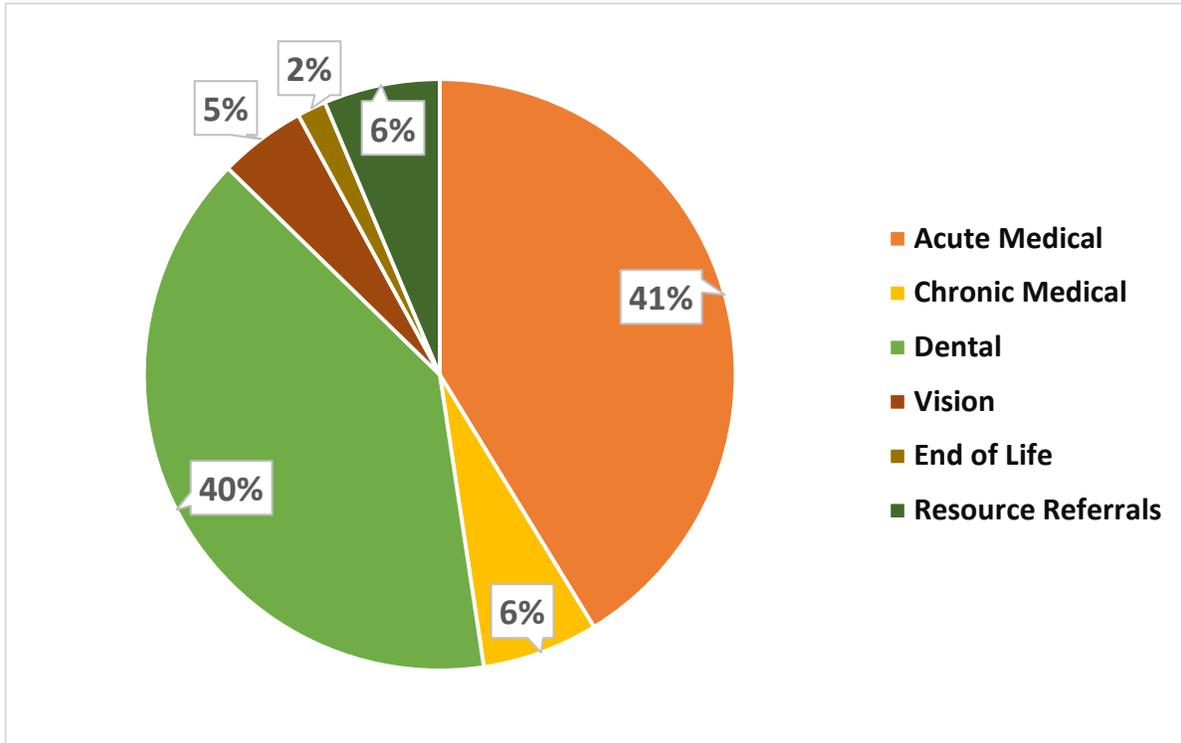
Total Patient Care Hours	74,232
Total Patient Care Hours Per Year, Not Counting FQHCs	70,788
Total Patient Visits	265,236
Total Patient Visits, Not Counting FQHCs	98,966
Total Unduplicated Patients*	62,918
Total Unduplicated Patients, Not Counting FQHCs	17,620

*Many VRP sites do not track unduplicated patients but do track patient visits. Of the 58 site respondents, 24 were able to identify 62,918 unique patient visits.

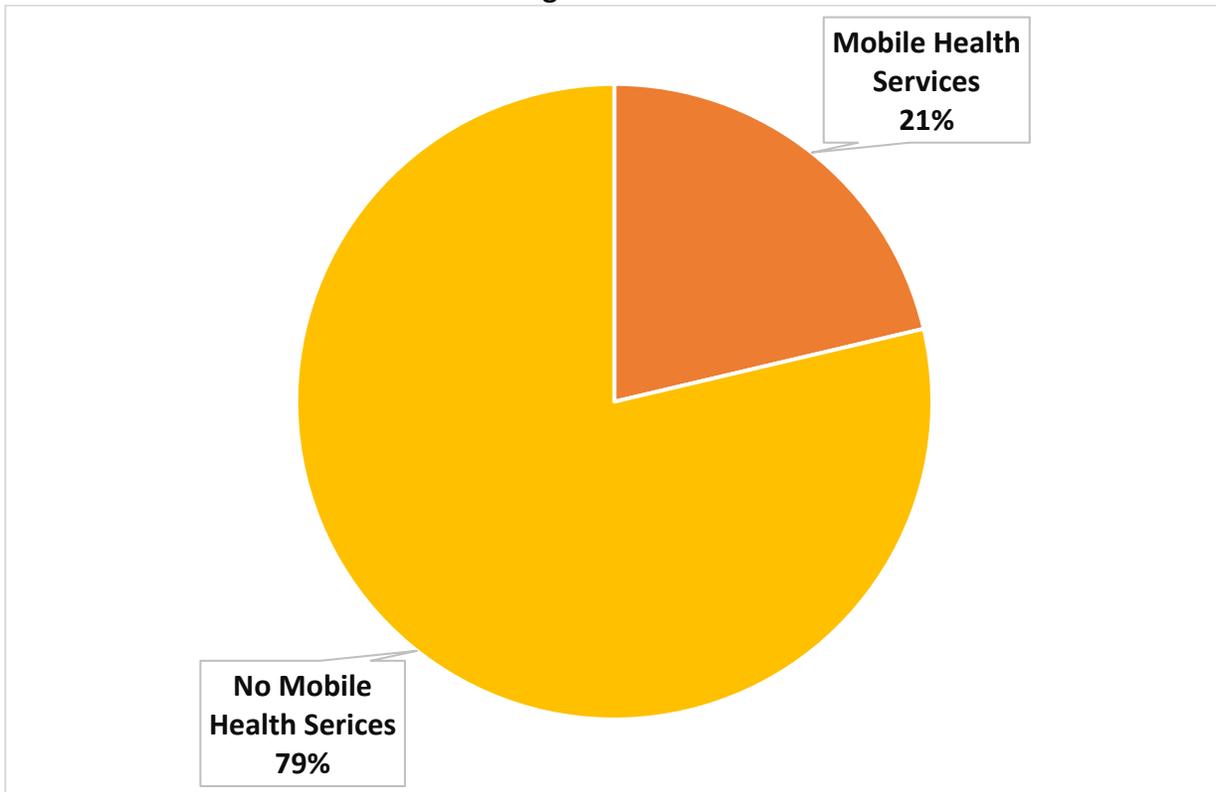
The 2018 Survey asked VRP sites what key populations were served – uninsured, underinsured, Medicare, Medicaid, and homeless patients. Of the 58 sites that replied to the survey, patient populations served by VRP sites were primarily made up of underinsured and uninsured patients, followed by homeless, Medicare, and Medicaid patients. (Patient categories and Services Offered were not mutually exclusive.)



Types of Health Services Offered



Sites Providing Mobile Health Services



Provider Survey Results

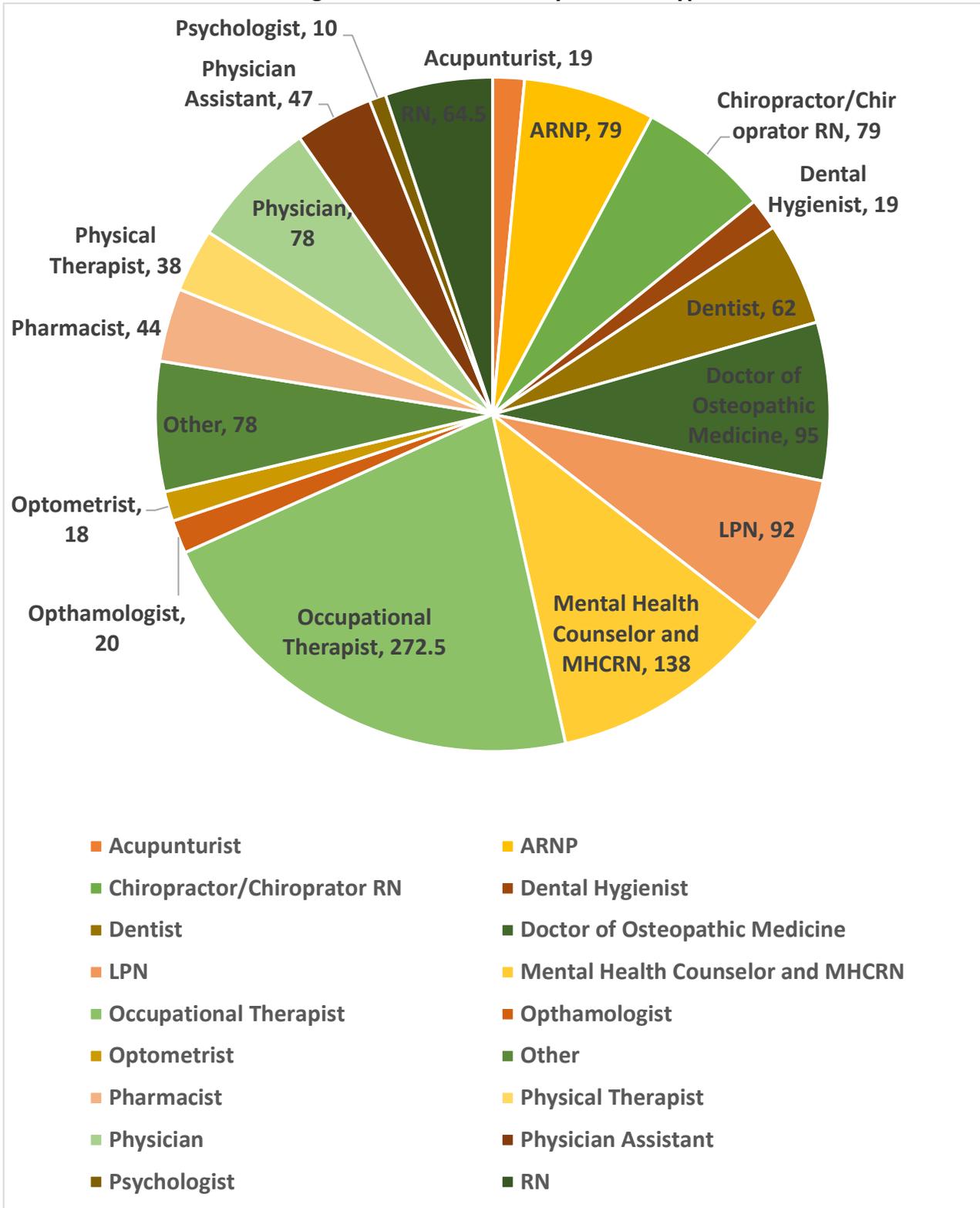


Nine hundred and three provider surveys were received of 1,562 sent. Of these providers, 833 confirmed that they volunteered in 2018.

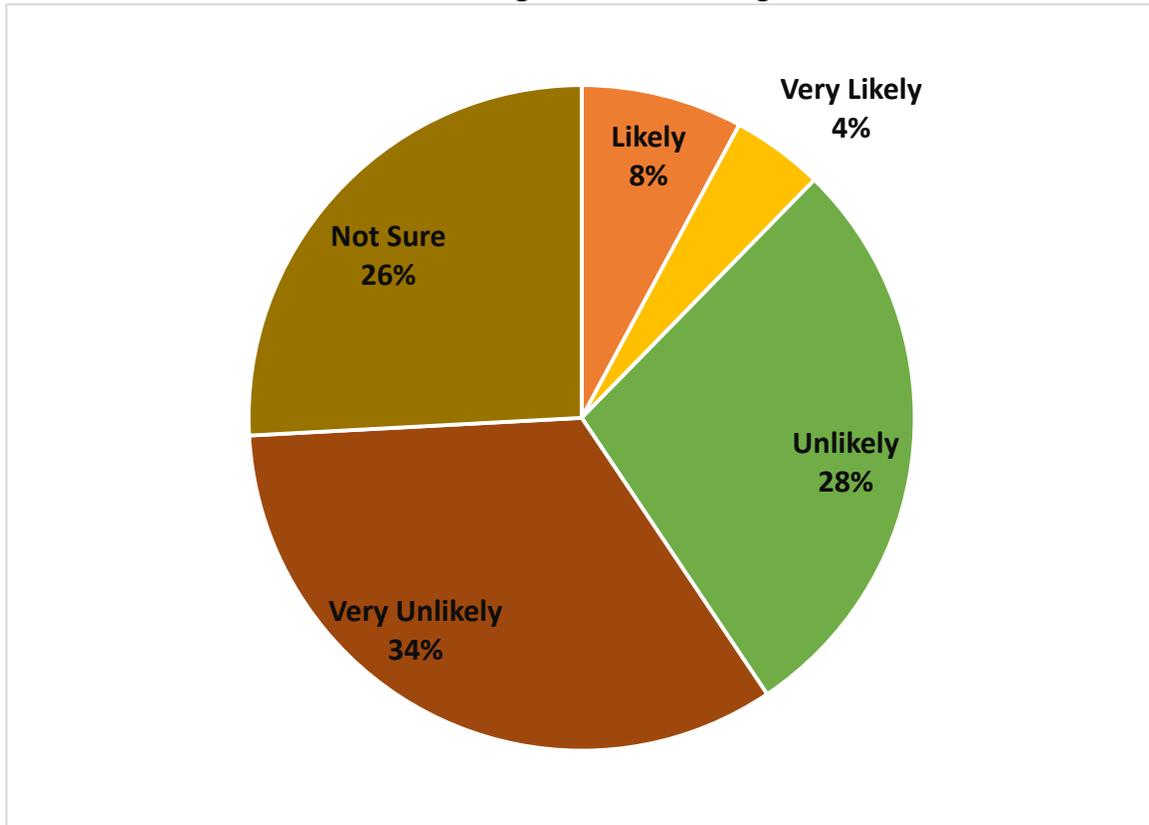
Annual Hours Reported by Provider Survey Respondents

Total	Average per Provider	Median
55,580	66.72	30

Average Hours Volunteered by Provider Type



Likelihood of Volunteering without VRP Program Benefits



Survey Response – “How could the VRP Program support you better in your role?”

- Over 30% of the Survey respondents stated that more Low Cost and Free Continuing Education Opportunities would be helpful.
- 27 individual respondents noted a need for website accessibility (unclear if this was referring to VRP program access or ability to conduct license renewals digitally.)

Other comments of note included:

“I would appreciate periodic (e.g. annual) confirmations that I am still in the program and automatic notification if I am removed from the program (as a failsafe). I realize nothing is supposed to change on its own, but since having malpractice coverage is such a big deal, the peace of mind would be great.”

“I feel like the dental care I am forced to provide is not the best quality due to lack of supplies and adequate help. I understand there is a cost issue but there are not adequate assistants to allow me to provide quality dental care to these patients. Also, this makes me less likely to volunteer because I do not feel good about the overall care that is being provided.”

“Speed up the process of renewals.”

“Do a better job of letting RNs in the state know about the program. Word of mouth is not helping us keep volunteers. Many RNs retire and quit as they do not know about the reduced hour requirements and free malpractice insurance.”

Opportunities for Survey Improvement

WHAA is committed to maximizing the quality and quantity of support available to Washington's healthcare volunteers and the clinic sites that utilize them, in the interest of improving healthcare access for underserved patients. In doing so, we will further refine the way VRP Program outcomes are measured.

Data from 2018 demonstrated an overall increase in survey response rates from providers, and a decrease in response from sites. We attribute this to the large number of changes in site contacts within this reporting period.

In addition to determining modified questions for upcoming surveys, we are continuing to improve the ways we capture data as we enroll new sites and providers. We anticipate the data from the 2019 and 2020 surveys will differ significantly from 2018, due to the rescheduling of Seattle/King County Clinic, the largest single program utilizer in the state.



Appendix 1: Provider Comments

“I am so happy you offer this malpractice coverage for my volunteer service at the Free Clinic of Southwest Washington. I would not volunteer without it. It would also be awesome if there could be coverage for the CEU hours that are required to stay current. Continuing Education is so expensive!”

“It's wonderful that our state provides this, because it encourages giving back to our communities! “

“The malpractice insurance is huge. I love volunteering, but this is a litigious society and we are held to rigorous standards which require a fair amount of effort in training and education.”

“Thank you so much for this wonderful service. I would volunteer without it, but I know that it is a huge incentive for many people and volunteers provide such important services for people in need. Please continue to provide this blessing.”

“I am so very, very grateful for the VRP Program. It gives peace of mind and lets me feel more motivated to do the volunteer work I love without reservation. This is a very good program to offer us, malpractice insurance for volunteering, THANK YOU!! Please keep it going! “

So thankful for the opportunity to be volunteer as an RN taking care of patients. I would not be able to do so if I had to incur the annual expense of license renewal.

“I deeply value volunteering at The Olympia Free Clinic and appreciate these opportunities to serve my community. Thank you for the work you do to help create these services for people that need them.”

“Fabulous program!!!! Our clinic could not operate without the VIP Program support!!”

“Thank you for providing RN license renewal and malpractice insurance. This is a big help to me as a low-income senior!”

Appendix 2: Site Survey

1. Please confirm/correct the accuracy of our records:
 - a. Organization Name
 - b. Mailing Address
 - c. Site Address in Washington State
 - i. *We offer mobile services (e.g. van, street medicine, etc.)*
 1. *In which locations do you offer mobile services?*
 - d. Phone number provided to the public
 - e. Website
 - f. Primary Contact Name
 - g. Best phone number for VRP administrators to reach you (if different than above)
 - h. Primary Contact Email
2. How many healthcare providers volunteered services with your organization in 2018?
Please count only providers who volunteered in Washington and not in other states.
3. How many overall volunteers served with your organization in 2018 in Washington State?
4. How many patient care hours did you provide in Washington State **total over 2018?**
5. Please select the category that best described your site(s) in Washington State in 2018.
 - a. Free/Charitable Clinic
 - b. Pop-Up Healthcare Event
 - c. Federally Qualified Community Health Center
 - d. Camp
 - e. School Based Health Clinic
 - f. Hospice
 - g. Other (please specify):
6. Please check all that applied to your organization's services in Washington State in 2018:
 - a. Multiple Clinic Sites
 - b. On-Site Pharmacies
 - c. PAP Assistance
 - d. Partnership with Off Site Pharmacy
 - e. Electronic Health Record Usage
 - f. Formal Collaboration with a Hospital
 - g. Sliding Fee Schedule
 - h. Bill Medicaid
 - i. Completely Free to Patients
 - j. Accept Patient Donations at Time of Care

7. How many total patient visits in Washington State did you have from January 1 through December 31, 2018?
8. How many **unduplicated patients** visited your site(s) in Washington State from January 1 through December 31, 2018?
 - a. We do not track unduplicated patients
9. Please check all services provided in 2018 in Washington State:
 - a. Chronic Medical
 - b. Acute Medical
 - c. Dental
 - d. Mental Health
 - e. Resource/Referrals
 - f. Specialty Care
 - g. Care Coordination
 - h. Pain Management
 - i. Physical and/or Occupational Therapy
 - j. Other:
10. Who did your volunteers serve in 2018 in Washington State?
 - a. Medicare patients
 - b. Medicaid patients
 - c. Uninsured patients
 - d. Underinsured patients
 - e. Homeless patients
11. Optional: If you would like to add anything else about the services you offer in Washington State, please do so here.
12. How could the VRP Program better support you in your role?

Appendix 3: Provider Survey

1. **Short answer:** Name
2. **Short answer:** Profession
3. **Y/N:** Has your contact information changed in the last year?
 - a. Please confirm your contact information so that we can keep our records accurate.
 - i. Email
 - ii. Address
 - iii. Phone
4. **Y/N:** “In 2018, did you volunteer your services as a healthcare professional in Washington State?”
 - i. “Approximately how many **total** hours did you volunteer your services as a healthcare professional in Washington State in 2018?”
 - ii. “Where did you volunteer as a healthcare professional in 2018?”
5. **Very unlikely/unlikely/unsure/likely/very likely:** “How likely is it that you would volunteer without free malpractice insurance for all volunteer professionals and/or free license renewal for retired healthcare professionals?”
6. **Checkbox:** “How could the VRP Program support you better in your volunteer role?”
 - a. No suggestions at this time
 - b. Malpractice and/or License Renewal application
 - c. Customer service
 - d. Volunteer opportunities
 - e. Low-cost and free continuing education opportunities
 - f. Website accessibility
 - g. Other (please specify):
7. **Short answer:** “OPTIONAL: Please add any additional comments you have about the VRP Program here.”

Appendix 4: Site Survey Respondents

County	Site Name	2018 Survey Response
Benton	Grace Clinic	Yes
Chelan	Upper Valley Free Clinic	Yes
Chelan	Entiat Regional Health Clinic	Yes
Chelan	Holden Village	Yes
Clallam	Olympic Peninsula Community Clinic	Yes
Clallam	Clallam County Homeless Outreach	
Clallam	The Sequim Free Clinic	Yes
Clallam	My Choices Pregnancy Medical Resources	
Clark	New Heights Clinic	Yes
Clark	Battle Ground HealthCare	Yes
Clark	Compassion Connect Vancouver	
Clark	Free Clinic of Southwest Washington	Yes
Cowlitz	Community Health Partners	Yes
Franklin	Grace Clinic at Tri-Cities Union Gospel Mission	Yes
Island	Enso House	Yes
Island	Ryan's House for Youth	
Jefferson	Jefferson County MASH Clinic	Yes
King	Acute Specialty Access Clinic	
King	UWSOM	Yes
King	Neighborcare: Youth Clinic at 45th Street	
King	Neighborcare: Madison Middle School	
King	Neighborcare: High Point	
King	New Hope Health Center	Yes
King	Peace for the Streets by Kids from the Streets	Yes
King	Project Access Northwest	Yes
King	RotaCare Bellevue	
King	RotaCare Lake City	
King	RotaCare Renton	
King	Seattle/King County Clinic	
King	Somali Health Board	
King	Swedish Community Specialty Clinic	Yes
King	The Seattle Stand Down	
King	Union Gospel Mission Seattle	Yes
King	University Temple United Methodist Church	Yes

County	Site Name	2018 Survey Response
King	UWSOM: Aloha Inn	
King	UWSOM: Casa Latina	
King	UWSOM: CHAP	
King	UWSOM: Othello Outreach Clinic	
King	UWSOM: SHIFA Health Fairs	
King	UWSOM: U-District Street Medicine	
King	UWSOM: Urban Grace Foot Care Project	
King	UWSOM: UTEST	
King	VOSH Northwest	Yes
King	CarePoint Clinic	Yes
King	Christ Community Free Clinic	Yes
King	Congregations for the Homeless	
King	Cornerstone Medical Services	
King	Crystal Mountain Aid Room	Yes
King	DECOD Clinic - University of Washington	
King	End of Life Washington	
King	Hepatitis Education Project	Yes
King	HopeCentral	Yes
King	Integrative Care Outreach	
King	International Community Health Services	
King	Korean Nest Mission (Korean-American Coalition for the Homeless)	
King	MAPS MCRC Clinic	
King	Mary's Place	Yes
King	Mercy Watch	Yes
King	Millionaire Club Charity Vision Clinic	
King	Neighborcare: 45th Street Clinic	
King	Neighborcare: Ballard Homeless Clinic	
King	Neighborcare: Central District	
King	Neighborcare: Chief Sealth International High School	
King	Neighborcare: Columbia City	
King	Neighborcare: Georgetown	
King	Neighborcare: Mercer Middle School	
King	Neighborcare: Meridian	
King	Neighborcare: Pike Place Market	

County	Site Name	2018 Survey Response
King	Neighborcare: Rainier Beach	
King	Neighborcare: West Seattle High School	
King	People's Harm Reduction Alliance	
King	Neighborcare	
Kitsap	Peninsula Community Health Services	
Kitsap	Project Connect Kitsap	Yes
Kitsap	The Christian Medical Response Team	Yes
Kitsap	West Sound Free Clinic	Yes
Kittitas	Open Door Health Clinic	Yes
Lewis	Health & Hope Medical Outreach	Yes
Mobile/Multiple Counties	Puget Sound Christian Clinic	Yes
Mobile/Multiple Counties	SmileMobile	
Mobile/Multiple Counties	Medical Teams International	Yes
Mobile/Multiple Counties	Mom & Me Mobile Medical Clinic	Yes
Mobile/Multiple Counties	Caring Hands Worldwide	Yes
Okanogan	Room One (The Lookout Coalition)	Yes
Pierce	Neighborhood Clinic	Yes
Pierce	Pierce County Dentists Care	Yes
Pierce	Pierce County Medical Reserve Corps	Yes
Pierce	Trinity Neighborhood Clinic	
Pierce	Community Health Care: Urgent Care Clinic at Hilltop	
Pierce	Camp Leo for Children with Diabetes	Yes
Pierce	Camp Promise – West	
Pierce	Community Health Care: Eastside Medical Clinic	
Pierce	Community Health Care: Hilltop Family Medical Clinic	
Pierce	Community Health Care: Lakewood Family Medical Clinic	
Pierce	Community Health Care: Parkland Clinic	
Pierce	Community Health Care: Spanaway Clinic	
Pierce	Everybody's Health Clinic	

County	Site Name	2018 Survey Response
Pierce	Key Free Clinic	
Pierce	LDS Church Lacey	Yes
Pierce	Community Health Care	Yes
Pierce	Diabetes Association of Pierce County	Yes
Skagit	Camp Korey	
Snohomish	Safe Harbor Free Clinic	Yes
Snohomish	Brookdale Assisted Living Hospice	Yes
Snohomish	Connect1D	Yes
Snohomish	Health Ministry of Rock of Hope Baptist Church	Yes
Spokane	Union Gospel Mission Inland Northwest	Yes
Spokane	Camp STIX	Yes
Spokane	House of Charity Outreach Center Medical Clinic	
Spokane	IDEA (Inland Dental Expanded Access Clinic)	Yes
Spokane	UWSOM: Spokane	
Spokane	Excelsior Youth Center Medical & Behavioral Clinic	
Spokane	Aging and Long-Term Care of Eastern Washington	
Thurston	The Olympia Free Clinic	Yes
Thurston	Hospice Without Borders: Amahoro House	
Thurston	Union Gospel Mission Olympia	Yes
Wahkiakum	Wahkiakum County Department of Health & Human Services	
Walla Walla	SonBridge Community Center Dental Clinic	
Walla Walla	SOS Health Services	Yes
Walla Walla	The Health Center	Yes
Whatcom	Bellingham/Whatcom County Project Homeless Connect	Yes
Whatcom	Frank Haskell Lions Eye Clinic	
Whitman	Palouse Free Clinic	
Whitman	Palouse Health Center	
Yakima	Union Gospel Mission Yakima	Yes
Yakima	Yakima Valley Community College Dental Hygiene Clinic	
Yakima	Virginia Mason Memorial Cleft & Lip Palate Clinic	