



# fact sheet

## Convenient Care Clinics: Addressing Unmet Needs

***The demand for affordable, accessible healthcare is why convenient care clinics (CCCs), based in retail outlets with pharmacy services, have flourished. An extension to primary care, CCCs have provided more than 35 million patient visits related to common ailments, physicals, health screenings, vaccinations and preventive care.***

### **PUBLIC HEALTH BENEFITS**

#### **Accessibility**

- CCCs complement traditional healthcare delivery systems by serving as an entry point for care; they take pressure off of overburdened physician practices and emergency rooms.
- Over 2,300 locations exist in retail-based businesses; over 97% of the clinics are members of CCA.
- CCCs are a critical public health ally for the millions of Americans without a primary care provider or insurance.
- Most clinics are open every day, including extended weekday and weekend hours, and many holidays.
- A recent study found that more than half of clinic visits were on weekends or weekday hours when physician offices are closed.<sup>1</sup>
- Appointments are not necessary.
- CCCs treat a focused list of episodic, acute conditions, including strep throat, pink eye, ear infections, and mononucleosis, and provide vaccinations, keeping visits to about 15 minutes.
- CCCs provide many preventive services, including millions of flu shots annually.
- CCCs are beginning to offer a broader range of services related to chronic illness, which will help address the increasingly severe crisis of chronic disease in the United States.

#### **Affordability**

- A national study says retail-based clinics are 30-80 percent less expensive than other providers (ER, urgent care, primary care physician practices).<sup>2</sup>

- Clinics generally accept most insurance plans.
- Prices are intended to be affordable for patients without health insurance or who need to pay in cash.
- Pricing is transparent so patients can know the cost of care up front.

#### **Quality**

- CCCs comply with all state and local health regulations.
- Practitioners are fully credentialed and licensed.
- Nurse practitioners and physician assistants, the main providers of CCC care, have Master's-level degrees.
- Practitioners adhere to evidence-based guidelines to diagnose and treat patients.<sup>3</sup>
- CCA members' guidelines incorporate the CCA's Quality and Safety Standards and all clinics are either third-party certified or accredited.
- CCCs follow applicable OSHA, CLIA, HIPAA, ADA and CDC requirements and guidelines.
- CCCs use electronic health records to help improve patients' long-term quality of care and improve efficiency and continuity.

#### **Continuity of Care**

- CCCs have local referral networks of healthcare providers for patients.
- With a patient's consent, CCCs forward electronic records of their visit to their primary care provider, if they have one, or help them find one if they do not.
- Where in place, clinics take steps to participate in state immunization registries and other state and local programs related to promoting appropriate healthcare.

<sup>1</sup>Mehrotra, Ateev, and Judith R. Lave. "Visits to Retail Clinics Grew Fourfold From 2007 To 2009, Although Their Share of Overall Outpatient Visits Remain Low." *Health Affairs*, 31, No. 9, (2012).

<sup>2</sup>Mehrotra, Ateev, Llu Hangsheng, John L. Adams, et al. "Comparing Costs and Quality of Care at Retail Clinics with that of Other Medical Settings for 3 Common Illnesses." *Annals of Internal Medicine*. 151 no. 5 (2009):321-328.

<sup>3</sup>Jacoby, Richard, Albert G. Crawford, et al. "Quality of Care for 2 Common Pediatric Conditions Treated by Convenient Care Providers." *American Journal of Medical Quality*. 2010.