Research Summary: Federally Qualified Health Center–level characteristics associated with sustaining tobacco screening and treatment in the United States, 2020–2024

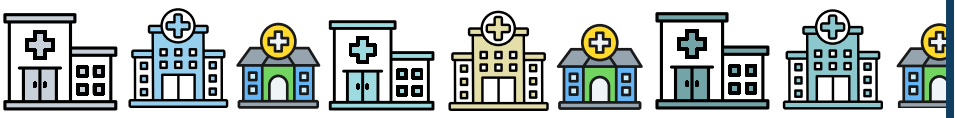
Tobacco use is common among patients at Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). Quitting tobacco is important to help prevent cancer and other health issues. Health centers play an important role in asking patients about tobacco use and helping people quit.

We studied which health centers were more likely to do this over time.

Scan QR code to read the full paper!

WHO PARTICIPATED

We looked at data from **1,354 FQHCs** across the United States.



WHAT WE DID

Each year, health centers report how many patients were asked about tobacco use. They also report whether patients who use tobacco got help to quit, such as counseling or medicine.

We looked at which centers met this goal in every year from 2020 through 2024: **at least 8 out of 10 patients were screened, and patients who used tobacco were offered help to quit.**

We also looked at whether results were linked to:

- The **number and types of patients** a center serves
- Whether the center is in an **urban or rural area**
- Whether the center gets **special funding** to serve certain groups



WHAT WE FOUND

Fewer than half of the health centers met the goal in all five years. These findings show links between health center features and results. They do not show that one caused the other.

Health centers with these features were more likely to screen and treat patients for tobacco use:

- Serving more patients overall
- Serving a larger share of Hispanic patients
- Serving more patients with low incomes

Health centers with these features were less likely to screen and treat patients for tobacco use:

- Serving a larger share of Black or African American patients
- Receiving special funding to serve people experiencing homelessness



Nagawa CS, Ravi P, Lee RM, Dargon-Hart S, Pagan J, Correa-Fernández V, Austin JD, Daly JG, Emmons KM. Federally Qualified Health center–level characteristics associated with sustaining tobacco screening and treatment in the United States, 2020–2024. Preventive Medicine. Published online October 17, 2026:108684.

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