

**TESTIMONY COVER SHEET
FOR**

Ron Dwinells, MD

Testifying on behalf of the
National Association of Community Health Centers

Before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, and Education

On April 20, 2004

Testifying:

Dr. Ron Dwinells
Chief Executive Officer
North East Ohio Health Services, Inc.
726 Wick Avenue
Youngstown, Ohio 44505
(330) 747-9551

Representing:

National Association of Community Health Centers
7200 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 210
Bethesda, MD 20814
(301) 347-0400

Summary:

NACHC requests that Congress continue the current health center expansion initiative by funding the **Consolidated Health Centers program at \$1.868 billion in FY2005**. This represents a 15 percent increase (\$250 million) over the existing funding level, and would allow health centers to serve 1.6 million new patients in 2005 and stabilize existing centers through base grant adjustments.

The President has requested a \$219 million increase to fund 176 new access points and 156 expanded sites across the country. NACHC strongly supports this goal and urges Congress to provide further funding to stabilize existing centers in light of the increasing number of uninsured patients visiting health centers and the continual rising cost of care. Without direct aid to existing health centers, the planned program growth will be threatened by reductions in patient volume at our nation's existing health centers.

In addition, health centers have utilized the **Healthy Communities Access Program** to better integrate care for their uninsured patients with other providers in the communities they serve. NACHC requests that HCAP be funded at \$105 million, an increase of \$2 million over FY2003.

Oral Testimony of
Ron Dwinnells, MD

Before the House Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education
Appropriations Subcommittee
April 20, 2004

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for letting me take a few minutes of your time to discuss the Community Health Center program and our request for fiscal year 2005. My name is Ron Dwinnells and I am the CEO of Ohio North East Health Systems in Youngstown, Ohio. We are a federally-qualified health center that serves xx,xxx patients in xx sites across northeastern Ohio, including a recent new site in Alliance.

I am here today on behalf of the National Association of Community Health Centers to first thank you for all your support over the past several years. The tremendous growth in the program, led by this subcommittee, has enabled more than 4 million more people to have access to care since 1999. This year we expect health center to serve nearly 15 million people in every state across the country.

We also appreciate the President's strong support for the Health Centers program and his request for a \$219 million increase in FY05. Such an increase will enable hundreds of communities to participate in the Health Center program and to deliver community-based care to more than 1.6 million more people. This would be a tremendous boost for these underserved communities and we wholeheartedly support the President's request. However, we also ask that the Subcommittee approve additional funding for existing centers like mine, which have seen unexpected increases in the number of uninsured patients coming through our doors, at the same time we battle the continuously rising cost of delivering health care in our communities.

Last year you included language identifying \$25 million for base grant adjustments which help health centers deal with these issues. We thank you and NACHC is working with HRSA to identify an appropriate mechanism for distributing these funds. This year we ask that \$31 million be added to the President's request in order to continue offering base grant adjustments to health centers to stabilize their operations and to continue serving their existing patients. With this addition, the total request for FY05 would for an increase of \$250 million, or total program funding of \$1.868 billion.

I know you hear from a variety of groups every year on why they need additional funds, and I'm sure the decisions you make are not easy. But I want you to know that the funding you provide for the Health Centers program is used efficiently and effectively for the most needy people in our country. Because our program is directed at the local level by a patient-majority Board of Directors, each health center has a direct tie to the community it serves. This tie ensures that we offer culturally-competent care in a manner that respects the needs of each individual. The Health Center program is not a cookie cutter health care program that lands in each community, it is made up of the community, for the community. The community board is what makes us unique among health care providers and we are stronger because of it.

Mr. Chairman, I am a pediatrician by training and have worked in several different care settings, including private practice, and in several different states; and I can tell you that working at a Community Health Center, delivering care to people who would otherwise not be able to see a doctor, has been my most rewarding experience. Everyday our center serves hundreds of people, regardless of if they are on Medicaid, Medicare, privately insured or uninsured; people who would have no other source of care except our center. Unfortunately, we know there are thousands more just in our community alone that could use our center if we had additional resources. Much has been made about the plight of the uninsured, and what kind of costs, in human terms and dollar terms, it takes on our country. Well, I'm here to say we are doing everything we can to help, and we stand ready to do more in the future with your leadership and support.

Mr. Chairman, I know my time is short, and we will be submitting a more detailed statement for the record, but I do want this Subcommittee to know just how much we appreciate the funding increases provided in the past, and how much more we can do together in the future. I'd be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman.

Curriculum Vitae

Ronald Dwinells, M.D.
Chief Executive Officer
North East Ohio Health Services, Inc.
726 Wick Avenue
Youngstown, Ohio 44505
(330) 747-9551

Professional History:

Chief Executive Officer	Ohio North East Health Systems, Inc. Youngstown, Ohio	Feb. 1998-Present
Director of Medical Services	Youngstown Community Health Ctr. Youngstown, Ohio	June 1994-Jan. 1998
Pediatrician	Hough-Norwood Family Health Cleveland, Ohio	1990-1992
Pediatrician	Private Practice Monroe, North Carolina	1989-1990
Pediatrician/Medical Director	Sharon Medical Group Sharon, Pennsylvania	1986-1989

Educational History:

MBA Curriculum	Youngstown State University Youngstown, Ohio	2001-Present
Pediatric Residency Program	Tod Children's Hospital Youngstown, Ohio	1983-1986
Doctor of Medicine	University of Kentucky Lexington, Kentucky	1979-1983
Bachelor of Science	University of Kentucky Lexington, Kentucky	1973-1977

Other:

- Frequent Public Speaking engagements regarding Health Leadership and Health Disparities.
- Medical School Appointments at Northeastern Ohio University College of Medicine and Ohio University College of Medicine.

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services, Education & Related
Agencies

*Witness Disclosure Requirement – “Truth in Testimony”
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)*

Your Name: Ronald Dwinells, MD

1. **Are you testifying on behalf of a Federal, State, or Local Government entity?** No
2. **Are you testifying on behalf of an entity other than a Government entity?** Yes
3. **Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 2003:**

BPHC 2003 - \$1,429,443
4. **Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you are representing:**

The National Association of Community Health Centers, Inc.
5. **If your answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any offices or elected positions held or briefly describe your representational capacity with the entities disclosed in question number 4:**

An Association member since 2000.
6. **If your answer to question number 2 is yes, do any of the entities disclosed in question number 4 have parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships whom you are not representing?** No
7. **If the answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which were received by the entities listed under question 4 since October 1, 2003, which exceed 10% of the entities revenue in the year received, including the source and amount of each grant or contract to be listed:**

BPHC - \$5,900,000