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**Charlie Winburn**  
*Cincinnati City Councilman*

# ***Adopt a Health Clinic Initiative***

## **A Plan to Save Cincinnati Health Clinics for 68,000 Cincinnati Citizens**

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**Cincinnati Council Member  
Charlie Winburn  
July 2011**

### **COMMITTEES**

**Chairman:** Job Creation | **Member:** Budget and Finance · Livable Communities · Public Safety · Strategic Growth

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*Cincinnati City Councilman*

**July 11, 2011**

**MOTION**

**Adopt a Health Clinic Initiative**

**WE MOVE** that City Council direct the City Manager to immediately alert the presidents of the five major hospitals in Cincinnati – Cincinnati Children’s Hospital, University Hospital, The Christ Hospital, Good Samaritan Hospital and Mercy Hospital Western Hills – so they can prepare for the possible closing of five city health clinics that serve approximately 68,000 citizens who may be left without primary health care services and may be forced to seek health care services from the five major city hospitals.

**WE FURTHER MOVE** that City Council direct the City Manager to develop an **Adopt a Health Clinic Initiative** as it relates to the following:

1. Establish an **Adopt a Health Clinic Initiative** with a view towards encouraging the city’s five major hospitals – Cincinnati Children’s Hospital, University Hospital, The Christ Hospital, Good Samaritan Hospital and Mercy Hospital Western Hills – to adopt one city health clinic each by providing one or more of the following adoptive services:
  - a. An adoptive hospital should provide efficient and effective management and operation of their local health clinic in a designated city neighborhood.
  - b. An adoptive hospital should provide funding of their local health clinic at approximately \$1.6 million each year.
  - c. The City of Cincinnati should provide resources and assistance for a possible merger or acquisition by the hospitals relative to the possible management and operation of each of the five city health clinics.
  - d. The City of Cincinnati should consider offering the hospitals the option for the Cincinnati Health Department to continue operating the five city health clinics through contracted services.
  - e. The City of Cincinnati should consider establishing health clinic standards and performance measures for its five health clinics under a new system of management and operations provided the adoptive hospitals.
2. Convene a meeting with the aforementioned hospital presidents and begin the discussion and dialogue around the hospitals considering adopting the five city health clinics by making them more efficient and effective in the delivery of health services to over 68,000 citizens currently served.
3. As an alternative to **Adopt a Health Clinic Initiative**, call a meeting with the Hamilton County Commissioners and encourage them to fund the five Cincinnati health clinics at approximately \$8 million a year.

**COMMITTEES**

## STATEMENT

The five major hospitals' combined annual net revenue equals approximately \$3.3 billion. Why should the five major hospitals take over the city's five health clinics? **Because under Community Benefits Requirements Ohio nonprofit hospitals are required to provide a substantial level of indigent care to maintain their federal and state tax exemptions.**

Approximately 68,000 citizens benefit from Cincinnati's health clinics because they are indigent and have little to no health insurance coverage at a cost to taxpayers of approximately \$8 million a year. But the current City Council appears to be one vote away from defunding the clinics. The November 2011 elections may result in the addition of a new member to Council willing to join four others in defunding the five city health clinics. This is an opportunity for the Mayor, City Council and the City Manager to begin to plan for what appears to be the inevitable defunding of the five city health clinics.

Although the city will save \$8 million a year in its General Fund if City Council defunds the five city health clinics, 68,000 citizens will be left without primary health care services. If the clinics are closed, these citizens will likely seek health care at the emergency rooms of the city's five major hospitals.

It is expected that the hospitals will provide one-time emergency medical assistance to those 68,000 patients, but possibly will not treat them on a long-term basis similar to what they currently receive at a city health clinic. This loss of preventative health care and other medical services provided at the clinics will only prove to be more costly in the long run.

If the hospitals fail to provide long-term medical care to the 68,000 citizens, their emergency rooms and hospitals will be used by these citizens as a quasi-health clinic on a regular basis because their options are severely limited with no other places to go for health care. This will become a major problem for the five major city hospitals and the three federally funded health clinics in the City of Cincinnati that are already overcrowded.

The city needs to determine what the impact of President Barack Obama's *Affordable Care Act* will have on the 68,000 citizens who may be left without health care services if the clinics are closed. If the Hamilton County Indigent Care Levy can be used to fund the five city health clinics at approximately \$8 million a year, there may not be a need for the hospitals to participate at this time.

The City Manager should call on the Ohio Auditor of State to immediately request a comprehensive performance audit on the five city's health clinics with view towards evaluating efficiency, cost savings, accountability, and effective delivery of services to the 68,000 citizens served.

The City Manager should also provide the Mayor and City Council with a Health Clinic Impact Report relative to the closing the city health clinics on the City of Cincinnati.

This is an opportunity for the five major hospitals to go the extra mile in serving a population of citizens who may be left out with little to no medical care if City Council defunds the five city health clinics. This is also an opportunity for the City Manager to work with the Hamilton County Health Department in assisting with the **Adopt a Health Clinic Initiative** to expand services for those in need. Finally, this is an opportunity for the City Manager to bring together all of the five major hospitals and in order to obtain their assistance in putting together a health services leadership agenda for the region and the city.

**Statistical Impact of Closing Five City Health Clinics  
and the Effect on the City's Major Hospitals**  
(for illustration purposes only)

<sup>1,2</sup> Estimates for 47,751 NEW Patients/ 143,161 NEW Visits Annually	<sup>5</sup> Annual Net Patient Revenue	<sup>5</sup> ER Visits per year	New ER Visits from City Health Clinics (69% adult/ 31% children)	Increase in ER Visits from City Health Clinics	<sup>3</sup> Estimated Increase in Hospital Costs @ \$750/visit & 60% uninsured	Hospital Cost with Contract to Operate Clinics for Health Dept.
Children's Hospital	\$1.04 billion	114,985	44,380	39%	\$19,971,000	---
University Hospital	\$584 million	84,025	36,334	43%	\$16,350,300	---
The Christ Hospital	\$483 million	46,548	20,124	43%	\$ 9,055,800	---
Good Samaritan Hospital	\$463 million	52,910	22,880	43%	\$10,296,000	---
Mercy Hospital Western Hills	\$93 million	44,965	19,443	43%	\$ 8,749,350	---
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$2.627 billion</b>	<b>343,433</b>	<b>143,161</b>	<b>42.2%</b>	<b>\$64,422,450</b>	<b>\$ 8,000,000</b>

Cincinnati Health Department Endnotes:

- 35,000 people served each year equals 137,411 visits each year in the five primary health clinics for primary health care services and emergency dental care.
- 12,751 citizens are served each year with 23,000 visits through the city dental program. 25% of dental visits are considered emergency related.
- If patients are diverted from a city health clinic to an emergency room, the cost per visit increases from an average of \$120 per visit at a clinic to \$750 per visit at the ER.
- 21,000 citizens are served each year with 263,000 visits through the city pharmacy program (data not included in chart).
- Source: Business Courier 2011 Book of Lists, Largest Tri-State Hospitals, page 86.
- Approximate operating revenue sources for health clinics: \$8 million in General Fund Revenues, \$9-10 million in combined cash payments from patients, private insurance payments, and public insurance payments.