

Budget at Odds with Bush Health-Clinic Plan

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[Morning Edition](#), March 1, 2006 · President Bush says he wants to dramatically increase the number of community health centers -- government-funded clinics that provide basic health care. But a new study suggests that goal cor

Others say they're confident that health centers will ultimately find the staff they need. Dan Hawkins of the National Association of Community Health Centers, says the shortage of primary care practitioners the study found is more ominous for the REST of the population. "This is a story for all Americans, not just for those living in rural and inner city communities," he said. "And not just for health centers. We are the canary in the coal mine. We are the ones who can point to what's happening."

Hawkins says the staffing difficulties of community health centers highlight the need for the federal government to step in to address the fact that so few of today's medical students are choosing careers in primary care. "The looming shortage in primary care is going to take a public policy solution," he said. "There are no market forces that are lending themselves toward a trend in resolving this through economic mechanisms only. It's gonna take a public policy solution."

Duke says that's not where her priorities are. "We've tried to focus on real shortages that exist now. The nursing shortage is now. the subject that's being referred to in the article talks about the study which projected a physician shortage in 2020."

And while President Bush likes to talk about market solutions to solving the nation's health care problem, study author Rosenblatt says the fact that some 46 million Americans have no health insurance, and the very need for the government-funded health centers, shows that the "the market doesn't work in medical care."