



Legislative Breakfast

Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2025

7:30am – 9:00am

Agenda

- 7:30am Welcome & Breakfast
- 7:50am Presentation – Karen Daley, CEO of Optimus Health Care
- 7:55am Special Remarks
- 8:20am Networking

Brief History



- In 1975, a group of active, civic-minded individuals in the Bridgeport area came together to create a community health center dedicated to the health of their neighborhood. With determination, and federal and city funding, they opened a health center just one year later. On December 21, 1976, Bridgeport Community Health Center was incorporated as a not-for-profit entity. It started operating in 1977 and became a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in 1990.
- Bridgeport Community Health Center continued to grow with a new main site and numerous satellite clinics. The Center was a leading provider of comprehensive integrated health and human services in Bridgeport, Stratford and Stamford. A focused group was selected to consider a name change since we were in several towns, and thus the name change to **Optimus Health Care, Inc. (Optimus)**.
- As the largest provider of primary healthcare in Southwestern Connecticut, **Optimus** exemplifies comprehensive, patient-centered care. Across 30 clinics, we provide innovative programs designed to serve vulnerable populations, ensuring increased access to high-quality, affordable healthcare.
- With nearly 50 years of experience, **Optimus** delivers patient-centered primary care services – both in-person and via telehealth – to over 42,000 medically underserved residents **across Bridgeport, Stratford, Stamford, and Waterbury.**

Missions, Vision, & Values

OPTIMUS Mission

- To be a lifelong health care partner, dedicated to achieving optimal wellness for the communities we serve.

OPTIMUS Vision

- A world where access to culturally sensitive, high quality health care is always within reach.

OPTIMUS Values

Outstanding. Our clinical care exceeds expectations.

Patient-Centered. We adhere to the patient-centered medical home model where patients are at the forefront of their care.

Trustworthy. Patients place their confidence in our capabilities.

Integrity. Ethical practices are at work in all we do.

Multicultural. We respect all people – those we hire and those for whom we care.

Understanding. Open minds and open hearts.

Supportive. Health is a shared journey between us and those we serve.

Health Care Safety Net Under Threat

- Health Care Safety Net
 - FQHCs
 - Medicaid
- Threat
 - Changes to Medicaid under HR1
 - Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA)
- Result
 - Thousands of individuals across Connecticut without access to convenient, affordable, quality, culturally sensitive health care and nowhere else to go.
The deterioration of the health care safety net.

Issues Threatening Health Safety Net

- Medicaid changes under HR1
 - Community engagement requirements and verification
 - Increase in redeterminations (every 12 months to every 6 months)
 - Restricts definition of qualified immigrant to lawfully permitted residents – limiting availability of Medicaid to certain individuals
- Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) Executive Order
 - Made health center programs a Federal Public Benefit
 - Cannot provide services to non-qualified aliens
 - Preliminary injunction granted halting its implementation in several states across the country, including Connecticut

Impact on Optimus/FQHCs

- 7 Areas of Impact
 - Reduced access to health care services
 - Reduced revenue
 - Reduced workforce
 - Increased cost of care
 - Administrative burden
 - Inability to maintain infrastructure (buildings, equipment)
 - ⚡ Decrease in health equity progress

Request

- Legislators
 - Protect Medicaid funding/eligibility at the state level
 - Protect FQHCs and rate increases when costs rise above rates
 - Encourage state agency help in determining how to provide health care services to individuals who we may be prohibited from treating
 - Support our funding requests for infrastructure
- Community Foundations
 - Consider prioritizing grant funding that supports programs/projects/strategic planning that provide health care for individuals who lose coverage or are not permitted access to health care services to maintain and improve health equity

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THANK YOU

Generous Giving Awareness Services Assistance
Helping Moral Care Aid Mission
Charity Altruistic Life Volunteer Time
Community Rescue Support Donations
Contribution Assisted Hope Teamwork Person
Adult