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# This health center is losing \$1M a month because dental services are shut down

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Lisa Yohalem's dental clinics will have been closed for a month and a half by the time Gov. [Jay Inslee's](#) stay home order expires on May 4.

Yohalem, CEO of Renton-based community health organization [HealthPoint](#), said that's significantly costing her business.

"Pen to paper, that's about \$1 million a month in lost revenue," Yohalem told the Business Journal.

HealthPoint, which has 10 main clinics throughout King County, is just one of many community health centers feeling the financial strain as a result of the coronavirus outbreak. Community health centers in Washington are expected to lose \$280 million in revenue over the next six months, according to Capital Link.

HealthPoint, which has an annual revenue of \$108 million and employs 850 people, had been in a growth phase, with multiple expansion projects in the works, and then the coronavirus swept the state. In Washington, 73 percent of health centers will be operating from a deficit due to financial losses by the end of June, according to Capital Link.

Since Gov. [Jay Inslee](#) shut down non-emergency dental work to free up personal protective equipment on March 19, Yohalem has suspended most dental care.

So far, Yohalem hasn't had to lay off employees. She's redeployed the 130 people in the dental program to, for example, some of the drive-thru testing sites to keep them working.

"We can't do that forever," Yohalem said.

[Bob Marsalli](#), CEO WA Association for Community Health, said one of the 300 clinics supported by the association saw a 93 percent decrease in dental visits compared to a normal day.

"What health centers are doing is they're tapping into their reserves, they're furloughing staff, and they're trying to switch valiantly and quickly to telehealth," Marsalli said.

Between April and the end of June, health centers in Washington are expected to layoff 3,350 employees, according to Capital Link.

Yohalem hopes HealthPoint will receive some relief funding from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

One appropriation, what Marsalli calls community health center "rescues," is a pool of \$1.32 billion that will be distributed nationwide proportionally to places like HealthPoint. But the stimulus package doesn't make up for all the losses.

"I would imagine the average one-time award to a community health center could be in the ballpark of \$750,000. Very helpful, very small amount of money," Marsalli said. "I have health center members in the Puget Sound area that report to me that they are losing anywhere from \$1 million to \$3 million a month in revenue because their visits are plummeting. ... It's not enough."



HEALTHPOINT

HealthPoint in Kent is one of the primary care clinics that offers dental services.

There are other loans smaller businesses can apply for, but that money is going to go fast, Marsalli said.

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