



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

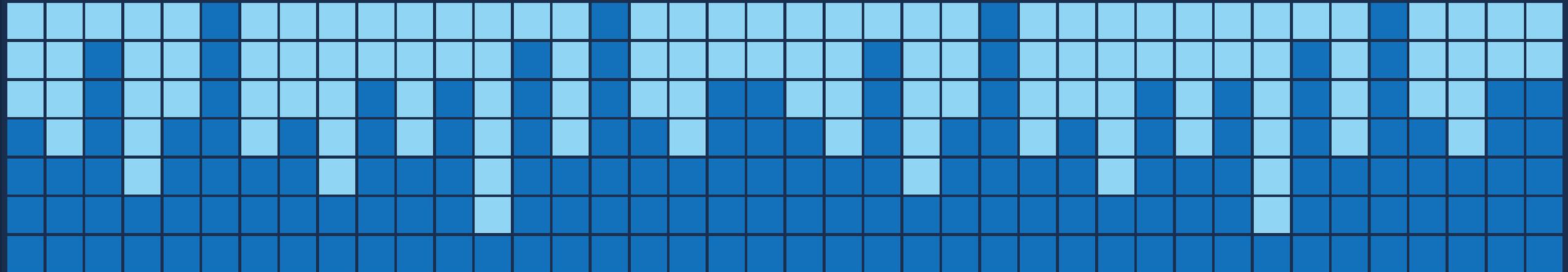
Office of The Health Insurance Commissioner

Department of Business Regulation

# Primary Care in Rhode Island: The View from OHIC

OCTOBER 29, 2024

CORY KING, HEALTH INSURANCE COMMISSIONER



# Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner Overview

The State of Rhode Island Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner (OHIC) is Rhode Island's commercial health insurance policy reform and regulatory enforcement agency. OHIC seeks to improve health care access, affordability, and quality. The office does so as it:

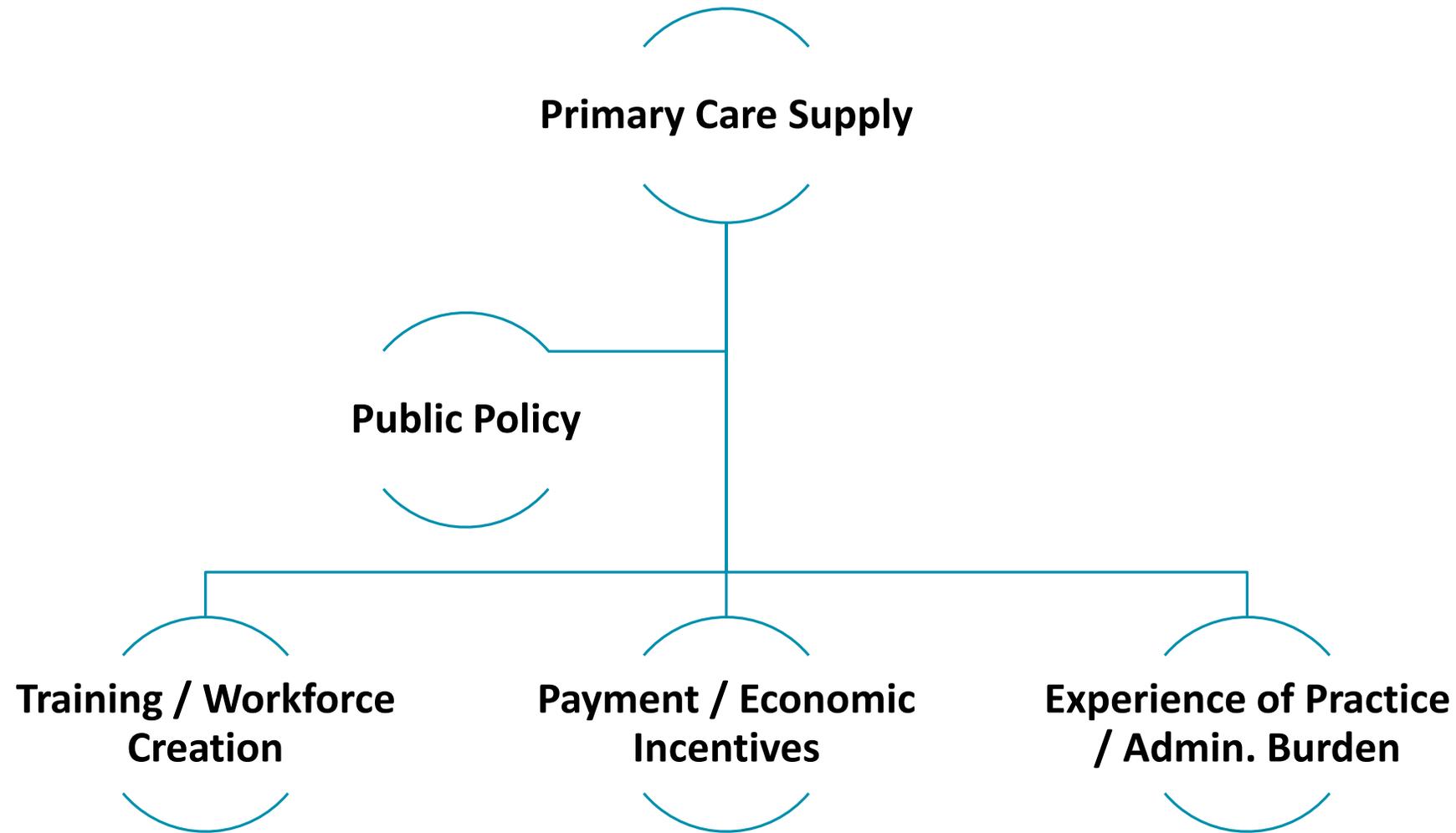
- Protects the interests of consumers of commercial health insurance,
- Encourages fair treatment of health care providers by commercial health insurers,
- Improves the health care system as a whole, and
- Guards the solvency of commercial health insurers.

# The Value Proposition of Primary Care

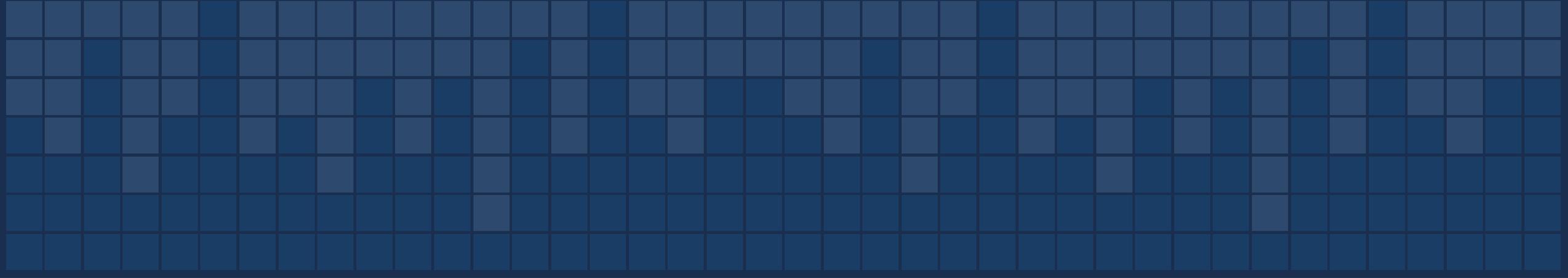
Primary care provides comprehensive, person-centered, relationship-based care that considers the needs and preferences of individuals, families, and communities. Primary care is unique in health care in that it is designed for everyone to use throughout their lives—from healthy children to older adults with multiple comorbidities and people with disabilities. Absent access to high quality primary care, minor health problems can spiral into chronic disease, care management becomes difficult and uncoordinated, visits to emergency departments increase, preventive care lags, and the nation’s health care spending soars to unsustainable levels. People in countries and health systems with high-quality primary care enjoy better health outcomes and more health equity.

Source: National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2021. Implementing High-Quality Primary Care: Rebuilding the Foundation of Health Care. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25983>, p.3.

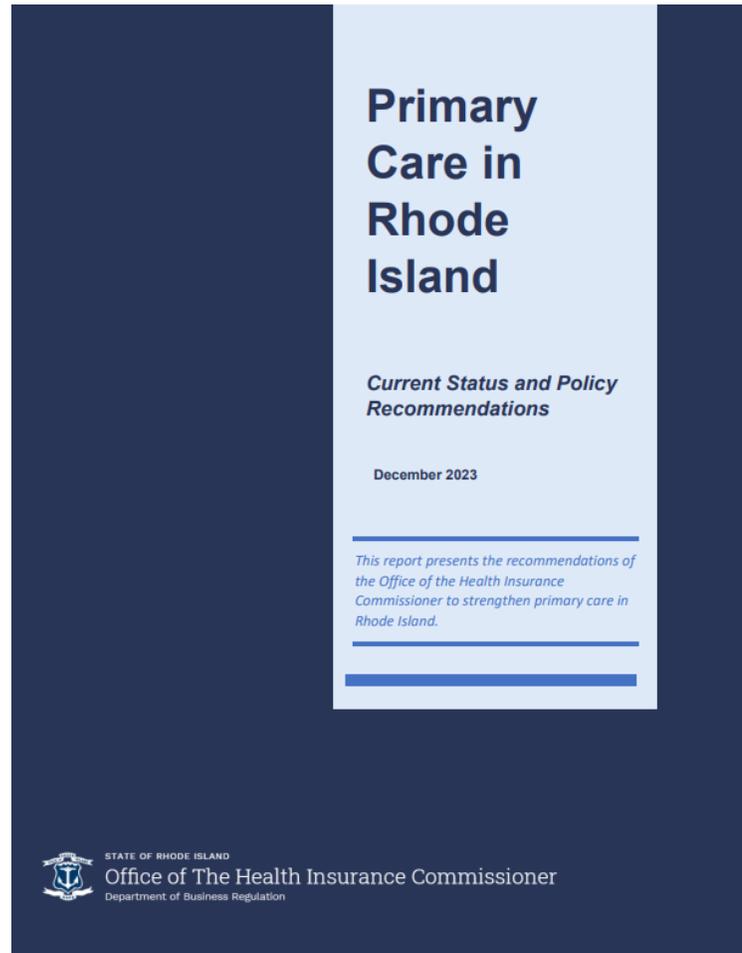
# Rhode Island Needs a Robust Primary Care Workforce



# Assessing the Current State of Primary Care



# Primary Care In Rhode Island



OHIC's December 2023 report, **"Primary Care in Rhode Island: Current Status and Policy Recommendations."**

The report:

- reviews the state of primary care in Rhode Island and nationally, and
- presents OHIC recommendations to strengthen primary care in Rhode Island.

# OHIC's Findings

Aging workforce, with many providers contemplating retirement.

Primary care is reimbursed and compensated at rates significantly less than medical specialties.

Nationally, and locally, fewer medical students are choosing primary care as a career path.

Clinician burnout is a key concern facing the primary care workforce and is driving physicians and advanced practitioners to reduce or leave clinical practice.

Primary care providers have stated that compensation is not competitive with other states.

Attestations that patient access, in particular, new patient access, is constrained.

# Rhode Island is Not Alone

THE HEALTH OF US PRIMARY CARE: 2024 SCORECARD REPORT

## No One Can See You Now: Five Reasons Why Access to Primary Care Is Getting Worse (and What Needs to Change)

BY YALDA JABBARPOUR, ANURADHA JETTY, HOON BYUN, ANAM SIDDIQI,  
STEPHEN PETTERSON, AND JEONGYOUNG PARK, ROBERT GRAHAM CENTER



# Recent Federal Initiatives

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- Proposed changes to the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (PFS).
  - The 2025 proposed rule introduces new payment opportunities for through three new Advanced Primary Care Management codes.
- States Advancing All-Payer Health Equity Approaches and Development (AHEAD) Model
  - CT, MD, HI, VT are in Cohort 1 or 2. RI & NY applied for Cohort 3.
  - Primary Care AHEAD would pay participating practices an average of \$17 per Medicare beneficiary per month, in addition to FFS billing.
  - States are required to develop an all-payer primary care investment target.
- The Pay PCPs Act, introduced by Senator Whitehouse, calls for the creation of hybrid payment methods for PCPs, lower patient cost sharing for primary care, and reevaluation the Medicare PFS for primary care.

# Recent State Initiatives

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- Senate Resolution S3165.
- Investments in Primary Care Training Programs and Scholarships. These programs were part of the Senate's HEALTH initiative.
- Senate Bill S0290 Sub A, enacted on June 22, 2023, required a Taskforce convened by OHIC to evaluate prior authorization processes.
  - OHIC submitted a legislatively mandated report in June 2024.
  - On October 11<sup>th</sup>, OHIC proposed new rules governing prior authorization.
- Redefinition and recalibration of the commercial health insurer primary care expenditure requirement under 230-RICR-20-30-4.
  - Will improve OHIC's oversight of commercial insurer primary care expenditures.



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# Thank You

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