

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH



How to Find an Applied Practice Experience that Serves Medically Underserved Areas/Populations in Illinois

According to the [Health Resources & Services Administration](#) website,

Medically Underserved Area/Populations (MUA/P) identify geographic areas and populations with a lack of access to primary care services. These designations help establish health maintenance organizations or community health centers.

MUAs have a shortage of primary care health services within geographic areas such as:

- *a whole county;*
- *a group of neighboring counties;*
- *a group of urban census tracts; or*
- *a group of county or civil divisions.*

MUPs have a shortage of primary care health services for a specific population subset within a geographic area. These groups may face economic, cultural, or language barriers to health care. Some examples include:

- *People experiencing homelessness*
- *People who are low-income*
- *People who are eligible for Medicaid*
- *Native Americans*
- *Migrant farm workers*

As you explore your options, it may be helpful to use the below resources to identify MUA/P sites in Illinois.

- Search for [Medically Underserved Area and Medically Underserved Population designations](#) by State or Territory. Organizations found within these designated areas may qualify as an APE site.
- Search for [Federally Qualified Health Centers \(FQHCs\) and Look-Alikes \(LALs\)](#) by State or Territory. *Examples of FQHCs where students have done their APEs in the past include Mile Square, Esperanza Health Centers, Erie Family Health, Heartland Alliance, Howard Brown, Tapestry 360 Health, PCC Community Health Center, Lawndale Christian Health Center, etc.*

In addition, all the Departments of Public Health in Illinois qualify as a site serving medically underserved populations.

If you're still not sure if the organization you are interested in pursuing serves MUA/Ps, ask the contact person at the organization. You can also consult with your Applied Practice Experience Advisor.