



ACCESS INFORMATION

The holiday season is now upon us. During this time of gratitude and family celebration, the staff and community partners of Project Access want to express our gratitude for the compassionate care being shown to the uninsured. As of mid-November, Project Access has:

- Opened enrollment for patients at two more clinics, Hunter Health Clinic and the Wichita-Sedgwick County Department of Community Health Clinic totaling three clinic sites
- Enrolled 141 patients
- Signed up 416 physicians
- Accessed \$30,273.75 worth of patient care through physicians' offices
- Accessed \$74,436.60 worth of in-patient and outpatient care through area hospitals
- Purchased 118 prescriptions for patients totaling \$1,414.86

These are incredible statistics considering the short time that Project Access has been operating. Clearly we have something to celebrate. As we enjoy the holidays with our families, rest assured that

at least 141 other people in our community (Project Access patients) are also celebrating improved health as they spend time with their families.



Anne Nelson
Program Director

Local Physicians Make A Commitment to Helping Project Access Patients

Now that MSSC Project Access is underway, the serious work has begun — serving the health care needs of eligible patients.

Many area physicians have begun caring for Project Access patients. One example is MSSC president Michael Bates, MD.

"I have seen a handful of patients, and one or two actually required an operation," Bates said. One patient who needed surgery was referred to Project Access by Dr. Bates himself.

"I had been helping a young woman from a family with quite modest means who needed a hysterectomy," Bates explained. He contacted the Project Access office and the staff established her eligibility. Preparations were then completed to admit her to an area hospital for the necessary surgery.

"The entire process went very smoothly, including working with the hospital, anesthesiologist and pharmacist," Bates reported. "It was a heartwarming feeling to help her and her family this way."

Project Access patients have begun to express their gratitude. "Even though we are still in the initial phase of implementing Project Access in the community, patients are already sharing their deep

appreciation for receiving the care they need but are unable to afford," said Anne Nelson, program director.



Dr. Michael Bates discusses a patient's x-ray with radiology technician Dixie Ruiz.

The design of Project Access has made it easier and more efficient to serve the community's uninsured population.

"I think area physicians are just beginning to understand

the program's structure," Bates commented. "As they become more educated about Project Access, they'll realize this system is a much more effective way of assisting patients who don't have insurance but who require medical care."

Project Access has dramatically improved the operation of area indigent care clinics. "The clinics don't have to spend all their time begging doctors, pharmacies, hospitals, etc. for assistance," Bates said. "Project Access helps spread the burden throughout the medical community."

As 1999 MSSC president, Dr. Bates has played a crucial role in the development of Project Access. As a participating physician, Dr. Bates is now making a difference in the lives of the very patients Project Access is designed to help.

IN THE KNOW

- Hunter Health Clinic began enrolling Project Access patients on October 20. Suzie Schwartz is executive director.
- As of November 10, the Wichita-Sedgwick County Department of Community Health is now on-line with Project Access. Enrollment is focused on patients visiting the main building at 1900 E. 9th; additional stations will identify eligible patients. Dr. Charles McGruder is executive director.
- SRS has played a crucial role in the development of Project Access. Sue Creegan is the SRS staff person at Guadalupe Clinic; Rex White is based at Hunter Health Clinic; and Mike McAdam is assigned to the Health Department.

THANK YOU

Guadalupe Clinic, Hunter Health Clinic and the Wichita-Sedgwick County Health Department for providing office space, furniture, phone lines and a modem line for C.A.R.E.S. computer connection for SRS staff.

SRS for providing the necessary computers and printers for staff assigned to each referral site.

WPPA, Inc. for developing the database to track the care being provided by Project Access.

Rosa Molina and the Medical Service Bureau staff for translating the patient packet information into Spanish and providing enrollment assistance with Spanish-speaking patients.

Dwight Allen and Dr. Michael Bates for their leadership and support during the development phase of Project Access.

New Staff Member Joins Project Access

Filling the newly created position of Project Access service coordinator has been a priority for Anne Nelson, program director. This goal was met in October when Allen Nelson was hired for the position.

“Allen brings a range of experiences and skills to the job that have already made him an important asset to the program,” said Anne Nelson.

“I like the sense that I’m doing something to improve the quality of life and making a difference.”

In his position as service coordinator, Nelson (no relation to Anne Nelson) acts as a liaison between patients and doctors. He determines eligibility of patients referred to Project Access by area physicians and coordinates referrals to specialists.

“I also try to help address ancillary issues with patients that are beyond the physician’s responsibility,” Nelson explained. “As a social worker, I have a deep commitment to identify resources and services that can improve the patient’s health and well-being.”

Nelson’s responsibilities include assisting the clinics with any referral problems.

A native of Salina, Nelson received a bachelor of arts in psychology from Marymount College. He worked for Topeka’s Stormont-Vail Medical Center and Wichita’s

Big Brothers-Big Sisters program before joining the Jayhawk Pipeline Co. in McPherson.

A desire to return to the social services field led Nelson back to school full-time. In August, he earned a BA in social work from Wichita State University and completed the requirements to be a licensed social worker.

During the months prior to graduation, Nelson was assigned to Via Christi-St. Francis Regional Medical Center for his practicum project.

“It gave me an opportunity to work in all the hospital units where I encountered a broad variety of situations,” Nelson commented. “The practicum experience reinforced my interest in medical social work.”

While at St. Francis, Nelson learned about Project Access. “I thought it was a great program for the community,” he said. “Since joining Project Access, I have been amazed at all the different partners who have made each patient’s experience successful.”

Problem-solving is what Nelson likes best about his job. “I like the sense that I’m doing something to improve the quality of life and making a difference.”

It appears that Allen Nelson and Project Access are a perfect fit.

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