



ACCESS INFORMATION

September 1, 2000 marks the first anniversary for Project Access. What a busy year it's been. To recognize the occasion, a two-page thank you was published in the Wichita Eagle on September 1. (Our thanks to Preferred Health Systems and Blue Cross/Blue Shield for underwriting the ad).

This newsletter is dedicated to informing you about the patients you have served and the progress our community has made in caring for the uninsured. The computer program we purchased from Asheville, N.C., called CARES (Centralized Applications, Referral and Enrollment Status), has been tracking the demographic data regarding all of our enrolled patients. The following article will tell you exactly who you have been providing donated medical care and services for this year.

We also have tracked the kinds of diagnoses and procedures stated on the billing forms you submit. The information is very enlightening and shows what kinds of illnesses this vulnerable population is experiencing.

We are learning a great deal about our enrolled patients and hope this information is helpful to you. Again, thank you for an exciting first year. We look forward to many years to come.



Our newsletters will now be published on a quarterly basis. Look for our next newsletter later in the fall.

Anne Nelson
Program Director

Data Underscores Need for Project Access in Wichita-Sedgwick County

By necessity, Project Access staff and volunteers have spent the first year of operation focused on establishing and coordinating access to services for the community's uninsured. Now that it has reached its one-year milestone, examining the quantitative results of Project Access' efforts is important.

"With the arrival of our one year anniversary, it seemed an appropriate time to stop and reflect about our patients — who they are and how they have been helped," said Anne Nelson, program director.

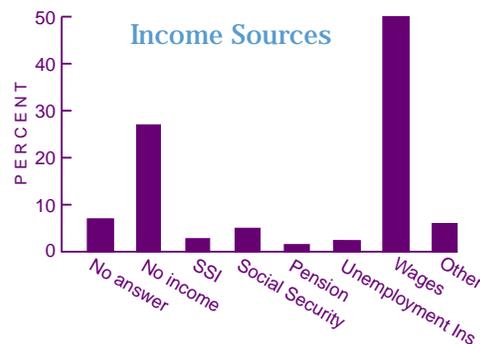
Ruth Wetta-Hall, KUSM-W, has collected and analyzed patient information from the Project Access database and from HCFA forms submitted by doctors and hospitals during the period of September 1, 1999 to August 1, 2000.

First-year demographics reveal the following statistics about Project Access patients:

- 63% are women.
- 27% are aged 18-30 years, 25% are 31-40 years, 24% are 41-50 years and 24% are over 50.
- 32% are single, 27% are married and 21% are divorced.
- Nearly 50% are white, 23% are Hispanic and 15% are Black.
- 77% have a high school education or less.
- Family size is predominately one person (41%) or two persons (19%).

- 48% rent their homes.
- 65% live at 100% of the federal poverty level, 19% live at 125% of the poverty level and 17% live at 150% of the poverty level.

When Project Access was first conceived, the belief was that most individuals without health insurance in Wichita are employed. As the chart below demonstrates, 50% of Project Access patients in the last year are employed.



During the first year, care of the program's patients has been evenly distributed among Project Access volunteer physicians. The majority of physicians have cared for 1-4 patients in a hospital setting.

While the Evaluation Committee is still working on additional patient care data provided by physicians, it has analyzed information submitted by participating hospitals:

- Nearly 70% of the admissions for hospital services were for "day" procedures that did not require an overnight stay.

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Patient Data continued from front page

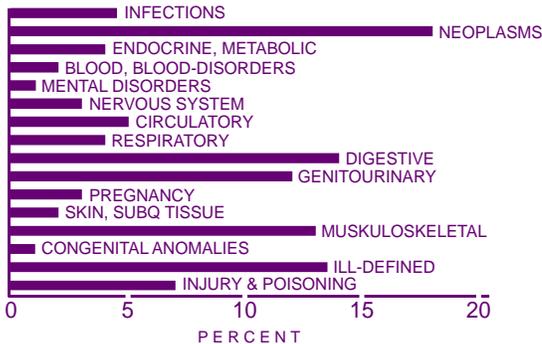
- 23% were 1-10 day hospitalizations.
- The average length of stay was 2.5 days.

An examination of the diagnosis/disease type of hospitalized patients indicates the serious nature of illness among a majority of Project Access patients.

The highest percentage of admissions — nearly 20% — were to treat a wide variety of types and sites of cancers.

Other significant health problems diagnosed included various digestive system diseases and genitourinary diseases. Approximately 70% of genitourinary admissions were related to female reproductive disorders. The chart below lists the total categories of diseases reported by the hospitals:

Primary Diagnosis Categories for Hospital Admissions



Despite the serious illnesses treated by area hospitals, the average charge submitted for Project Access admissions was \$4,864. The median charge was \$1,906 and the most frequently occurring charge was \$308. The chart below details hospital charges per admission:



“It is apparent that a need exists for Project Access in our community,” Nelson commented. “The initial data shows that many people are suffering serious repercussions from the lack of consistent health care. Their families, their livelihood and their ability to participate fully in our community are all impacted by the status of their health.”

Nelson hopes that the statistical evidence “will motivate everyone involved with Project Access to continue their commitment to this most worthwhile endeavor.”

If not us, then who?

IN THE KNOW

- As of August 28... 533 physicians are participating in Project Access. 1,157 patients are enrolled in Project Access.

Project Access Adds To Staff

The office of Project Access recently expanded to include an additional patient service coordinator. “As our patient numbers have increased, so has the need to increase the number of staff members,” said Anne Nelson, program director.

Laura Graham joined Project Access on August 4. Her previous case management experience includes positions with KETCH and the Department of Aging.



Laura Graham

She has a degree in psychology from the University of Kansas.

“I’m happy to be part of Project Access,” Graham remarked. “It is a good cause to work for and great people to work with.”

Medical Society of Sedgwick County
1102 S. Hillside
Wichita, KS 67211
(316) 688-0600

