



# ACCESS INFORMATION

## IN THE KNOW

- In March, physicians and other health care providers in Wichita-Sedgwick County will be contacted by participating physicians to recruit their involvement in Project Access. This activity is part of a quarterly effort to increase the number of physicians and providers participating in the program.
- Project Access is gathering data from multiple sources to gain a better understanding of the enrolled patients local providers are serving. The process includes linking patient demographic data with diagnostic and procedural codes collected from providers' billing forms. This aggregate data will be shared once it is available.
- Representatives from 16 communities have contacted Project Access and expressed interest in developing local programs to assist the uninsured. Several communities in Kansas, including Manhattan, Topeka and Wyandotte County, have requested in-depth, specialized technical assistance. Project Access partners and staff have made presentations in these communities as well as to cities out of state, such as Burlington, Iowa and Oklahoma City.
- In March, Anne Nelson, program director, and Dwight Allen, executive director of the Medical Society of Sedgwick County, will attend a RWJF grantees conference and exchange information with other communities working to serve the uninsured.

## Major Grant Awards Will Expand Services Offered By Project Access

The anticipation is over and it is official: The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has selected Project Access to receive a three-year implementation grant totalling \$700,000.

This is the second grant Project Access has received from the foundation's *Communities in Charge: Financing and Delivering Health Care to the Uninsured* program. Last year, Project Access was one of 20 cities awarded a \$150,000 one-year planning grant from RWJF. Out of the original pool of 20, only 14 communities nationwide received an additional three-year grant to assist them in finding new ways to serve the uninsured and to finance their care locally.

Project Access also received a matching grant from the Kansas Health Foundation to fund outreach and interpretive services.

"These new grants are the result of a team effort," says Anne Nelson, Project Access program director. "This is just one more example of what the Wichita-Sedgwick County community can achieve when we work together."

Project Access will use the new grant funds to expand its activities and to start new initiatives, including the following:

- **Tracking Patients** Area indigent care clinics will soon have access to information for all persons enrolled in the program in order to improve care coordination of patients receiving services at

more than one clinic.

- **Call A Nurse** Offering a central phone number to access basic health information and help determining when to use emergency room care is the goal of this potential new service for enrollees.

- **School Nurse Program** Project Access plans to hire a new patient service coordinator to work with public and private school nurses who have identified a sick child who should not be released

back to school and who does not have a primary care home. The child will receive donated care by a primary care physician,

and the family will receive assistance enrolling in HealthWave, a program for uninsured youth under age 19.

- **Adding More Health Care Services** Efforts will continue to broaden the continuum of care available to Project Access patients. Mental health services and basic dental care are two priorities.

- **Interpreter Services** The patient population of Project Access includes 27% identified as Hispanic or Asian, many of whom experience English language barriers. A comprehensive interpreter service is now available through Catholic Charities. Interpreters fluent in Spanish and several Asian languages have undergone training by a nationally-recognized program.

"All these efforts are intended to address the needs and improve the health of our community's uninsured citizens," Nelson adds.



## Sharing Information With Others Important

Project Access is participating in efforts on the national and state level to better understand the uninsured population and to develop long-term solutions to improve access to health insurance.

From the national perspective, Process Access will be part of an actuarial study of America's uninsured conducted by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The study will include the 14 other communities who received one of the foundation's three-year implementation grants. RWJF will share the information with other foundations and the federal Health Services and Resource Administration's Community

Access program who are working to serve the nation's uninsured.

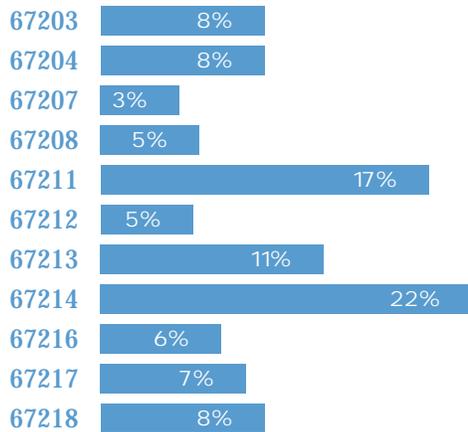
"We will be part of a national cooperative effort to study this population and to communicate about the different models being utilized," Anne Nelson explains.

In Kansas, Project Access is cooperating with a task force established by the Office of the Insurance Commissioner. Kansas received a HSRA grant to study the state's uninsured citizens and to develop a plan to insure all Kansans within five years. Part of Project Access' role in the state's survey is to set up interviews with Wichitans who do not have insurance.

## NUMBERS COUNT

- As of March 1...
  - 1,740 patients are enrolled in Project Access
  - 531 physicians are participating in Project Access
  - \$2,499,005 total amount of care donated by physicians who have submitted HCFAs
  - \$5,699,969 total amount of care donated by area hospitals who have submitted HCFAs
  - \$266,000 total amount of prescriptions purchased with funding provided by the Sedgwick County Commission and the Wichita City Council and filled at no charge by 55 participating pharmacies

### Where Project Access Patients Live By Wichita Area Zipcodes



First-year demographic data reveals that most Project Access patients live in neighborhoods identified as "vulnerable" by the 1997 Community Health Assessment project. Residents in these neighborhoods report lower health status than the general population and were much less likely to have seen a health care provider.

"Residents in the 67211 and 67214 neighborhoods in particular have the lowest per capita income and the highest rate of disease, levels of violence and unemployment in Wichita," says Ruth Wetta-Hall of the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita's Department of Preventive Medicine. "These area's are also characterized by a high rate of single family households with children under 18."

"These statistics show that Project Access is reaching Wichitans who are in need of health care," says Anne Nelson, program director.

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