



IN THE KNOW

- Project Access's four-year grant from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration's Healthy Communities Access Program will end in August. Wichita-Sedgwick County expresses its thanks to this government funder for helping to launch several Project Access endeavors, including the hospital case management program, hospital utilization study and the Clinics Patient Index shared database.

"We wouldn't be where we are today without HRSA's funding," said Anne Nelson, Project Access program director.

- In May, Project Access submitted a grant proposal to the Sunflower Foundation to help fund the Clinics Patient Index. Project Access received an invitation to submit the proposal after the foundation okayed a concept letter presented earlier for its consideration. A decision from the foundation is expected by the end of June.
- Representatives from five community clinics and Project Access will meet with staff from Via Christi Regional Medical Center and Wesley Medical Center June 30 to discuss incorporating the hospitals into the shared Clinics Patient Index database. The technical advisors contracted to link together the various program patient demographic databases also will attend the meeting. "Adding the hospitals to the CPI is an exciting and vital next step," said Anne Nelson.

ACCESS INFORMATION

Prescription drugs help make a difference

During its March 24 meeting, the Sedgwick County Commission unanimously approved Project Access's 2005 request for \$192,000 for prescription medications used by patients enrolled in the program. This decision echoed an earlier vote by the Wichita City Council which approved awarding Project Access \$300,000 for 2005.

The city and county governments have been vital supporters of Project Access since its inception September 1, 1999. Together, the funding provided by local government have purchased over \$2,300,000 in prescriptions for patients enrolled in the program.

"I can't stress enough how important the city and county's financial support has been to Project Access patients," explained

Anne Nelson, program director. "The prescription medications they have funded can make the difference between good and poor health for many patients."

Nelson also added that "the participating pharmacies offer a significant contribution to Project Access by filling prescriptions at no charge."

An analysis of the prescription component of Project Access from 2000 (*the program's first full year*) and 2004 reveals some interesting facts:

- The number of claims paid rose 43% between 2000 and 2004, although that number declined 11% between 2002 and 2004. This decline is a direct result of work begun by Project Access staff member Fern McGehee in

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Project Access continues to garner national attention



Dr. Joe Meek (left) and Sedgwick County Commissioner Tim Norton share a moment on the podium with Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle during an event held May 5 to unveil MilwaukeeCares, a public-private partnership designed to improve health care access for low-income, uninsured residents in Milwaukee County. Also attending the event from Wichita were Pat Hanrahan, United Way of the Plains executive director, and Anne Nelson, Project Access program director.

Project Access staff and partners provided technical assistance to MilwaukeeCares during its development of a system to coordinate physician volunteer services.



During a June 3 visit to Wichita, Dr. Dennis Schaberg met with Dr. Joe Meek (left), Dwight Allen, MSSC executive director, and Project Access director Anne Nelson.

"When I agreed to come to speak at the KU School of Medicine-Wichita, I had a request: to meet with the Project Access folks. I had heard Dr. Ed Dismuke's remarks describing Project Access and I was intrigued. I am interested by what you're doing in Wichita to improve access to care and wanted to learn more," said Dr. Schaberg who is chair of the Department of Medicine at the University of Tennessee's Health Sciences Center.

Prescriptions

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2002 to connect patients with donated medications offered through the pharmaceutical companies.

- While the number of patients receiving prescriptions rose 21% over the four years, the patient utilization rate for 2004 is down 153 patients when compared to 2002. This decline also is related to the number of patients receiving medications from drug company programs.
- The cost of name brand drugs rose 9.80% between 2003 and 2004, and a whopping 30% increase between 2000 and 2004.
- Most importantly, the number of patients receiving generic drugs rose to 99.64% in 2004, a 2.24% rise over 2003's rate.

The chart below details trends in Project Access's prescription medication component.

Project Access Rx Annual Trend Comparison

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Claims paid	7,922	12,597	15,696	14,527	14,002
Dollar value	\$205,762	\$404,379	\$543,863	\$469,285	\$428,511
Patients utilizing	968	1,333	1,356	1,202	1,203
PMPM per patient	\$17.71	\$25.28	\$33.42	\$32.54	\$29.68
Generic rate	91.83%	92.96%	92.97%	97.46%	99.64%
Avg. script cost	\$30.58	\$36.49	\$39.41	\$37.13	\$35.53
Avg. brand cost	\$44.95	\$49.53	\$54.79	\$58.35	\$64.07
Avg. generic cost	\$9.47	\$12.74	\$15.38	\$14.37	\$15.45

Dental services undergo changes in funding

The Wichita Community Foundation notified Project Access in May of its board's decision to terminate funding of the program's dental initiative, as of June 30, due to lower than anticipated patient enrollment.

In a letter to participating dentists, Project Access dental leaders expressed gratitude to the doctors for their work caring for patients, and noted that the foundation's decision did not reflect on the quality of care provided by local dentists.

Despite the funding loss, the Wichita District Dental Society has indicated a desire to continue its relationship with Project Access, and efforts to secure new funding are underway.

ATTENTION: Primary Care Physicians & Community Clinics

When referring patients to specialists, please include all lab work, tests, etc.

NUMBERS COUNT

Since September 1, 1999...

5,885 patients have enrolled in Project Access, and **725 patients** are active as of June 3.

530 physicians participate in Project Access and **50 physicians** volunteer in six community clinics for a total participation rate of **75%** of MSSC practicing physicians.

\$11,905,114 in care has been donated by physicians submitting HCFA billing reports.

\$28,677,800 in care has been donated by seven area hospitals submitting UB92s.

\$2,302,523 in prescriptions have been purchased (**105,788 prescription** claims filed) with funds provided by the Sedgwick County Commission and the Wichita City Council and filled at no charge by **78 participating pharmacies**.

In addition, pharmacy efforts by Project Access has leveraged over **\$846,675** in donated medications for the programs patients.

Since October 1, 2003...

283 patients have been enrolled in Project Access' Dental Initiative and referred to the **44 dentists** participating in the dental services program.

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"Thank you to all those in the medical community who volunteer their time to Project Access. I think it is amazing how many are working with the program."

Sedgwick County Commissioner Tom Winters

