

## State legislators learn more about ECM services during recent meeting

If it takes a village to raise a child, Melody McCray-Miller believes it takes a community working together to develop quality health care available to everyone, especially the poor, uninsured and underinsured. She expressed these sentiments during a May 15 meeting hosted by Enhanced Care Management of Sedgwick County for area legislators.

The impetus for the meeting came from Representative McCray-Miller (D-Wichita) who expressed a desire to learn more about ECM, following the Kansas legislature's recent vote to fund the program through June 2008. Other legislators attending the May 15 meeting were Nile Dillmore (D-Wichita), Don Schroeder (R-Inman) and Jim Ward (D-Wichita). Staff members from the Kansas Health Policy Authority (KHPA) also joined the meeting, including Marcia Nielsen, executive director.

ECM is a pilot program developed by Central Plains Regional Health Care Foundation (Central Plains), the Medical Society of Sedgwick County (MSSC) and KHPA to coordinate care management services for eligible Medicaid-HealthConnect enrollees, most of whom experience multiple chronic health conditions.

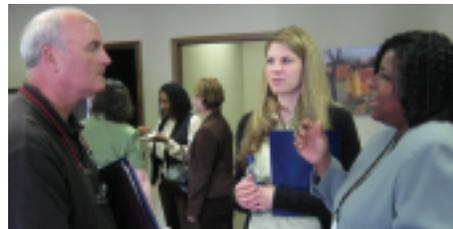
"This pilot program is operating in a community with a strong safety net system and a strong medical society," said Nielsen. "We have an important opportunity to look for answers in Wichita to the questions of what works to help improve health for this population and how can we get it to work in other places."

ECM program manager Matt Schrock described the care management process and its emphasis on a team approach to interacting with patients.

"We have to give them a reason to go in their homes and their lives and assess their health and social needs



Marcia Nielsen, executive director of the Kansas Health Policy Authority, visits with Adrian Walling, MD and Tim Scanlan, MD following ECM's informational meeting with area legislators.



Representative Jim Ward learns more about ECM from staff members Tiffany Frahm and Dennina Collins following their presentation at the May 15 meeting.

so that we can get them the help they need to improve their health," said Schrock.

"These patients are very difficult to care for and its time consuming," explained Tim Scanlan, MD who is assisting with the program. "For physicians who see these patients, ECM simplifies their care because of the help and support they receive."

Real-life scenarios were shared by ECM staff members Dennina Collins, nurse care manager, and Tiffany



Frahm, community resource care manager. They described the help provided to two ECM patients and the improvement in their health that they have observed.

"We are evaluating every step of the way to make sure we are doing what we said we would," said Anne Nelson, Central Plains chief operations officer. Results from the program's first year evaluations are available at [www.ecmsc.net](http://www.ecmsc.net).

ECM is breaking new ground in how Kansas cares for its sickest and poorest citizens. McCray-Miller and Susan Wood, KHPA staff member, will share the program's goals and progress during an upcoming national conference of the federal Agency for Health Research and Quality. State legislators from across the country will gather to learn about innovative health care projects underway nationwide, including the ambitious effort happening right here in Sedgwick County.

## United Way okays funding

The United Way of the Plains board approved Project Access's funding request for 2007 in November 2006. The program received \$232,174, a portion of which helps cover operational expenses, including staff salaries, computer services, supplies and the program's medical director contract.

Because United Way achieved its campaign goal of \$15 million, it increased this year's grant to Project Access beyond the 2006 funding level.

United Way has provided financial support to Project Access since it began operation in 1999. Other major funding partners include the Wichita City Council, Sedgwick County Commission and the Sunflower Foundation. Project Access has already submitted its request to United Way for funding for 2008.

# New materials designed to aid with physician recruitment

Physicians, under the auspices of the Medical Society of Sedgwick County, took the lead in forming the community partnership that created Project Access in response to the rising number of residents in Sedgwick County who lack health care coverage.

"Since Project Access opened its doors in 1999, physician participation has been crucial to its success," said Christopher Moeller, president of the Central Plains Board of Directors. "But we've been sitting at around 60% participation for the last seven years, and we need to increase that total."

In Asheville, NC, home of the first Project Access, 90% of physicians serve program patients. Other programs around the country, many that Wichita Project Access staff have helped to establish, have physician participation rates as high as 75%.

To reach that level, Project Access has developed a new recruitment strategy targeted at physicians and dentists not currently accepting Project Access patients. New materials that quickly explain the benefits of participating in Project Access will be presented in person by program staff.

"We literally need just two minutes from a provider or business manager to explain the program," said Moeller.

Project Access particularly hopes to add specialists in endocrinology, orthopedics, gastroenterology, pain management and gynecology as well as dentists to its provider roster.

"I participate in Project Access because when we work together, the responsibility of serving the uninsured is shared fairly," said Dennis Ross, MD, 2007 MSSC president.

Anyone interested in hearing a presentation should call 688-0600.

## ECM hires new nurse care manager

Robin Anderson joined the Enhanced Care Management program staff March 26 in the position of nurse care manager. She earned her nursing degree in Iowa before moving to Kansas in 1988, and recently completed studies in computer science at Butler Community College.

Anderson's work experience includes 13 years as clinical manager in Wesley Medical Center's high-risk obstetrics/gynecology department. She has also worked as director of nursing at a local psychiatric facility and as a school nurse.

Finding resources for patients, managing patient health care needs,



conducting home visits and working with health care providers are examples of Anderson's responsibilities with ECM.

"Basically anything patients need to improve their health" was Anderson's

answer to the question of what her job entails.

"It really varies from patient to patient," Anderson explained. "Most importantly, I teach them how to manage their health conditions, such as diabetes and blood pressure. The patients I've seen love the program. And the physicians and their staff I have talked with appreciate the help."

## YOU SHOULD KNOW ...

**#1** More dentists are now accepting Project Access patients in need of treatment for serious dental conditions. Project Access staff can help facilitate these referrals.

**#2** When program patients require the services of a specialist, physicians should contact the Project Access office to identify the next available physician specialist.

**#3** Participating physicians can refer patients to Project Access to determine eligibility for program services. Simply fax the program referral form to initiate the process.

**Contact Project Access at 688-0600 for more information.**

## NUMBERS TO KNOW

Since September 1, 1999...

**7,362 patients** have enrolled in Project Access and **626 patients** are active daily.

**569 physicians** participate in Project Access and **50 physicians** volunteer in six community clinics for a total participation rate of 58% of MSSC practicing physicians.

**\$17,245,415** in care has been donated by physicians submitting HCFA billing reports.

**\$43,718,931** in care has been donated by seven area hospitals submitting UB92s.

**\$3,070,284** in prescriptions have been purchased and **155,499 prescription claims** filed with funds provided by the Sedgwick County Commission and the Wichita City Council and filled at no charge by **77 participating pharmacies.**

In addition, pharmacy efforts by Project Access leveraged over **\$1,700,000** in donated medications for the program's patients.

As of June 14...

**181 clients** are actively enrolled in Enhanced Care Management of Sedgwick County.

**67% of ECM clients** are challenged by three or more of the following chronic conditions:

Arthritis	36
Asthma	22
Congestive Heart Failure	16
COPD	27
Diabetes	48
Frailty	28
Hyperlipidemia	41
Hypertension	77
Ischemic Heart Disease	23
Lower Back Pain	58