



# ACCESS INFORMATION

## Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Awards Grant to Project Access

**W**e recently received good news from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). We have received a one-year, \$150,000 planning grant to assess the barriers to health insurance for uninsured people in our community and to develop a plan to remove those barriers. If we successfully meet our grant goals this year, our community will be eligible for a three-year implementation grant from RWJF.

*This successful grant application is acknowledgement that Project Access is working. Our local clinics are enrolling patients who need care beyond the scope of their clinics. More than 300 patients have been enrolled since September 1. Thanks to the compassion of our medical community, these patients are accessing the donated medical care and medications they need to get well.*

*The United Methodist Health Clinic is the fourth clinic to begin enrolling patients as of January 20. Our residency clinics are also very strong partners and will be of great assistance in identifying patients who need to be enrolled. They will serve as a wonderful referral network for the specialty care they can provide.*



Anne Nelson  
Program Director

*Project Access is a complex program still in its very early stages of development. But, thanks to you, it's working!*

**T**he waiting is over. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation notified Project Access at the end of December that it is one of 20 programs nationwide to receive a \$150,000 one-year planning grant through its Communities in Charge initiative.

"It was quite a thrill to receive word that our grant application had been accepted," said Anne Nelson, program director. "It speaks highly of our community and the unique partnership that has come together to help improve access to health care for the uninsured."

The grant enables Project Access to identify the barriers to accessing health insurance and medical care in Wichita-Sedgwick County.

"We plan to bring together a broad base of people and organizations, from physicians and social agencies to insurance companies and Chamber of Commerces in the surrounding communities, to explore the issues affecting access to health care and health insurance," explained Dr. Michael Bates, president of Central Plains Regional Health Care Foundation board of directors, Project Access' governing board.

The grant funding also provides for the development of strategies to address the identified barriers. Broadening access, improving care coordination, reducing the prevalence of preventable illnesses and enhancing information channels

are examples of solutions the plan might consider.

"Project Access' very existence represents the level of commitment locally to improving our system of care," said Nelson. "With the support of the grant, we can begin to rethink and reorganize care for the uninsured on a much broader scale."

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, based in Princeton, NJ, is the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to health and health care. It concentrates its grantmaking in three areas: to assure that all Americans have access to basic health care at a reasonable cost; to improve care and support for people with chronic health conditions; and to reduce the personal, social and economic harm caused by substance abuse.

The foundation's Communities in Charge project is divided into two phases. Phase I covers organization and planning efforts. During Phase II, up to 15 communities from among the initial 20 funded will receive three-year, \$700,000 grants for implementation of strategies developed during Phase I planning activities. Wichita's Project Access will be eligible for a Phase II grant.

It is estimated that as many as 50,000 area residents, primarily those who work in low-wage jobs without benefits, do not have health insurance nor reliable access to medical care.

*The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to health and health care.*

## IN THE KNOW

● As of January 20, United Methodist Health Clinic is enrolling Project Access patients. Stephanie Adams-Stone is the executive director. The Center for Health and Wellness and Good Samaritan Clinic will be added soon.

● The impact of Project Access is already making a difference in the community. Below is an outline of services donated from September 1 through December 31, 1999:

**Physician Services**  
**805 HCFA's submitted**  
**totaling \$184,782.93**

**Hospital Services**  
**31 inpatient admissions**  
**totaling \$423,796.30**

**79 outpatient visits/procedures**  
**totaling \$202,154.84**

**Pharmacy Services**  
**735 prescriptions purchased**  
**totaling \$13,121.23**

### THANK YOU

**To the following organizations who have expressed an interest in partnering with Project Access:**

Via Christi Home Health  
Via Christi Home Medical  
Hospice, Inc.

Wesley Rehabilitation Hospital  
NovaCare Outpatient  
Rehabilitation

Apria Medical Supplies  
EBI-LP Medical Supplies

## Local Physician Glad To Do Her Part

**D**r. Deborah Haynes thinks Project Access is good for Wichita, for physicians and for patients.

“Project Access is extending an important service to patients and to the city,” Haynes said. “And it enables physicians to fulfill what I believe is the mission of our profession: to provide care for patients who need it.”

Dr. Haynes was an early proponent of Project Access. When she first learned of the program, she forwarded a list of 15 current patients to Project Access to ascertain their eligibility. Five patients were eligible to enroll. She describes how one patient in particular was assisted:

“I had been seeing Pat for some time, and had determined that she needed hip replacement surgery. She worked full-time but didn’t have any insurance to cover the costs. Like many people, Pat was eventually forced to quit work due to severe pain, and she had developed a limp.”

With the assistance of Project Access, Dr. Haynes’ patient was referred to Dr. David McQueen, an orthopaedic specialist. All the costs of hospitalization and surgery were defrayed.



*Dr. Deborah Haynes, right, discusses a patient with Rebecca Green, a third-year medical student working with Haynes.*

“Thanks to Project Access, every step Pat takes is appreciated,” Haynes explained.

Other eligible patients have benefitted from Project Access services. “So many patients worry about the costs that they don’t come in for the care they need,” Haynes

said. “I can control office costs but x-rays, surgery, prescriptions, etc. have been a problem in the past. It has been very helpful to access a system that is greater than what I am able to provide directly.”

Haynes or her staff often called other doctors to find help for her uninsured patients. “It is so much easier now that Project Access is controlling the coordination aspect. The system can make a difference when everyone, from physicians to hospitals to pharmacists, do their part.”

---

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