

# FactSheet

## Physician Volunteers

SCMS HealthAccess is a community partnership improving access to health care for low-income, uninsured residents of Topeka and Shawnee County. HealthAccess combines donated physician care, hospital services, and medication assistance in a coordinated program led by the Medical Society. HealthAccess was designed to complement and enhance the work of existing low-income clinics and other community agencies.

### NEED

- Nearly 20,000 residents of Shawnee County do not have health insurance or reliable access to medical care.
- Most of these residents work one or more low-wage jobs without health benefits.
- People who find themselves in these situations do not qualify for Medicaid or other government programs, but do not make enough income to purchase affordable health insurance.

### HOW IT WORKS

#### A highly visible example of physician leadership in action!

- HealthAccess is a referral network that provides medical care for low-income, uninsured patients.
- Designed to provide comprehensive healthcare services including **physician care, hospital care, and medication assistance.**
- Patients must live in Shawnee County, not have insurance or qualify for benefit programs like Medicare or Medicaid, and have a total family income below 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.
- Every six months, patients must re-enroll in

HealthAccess and provide proof of income to ensure they remain qualified .

- Patients can be referred through the emergency room, case management, social workers, local agencies, or they can self-refer and submit an application at any time.
- By helping these patients find a medical home, they stay out of the emergency room, and are able to continue to work, which leads to a healthy workforce and ultimately, a health community.

*HealthAccess is a way for you to help provide efficient care for the low-income, uninsured more effectively than any other entity could provide alone.*

### PATIENT RESPONSIBILITY

- Patients are responsible for keeping appointments and making a good-faith effort to work in partnership with their doctors to carry out the plan of care recommended.

## SEEING PATIENTS

- HealthAccess patients are scheduled just like insured patients. They should present their HealthAccess card at time of service.
- Your office should submit a standard billing and coding form (HCFA-1500) to our office by mail or electronically code to Blue Cross & Blue Shield in the same way as insurance plans. However, you will not receive a payment.
- After the claim is submitted you may want to write it off immediately.
- The HealthAccess group number is **SCMSHA**.
- By electronically submitting a HCFA 1500, HealthAccess will record your volunteer hours and the value of the care you provide.

## COMPREHENSIVE CARE

- If patients need laboratory services, x-rays, or other tests—you may choose to donate these services in office. Or you may choose to refer the patient to other participating facilities. If a referral is needed for a patient, contact the HealthAccess office for information regarding participating provider volunteers.
- After you have finished seeing a HealthAccess patient, please contact the referring provider in the same manner you do for other patients.

### **Medications**

- Patients are given a pharmacy card with a \$1000 yearly limit for use at area pharmacies for outpatient prescriptions. With a \$7.50 co-pay, only generic medications are covered. Area pharmacists through the Prescription Network, donate their services and provide medications to the program at cost.

### **Hospitalization**

- Both Stormont Vail Health and University of Kansas - St. Francis Campus provide donated hospital care for HealthAccess patients. Admit the patient just as though you normally would.
- Ambulance / emergency room care are not included.

## HOW CAN I HELP?

*Most volunteers recommend . . .*

**Specialist Physicians**

**20 patients/year**

**Primary Care Physicians**

**10 patients/year**

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Many providers already provide care for low-income patients. THANK YOU! By formally volunteering for HealthAccess, we hope to record and recognize this service. The number of patients you are already seeing counts toward your pledge for HealthAccess. Refer them to be enrolled in the program, which will help them gain access to specialty referrals, hospitalization, and medicate assistance.
- HealthAccess maintains a database to ensure that only the number of patients you have agreed to accept will be referred to your practice. We work to rotate referrals and equally distribute patients.
- In the unlikely event that a physician would be sued for care donated, your usual malpractice coverage would apply. In addition, the State of Kansas has some liability resources under the Tort Claims Funds, under certain conditions.
- Too few people in our community know of the many volunteer efforts led by our physician community. One of our primary goals is to help increase awareness of these activities by working with area media and establish ongoing recognition efforts.
- We know we are asking a lot of you, and can count on your support. You know you can count on your Medical Society.

**THANK  
YOU!**

Please call us if you have questions or need additional information. You may reach the HealthAccess office by calling Megan Skaggs, Executive Director, at (785)235-0996.