

# SUBURBAN PRIMARY HEALTH CARE COUNCIL

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Access to Care® is a model primary health care program serving low-income uninsured individuals.

The **Access to Care** program is a unique public/private partnership making primary health care and the ancillary pharmacy, laboratory and radiology services available to the most forgotten segment of our population, the working poor. There is an annual enrollment fee of \$20 for one person, \$40 for two people and \$50 for a family with three or more adult members. (Husband, Wife, and children 19 to 21) Children 18 years and under are not charged an enrollment fee. The program provides diagnosis and treatment to individuals and families for a small co-payment per visit, procedure or prescription medication.

**Access to Care** contracts with local providers throughout Cook County, Illinois and pays them a discounted rate to provide services. Eligibility screening is determined by the following criteria: family incomes below 200% of the federal poverty level, with no health insurance, or a deductible of \$500 or more per person, and ineligible for Medicaid or Medicare. Registration takes place at local township offices, public health departments and community social service agencies.

Physicians volunteer to participate and choose the number of patients they will add to their practice. They are compensated at the rate of \$68.00 per patient per year.

#### **SERVICES PROVIDED:**

Patients pay \$5 per visit, \$5 for lab and radiology services and \$10 for generic, \$20 for preferred brand or \$30 for non-preferred brand prescription medication.

#### **BENEFITS:**

◆ Patients receive diagnosis and treatment for nominal fees. The most common diagnoses among adult patients are diabetes and hypertension. Individuals with chronic and episodic conditions are monitored by their physicians and are able to obtain medication to manage their illnesses.

◆ Patients are able to receive care in the private offices of their personal Access to Care physicians.

◆ The program encourages physicians to contribute their time and skills in the spirit of community service.

◆ The administrative office facilitates physicians' referrals to public ambulatory specialty clinics.

#### **THE PROGRAM IS SUCCESSFUL:**

◆ **Over 91,000 individuals have been served since the program was implemented as a demonstration project**

***in 1988. The program has expanded to cover all of suburban Cook County and the demonstration area in Chicago***

◆ ***Currently, over 700 participating physicians have volunteered to provide care for over 28,000 individuals.***

◆ ***85% of patients indicate they are "extremely satisfied" or "satisfied" with the program.***

◆ ***Prior to joining the program 77% of patients stated that cost prevented them from receiving medical care.***

◆ ***86% of enrollees report overall satisfaction with the program.***

◆ ***Funded by both public and private sources, the program receives its largest source of funding from the Cook County Board of Commissioners.***

#### **ENDORSEMENTS:**

**Access to Care** has been endorsed by the Institute of Medicine of Chicago, the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians, the Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, The American College of Physicians, Northern Illinois Region and is supported by the Chicago Medical Society. Recipient of the 1996 Governors Hometown Award.

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The Cook County Board of Commissioners and the State of Illinois partner with Access to Care to provide primary health care services.