

Children's Health Access Program

Improving the Health of
Children Covered by Medicaid
By Improving Access to Care



Children with Medicaid often have poorer health than children with private insurance. Improving access to quality primary health care is critical to reducing this disparity.

Nearly one of every three children in Kent County is covered by Medicaid. Low reimbursement rates make it difficult for private physician practices to accept these patients. Clinics are overwhelmed by the number of patients they see. Children with Medicaid have less access to preventive care and as a result have significantly higher hospitalization rates, more severe illnesses, significantly higher rate of asthma and more emergency hospital visits.

The Children's Health Access Program (CHAP) is a pilot program operated by First Steps Kent in partnership with Priority Health, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital, Cherry Street Health Services, four private pediatric practices and human service agencies. Due to CHAP's advocacy, Priority Health provides financial incentives to its private practice practitioners to accept more Medicaid children, which results in more children receiving preventive care. By reallocating resources towards prevention, Priority Health partners reduce emergency visits and save money on care.

Grant Facts

Organization: First Steps Kent

Grant amount: \$250,000

Grant Purpose: To expand a pediatric "medical home" program designed to improve the health outcomes of publicly insured children

Web site: www.firststepskent.org

Started: 2009

Location: 118 Commerce Ave. SW, Suite 300, Grand Rapids, MI 49503

No. served: In its first year CHAP provided direct services to 2,789 patients

Area served: Kent County

With a \$250,000 grant, CHAP will expand to add one or two additional health plans, providing quality care for more children in need. The expansion will also intensify support provided to children with asthma, and enable the research, planning, and strategy development to address the crisis in accessing dental services, especially for medically-fragile children.

This is Community Leadership.

CHAP is **changing "business as usual"** for health providers by shifting dollars to fund **prevention**—and reducing high-cost emergency care. Kent County children are healthier as a result, and the system of health care provision will be **improved permanently.**

Ways You Can Help

To help ensure the success of this grant you may give to address any of the needs listed below. Please call First Steps Kent at 616.632.1018 to learn more.

- **Asthma patient/parent education materials** – \$3,000
- **Public awareness campaign** – \$10,000 May include messages on mass transit, billboards, print media, and radio, based on available funding
- **Community education** – \$20,000 An additional part-time community health worker.

*To ensure the Community Foundation can make grants like this one in the future, please consider a gift to the **Fund for Healthy People**. Please call 616.454.1751 to learn the benefits of Community Foundation giving and how gifts can be made.*



Grand Rapids

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