

# COMMUNITY ALLIANCE OF SARASOTA COUNTY

## Health Coverage for Uninsured Children Subcommittee

August 24, 2004

Members Present: Sarah Gorman, Chair  
Eva Goodwin  
Janet Kahn

Members Absent: Virginia Brockman  
Mary Crowley  
Gloria DeHaven  
Debra Kaufman  
Lou Anne Koch  
Kim Kutch  
Sherri Reynolds  
Nancy Shoemaker  
Beverly Stockton

Others Present: Christie Lewis

Staff: Pauline Tracy

### **Review of Updated Matrix**

Sarah gave an update on the matrix information she has gathered on pediatric health care coverage. The Sarasota County Health Department reported that 1,285 children received health care during the past fiscal year in which the health department received no compensation. Sarasota Memorial Hospital reported that a total of \$2,132,034 in uncompensated pediatric care was written off during the past year. Sarah should be able to obtain information regarding private insurers very soon.

It appears that there are at least 7,000 children in Sarasota County without any health insurance coverage. This estimate is based on:

- the reported numbers of Sarasota County children with health coverage as listed on the matrix;
- *Child Health USA, 2002*;
- *Kids Count Data Book 2004*; and
- data obtained from The Lawton and Rhea Chiles Center.

Sarah also provided copies of a draft report to the Community Alliance Steering Committee outlining the process the subcommittee used to assess the situation, the

*Subcommittee Goal: 100% of children in Sarasota County have access to affordable, basic health care.*

resources utilized, and general information about Healthy Kids and health insurance coverage for adults.

The subcommittee discussed other resources that may be available. Pauline will contact 211 Manasota, the Child Protection Center and the Department of Children and Families to see where they refer clients who are uninsured but need medical attention.

### **Review of Models for Service Delivery to Uninsured Children**

Discussion ensued regarding several models for service delivery to uninsured children. Sarah reported that there is a model in another state where a primary clinic is located in stores such as Target and Wal-Mart which provides better access and convenience.

### **Recommendations for Steering Committee**

1. Open a new clinic using a sliding scale fee. Pauline will contact the health department to determine whether they have conducted surveys which indicate whether the times and locations of the current clinics are meeting the client's needs.
2. Ask private physicians to see a certain number of children on a pro bono basis.
3. Establish a community health foundation such as the Primary Care Access Network (PCAN) in Orange County.
4. Establish primary care clinics in non-traditional settings such as Target or Wal-Mart. ARNPs and physician's assistants could staff these clinics.
5. Apply for grants which will provide better access to health care for the uninsured.

Reasons parents choose not to use existing resources such as the health department were discussed. Some possibilities include: language barriers, lack of awareness of what the health department offers, the health department is perceived as "public clinic", and parents, in particular, single parents, may not see well-child visits as a priority compared to everything else they have to balance in their lives.

Parents have to be willing to do everything they can to maximize their child's health, including attending mandatory health care classes similar to the program at Sarasota Memorial Hospital for small business owners.

## **Community Forum on Medicaid Reform**

Several meetings have been held around the state to inform communities about a proposed Medicaid Reform initiative. The State of Florida has indicated that in the fall, they will submit a request for the federal government to approve a Medicaid Section 1115 Waiver which would block grant Florida's Medicaid dollars. There has been concern expressed by the counties and by human service providers that if approved, the waiver could reduce the amount of Medicaid services provided and place a greater burden on local resources to fill the gap.

Christie Lewis, Director of the Non-Profit Resource Center, attended the meeting to discuss logistics for holding a symposium on Medicaid Reform in Sarasota County in the very near future. It was decided that it would need to be held in late September or early October in order to have meaningful dialogue and input into the waiver application.

A draft agenda, including presenters, was agreed upon. Christie will contact Alan Levine, Secretary of AHCA, first to determine his availability before establishing a definite date for the event. Christie will then contact other presenters and secure a location.

## **Next Meeting**

***The next meeting of the Health Coverage for Uninsured Children Subcommittee is scheduled for Tuesday, September 28, at 3:30 p.m. at the Healthy Start office, 1750 17<sup>th</sup> Street, Building M.***