

# The Health Resources and Services Administration

## Patient Navigator Program

*\$18.6 million for the Patient Navigator Program*



Navigating the health care system can be an insurmountable journey for many people, especially when they are low-income or uninsured. Helping people stay healthy and overcome barriers to health care – from screening to diagnosis, treatment, and beyond – is the idea behind “Patient Navigators” and the Patient Navigator Program run by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

### Patient Navigator Programs:

- Rely on local resources and people who already work in community health centers, clinics and local hospitals to identify patients who may need help.
- Make more efficient use of health programs Congress has already created.
- Act as a roadmap and compass for people in need by:
  - Providing community outreach and counseling on disease prevention and healthy lifestyle choices;
  - Promoting early detection screening tests;
  - Providing assistance in obtaining referrals for treatment;
  - Scheduling follow up appointments and arranging transportation;
  - Ensuring medical instructions are understood and followed;
  - Helping patients find funds to pay for doctor visits and treatments;
  - Addressing other barriers to health care that medically underserved individuals often face

### Model Patient Navigator Programs

**Ralph Lauren Center for Cancer Prevention and Care of Harlem, NY** - Diagnosis of early stage breast cancer in the Harlem community has improved from 1 out of 20 in 1989 to 4 out of 10 women today, and the average length of time between initial breast exams and biopsies has decreased to 10 days, a rate comparable to patients in private care. In 1989, the five-year survival rate in this community due to breast cancer was only 39% compared to 60% for the rest of the U.S. population. As of 2004, the five-year survival rate has increased to 70%, compared to 90% in the greater U.S. female population.

**Washington Hospital Center “Cancer Preventorium”**- The impact on patients has been extraordinary, with compliance rates for mammograms and follow-up examinations improving considerably. Since 1994, more than 14,000 people have received preventive care and treatment at the Cancer Preventorium. Sixty percent of those patients had no health insurance, and 85 percent had no symptoms at the time of visit.

**Southeast Kentucky Community Action Program (SKYCAP)** - The patient navigators help get optimal care for 7,000 patients and drastically reduce emergency room visits and hospitalizations while lowering the one-year-cost of hospitalizations from over \$1 million to \$250,000 one year later.

<b>Funding History for HRSA Patient Navigator Program</b>					
<i>(in millions)</i>					
	<b>FY 2006</b>	<b>FY 2007</b>	<b>FY 2008</b>	<b>FY 2009</b>	<b>FY 2010</b>
<b>Authorized</b>	\$2.00	\$5.00	\$8.00	\$6.50	\$3.50
<b>Appropriated</b>	--	--	\$2.95	\$4.00	--

### FY 2010 Funding for the Patient Navigator Program

The Patient Navigator Program was funded for the first time in FY 2008, receiving \$2.95 million. The program received \$4 million in FY 2009. Please support full funding in FY 2010. If fully funded, HRSA would be able to build on the groundwork that was set last year and fully implement this important program in communities across the country.

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