

Lee County Primary Care Plus

A program of the Lee County Health Department

Sanford, NC

Vision

Paving the Path to Primary Care Access

Mission

The Lee County Health Department will help improve access to primary care by providing contracted primary healthcare services to local small business owners who cannot afford to offer traditional group health insurance and their employees.

Lee Primary Care-Plus will provide affordable primary healthcare to local uninsured employees of small businesses. The Lee County Health Department has created Lee Primary Care-Plus (LPCP) to increase the availability of primary healthcare services to small business employees and contribute to improved short and long-term health outcomes of these employees. LPCP is an innovative program that can avoid the financial burden associated with health insurance while offering many or all of the same benefits. The staff of enrolled businesses can obtain a range of primary care services from medical providers staffed by the Lee County Health Department in exchange for a \$15 co-pay per visit. The program is a pilot funded by the NC Partnership for Public Health through budget approval in the NC General Assembly, and hopes to be a model of care for the county, state, and nation. Participating businesses can experience greater productivity and increased loyalty from employees. Eventually LPCP may enroll enough patients to operate in a building outside of the health department and may expand services or coverage of dependents.

II. Background:

Lee Primary Care-Plus (LPCP) is an innovative program initiated by the South Central North Carolina Partnership for Public Health (SCNCPH) in July 2006. The Lee County Health Department (LCHD) is the site of the pilot phase of LPCP, and funding was designated for expansion of the program at the pilot site and an additional late-stage pilot site in the Anson County Health Department (ACHD). Mike Hanes, the current health director at LCHD, is

currently heading the efforts of the program and has two managers to help steer the program. Linda Henderson and Carol Kivett have provided help in organizing healthcare and billing for LPCP participants. In May 2007, Mr. Henderson began working with staff at the North Carolina Institute for Public Health (NCIPH) to assist in the launch of the pilot phase by providing marketing advice. After meeting with leadership at the NCIPH, SCNCPPH, and LCHD, a marketing plan was identified as a desired resource from this marketing advice. The following information was researched and compiled by a health administration and policy graduate student with a marketing concentration. This marketing plan should be of particular use for the ACHD and the NCIPH if other state health departments become interested in adopting a similar initiative. A summary sheet is available in the appendix.

LCHD is **not** health insurance, but rather, is a mechanism to provide primary care access. LCHD does this by offering a lower flat fee per visit to patients who work in a small business in Lee County that has already enrolled the patients in LCHD and has agreed to a contractual per patient per month enrollment fee. For example, an enrolled employee who works at XYZ Small Business will pay \$15 per visit instead of \$40 per visit. His employer will pay \$25 each month for that employee to enjoy the reduced fee. **The intent of the program is two-fold: to reduce cost barriers for the working poor in Lee County, and to reduce the individual and collective toll of chronic diseases by providing a new opportunity for patients to get consistent primary and preventive care.** The benefit for small business owners is that healthier employees should result in reduced absenteeism, increased employee loyalty, and increased profits due to increased productivity. The current marketing challenge for LPCP is conveying the fiscal and health concepts to audiences who may be unfamiliar with the LCHD or with the monetary and physical benefits of primary health care that have been documented in academic literature.