

Hospitals and Health Systems Outreach Strategies



There is no better time to approach a parent about the value of health insurance than when his/her child is in need of medical care – and no more trusted resource for families than the providers of that care. Here are some ways the medical community can help children and pregnant women enroll in the FAMIS programs or Medicaid.



- Many hospitals have lower wage workers whose children may be eligible for Medicaid or FAMIS. Even if they are offered dependent care coverage, many may not be able to afford it. Make sure your own employees, and contract workers, are aware of these programs and how to apply.
- Ask the hospital administration to support an aggressive campaign to help eligible children enroll in the health care plans. It is good for children, good for families, and good for business!
- Establish mechanisms to track the success of your outreach efforts, the benefits to children, and the resulting savings to the health care system.
- Have posters, brochures, and applications available in all appropriate areas, including: Pediatrics, the ER, clinics, staff locker rooms, and the cafeteria. If possible, provide a local phone number where families can call with questions.
- Ensure that appropriate staff at all points of contact are aware of the programs and able to provide information and make appropriate referrals, including: the ER, Labor and Delivery, clinics, financial counselors, social workers, human resources personnel, pediatric practices, and others.
- Include a flyer regarding the programs in all bills for self-pay patients, include a local contact number to call for assistance with the application.
- Have some key staff trained to help families through the process. This means: assisting with the application, helping the family copy and submit verifications, following up on the status during processing, and advocating on their behalf with social services if necessary.
- Provide leadership to the community on increasing enrollment of eligible children/pregnant women/parents and caregivers. Host trainings for community workers, facilitate an ongoing inter agency team to address the problem, use your position in the community to make it a priority.
- Make sure the medical community is aware and involved. Regularly send information to area pediatricians, OB/GYNs, and family practice doctors, encourage the local dental community, Medical Society, Pediatric Chapter, or nurses associations to get involved.
- Dedicate staff to design and carry out a comprehensive outreach campaign throughout the community. This could include: raising community awareness by speaking at schools, churches, civic organizations; sponsoring public service announcements; having your public relations department create special materials; working directly with local businesses and schools to inform and assist parents; and offering families a place to go for hands-on assistance with the application process. It may also include participating in the Hospital Presumptive Eligibility Program.