



VIRGINIA
HEALTH CARE
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***“RxRelief Virginia”* Brings Medication Help to the Uninsured in
Charlottesville-Albemarle Area.**

The wonders of today’s new drug treatments unfortunately are not available to a lot of the people who need them most. Thanks to a \$18,750 grant awarded to the United Way - Thomas Jefferson Area by the Virginia Health Care Foundation, chronically ill patients of Region Ten Community Services who lack health insurance will now be able to receive the medications they need, at no cost. The grant will support a part time medication assistance caseworker who is expected to help obtain \$232,000 in free medicines for Region Ten patients.

This grant award is part of the Foundation’s *“RxRelief Virginia”* initiative, which helps health safety net organizations expand medication assistance programs for eligible residents. These programs assist people in obtaining prescription drugs donated by the nation’s brand-name pharmaceutical companies.

The Foundation now funds 44 medication assistance caseworkers throughout the state via *RxRelief Virginia*. Last year they obtained over \$18 million in free medications.

“Nobody should have to choose between filling a prescription or putting food on the table. Unfortunately, that’s the reality for many Virginians,” said Debbie Oswalt, Executive Director of the Virginia Health Care Foundation. “The Foundation is grateful for the Governor and General Assembly’s support of our efforts to help uninsured, chronically ill Virginians get the medications they need.”

Lack of access to medication is an increasingly urgent issue. According to a 2005 study by the Center for Studying Health System Change (a non-partisan healthcare policy research organization), the proportion of adults with chronic medical conditions who reported cost related drug access problems rose almost 11 percent (16.5 percent to 18.3 percent) between 2001 and 2003. Almost one fifth of adults with chronic conditions were unable to afford all their prescription drugs in 2003.

The Virginia Health Care Foundation is a non-profit public/private partnership dedicated to increasing access to primary care for uninsured and medically underserved Virginians, by strengthening and growing Virginia’s healthcare safety net. The Foundation was initiated in 1992 by the Virginia General Assembly and its Joint Commission on Health Care. To date, the Foundation has funded 268 community based projects across the Commonwealth.

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