

August 2009

## Tri-Town Health Center Receives \$1.7 Million to Expand

Tri-Town Community Action Agency's Health Center, the only community health center serving uninsured and underinsured families in Johnston, North Providence, Smithfield and North Smithfield, recently received grants totaling \$995,000 for expansion of its facilities and \$730,000 to cover operating expenses. The grants will enable the Center to double its space as well as the number of patients served, and to offset the cost of providing care to the increasing number of uninsured patients. Grants for renovations to the Center at 1126 Hartford Avenue in Johnston came from diverse supporters including a \$330,000 Congressional appropriation; \$265,000 from the Champlin Foundations, \$250,000 from the Department of Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA); and \$150,000 from the Bureau of Primary Care. The HRSA will also provide \$650,000 annually for the additional staffing and operating costs associated with the expansion of services. The Rhode Island Foundation will contribute \$80,000 in the first year to cover the cost of new evening and Saturday staffing.

*"This magnificent support from both public and private sources demonstrates their trust in our ability to deliver high quality, cost-effective services," said Joseph DeSantis, Tri-Town CEO. "The support comes at a time when the need is skyrocketing and services have been threatened by cuts in state funding. The grants will allow us to provide affordable, accessible care to thousands more infants, children and adults who would otherwise have difficulty accessing care."*



The community is designated as a Health Provider Shortage Area for primary care, dental and mental health. Over 21,000 people live at or below 200% of the poverty level. *"With expanded facilities, services and hours, patients will be able to get an appointment without the long waits they now experience, utilization of emergency rooms for non-emergencies should decrease, and the overall health of low-income residents should improve,"* said DeSantis. *"The \$650,000 annual grant from HRSA to help cover operating costs is a big boost in enabling us to maintain the Health Center's services and financial viability in the years ahead."*



The Health Center will double in size, adding 6



examination rooms and a new three-room dental suite. Presently no dental providers in the area accept Medicaid or RIticare-insured families. The dental service is expected to provide access to over 650 new patients. Staff will also be added in primary care, mental health, substance abuse and community outreach, enabling the Health Center to increase the number of patients seen from 2,900 to 6,300 over

the next three years. Chronic care self management in the areas of pre-diabetes, asthma, cardio-vascular disease, colorectal screening and depression will also be available on site.

According to DeSantis, patients will benefit from coordinated health, and behavioral health services at one location as well as access to more than 50 other social service, nutrition, educational, youth, and housing programs offered by Tri-Town. The Health Center will remain open during renovations which are expected to be completed by October 1, 2009 .

Visit our website at

[www.tri-town.org](http://www.tri-town.org)

Thank you.

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