

May 2007

Last year Collin County made some significant changes to our indigent health care program. For example, we raised the income eligibility ceiling from 50 percent of the poverty rate to 100 percent of the poverty rate. This means that a family of four can now earn up to \$18,000 a year and still qualify under for our health care program. Keep in mind other fast-growing counties such as Denton and Rockwall are still at the state minimum of 21 percent of the poverty rate. In other words, if a family of four makes over \$3,500 a year, they would not qualify under their programs. On the other hand, Dallas County is at 200% of the poverty rate. Under their plan, a family of four can make up to \$36,000 a year and qualify. However, Dallas County also has a separate hospital tax which is higher than our overall county tax.

Another major part of our reform was to partner with local Primacare clinics. This program went into effect in January with \$400,000 budgeted for the year. Under this program a person goes to Primacare, shows a drivers license to prove citizenship, and signs an affidavit stating they make at or under the federal poverty level. With a \$20 co-pay they will be seen by Primacare staff members. This visit also includes tests and lab work. Below are the first quarter numbers concerning this program:

PrimaCare Demographics

	Jan	Feb	Mar
Patient Visits	98	181	84
Billed	\$11,270	\$20,875	\$9,660

% of Poverty Level Stated on Form

	Jan	Feb	Mar
0%-20%	18	55	25
21%-50%	15	22	11
51%-75%	27	35	24
76%-100%	38	69	24
Total	98	181	84

Gender

	Jan	Feb	Mar
Female	53	108	52
Male	45	73	32
Total	98	181	84

Age (0-17 years would not qualify under county indigent)

	Jan	Feb	Mar
0-18	41	64	24
19-40	29	71	32
41-62	28	42	26
63-82	0	4	2

83-100	0	0	0
Total	98	181	84

Residence

	Jan	Feb	Mar
Allen	3	8	4
Anna	3	3	4
Blue Ridge	1	0	0
Celina	3	3	0
Dallas	3	5	2
Fairview	2	1	0
Farmersville	1	1	3
Frisco	11	12	5
Lucas	1	0	0
McKinney	30	87	40
Melissa	0	0	1
Murphy	2	0	0
Plano	29	50	17
Princeton	6	9	6
Richardson	1	1	0
Wylie	2	1	2
Total	98	181	84

It's difficult to draw any firm conclusions from these numbers since the program is so new. I suspect that not many people are fully aware of it yet. This also puts the county in a difficult position: we want people to be aware of the program, but after the \$400,000 is spent, the program ends unless it receives funding in next year's budget. Is the program perfect? No. People can always lie on the affidavits and still be seen. However, we do have the ability to check and flag those who try to abuse the program. What we do have here is a public-private partnership that, on the local level, attempts to address one of the most pressing issues of our time. As this program continues I will keep the numbers posted for you to examine right here at [www.joejaynes.com](http://www.joejaynes.com).