

# What's What in Project Access?

## Frequently Asked Questions and Answers for Project Access Specialists

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### What is Project Access?

Project Access is a specialty care referral network administered by the Primary Care Coalition of Montgomery County (PCC). It is composed of a dedicated group of health care specialists, local hospitals, and diagnostic facilities that participate in a coordinated effort to provide specialty care to low-income, uninsured members of our community.

### Who is eligible for specialty care through Project Access?

Patients are referred to Project Access from Montgomery Cares clinics. Montgomery Cares is a public-private partnership administered by the PCC and composed of twelve clinics, five local hospitals, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, volunteer health providers, and other community partners. Montgomery Cares provides primary and preventive care to underserved adults in Montgomery County through a group of community health clinics. Eligibility screening for Montgomery Cares is performed at local safety-net clinics. Eligible patients are:

- Residents of Montgomery County, Maryland
- 18 years old or older
- Uninsured (no health insurance including Medicare, Medicaid, or Primary Adult Care)
- Low-income (family income at or below 250 percent of the Federal Poverty Level)

### Who is my primary point of contact at Project Access?

When you join Project Access, an RN referral coordinator will be assigned to you based on your area of specialty. Your Project Access RN is your primary point of contact for routine communication including appointment scheduling, ordering diagnostic studies, and prescribing medications. Your assigned RN will call you shortly after you join the program and share his or her contact information. If you are ever unable to reach your assigned RN, call the Project Access office at (301) 628-3430.

### How are Project Access referrals made?

Patients are referred to Project Access by primary care providers at Montgomery Cares safety-net clinics. Project Access RNs screen referral requests for appropriateness and completeness, and schedule appointments for patients with the highest priority needs. Your Project Access RN will contact your office to schedule the first appointment. Project Access staff will call the patient to confirm the appointment.

### How are follow up appointments scheduled?

Two follow up appointments can be scheduled directly between your office and the patient. If the patient requires additional follow up care we ask that you contact Project Access so we can make sure the patient's Montgomery Cares eligibility and primary care provider information are up to date.

### How do I order diagnostic lab and imaging studies?

To order lab or imaging studies, fax a copy of the written order to the Project Access office at (301) 608-9047, and give the original order to the patient. Project Access has agreements with local laboratory and imaging facilities that provide diagnostic testing for our patients. Once an order is received, Project Access will contact the patient and schedule the test. Results will be sent directly to your office.

# What's What in Project Access, continued

## How do I prescribe medications?

To prescribe medication(s), fax a copy of the written prescription to the Project Access office at (301) 608-9047, and give the original prescription to the patient. Project Access will advise the patient on the best way to obtain the medication. Project Access patients can access prescription medications in several ways:

- Some local pharmacies offer discounted generic prescription programs
- The Community Pharmacy, operated by PCC, provides generic medications dispensed at the patient's home clinic
- MedBank is a PCC program that assists patients in applying for brand name medications from pharmaceutical companies

## Where can I send specimens for pathology?

Pathology services for Project Access patients are provided by Capital Choice Pathology Laboratory (CCPL). If pathology services are needed, your Project Access RN will set up a provider ID for you under Project Access' account with CCPL. Requisition forms and specimen supplies will be mailed directly to your office. To reorder supplies contact your Project Access RN.

## Where should I send consult reports?

Please fax consult reports to the Project Access office at (301) 608-9047. All consult reports are uploaded to a shared electronic health record accessible by the primary care provider(s) at the patient's home clinic. Sending consult reports to Project Access helps us coordinate follow up care.

## What if I need to refer the patient to another specialist?

If a patient requires consultation with another specialist, please contact your Project Access RN and fax relevant clinical documents to (301) 608-9047. Please keep in mind that referring patients directly to another specialist is not usually feasible as Project Access patients do not have health insurance.

## How do I schedule surgeries/procedures for a Project Access patient?

The Project Access network includes many local hospitals that provide access to facilities and ancillary services, such as operating rooms and anesthesia. If one of your Project Access patients requires a surgery or procedure, please be sure to contact your Project Access RN and fax any pre-operative orders to Project Access at (301) 608-9047. Your Project Access RN will work with your office to schedule the procedure and arrange for pre-operative studies, if needed.

## What if my patient speaks a different language?

Project Access subscribes to a telephonic interpretation service. Interpreters will listen to your patient, analyze his or her message and accurately relay the meaning back to you. To receive the Project Access telephonic interpretation service account information, contact your Project Access RN.

## Can I charge patients a copay?

Project Access specialists may charge a copay for visits and/or procedures. A suggested office visit fee and procedure fee—calculated on a sliding scale based on the patient's household income—is printed on the Project Access referral sheet. To charge a different copay, please contact the Project Access Program Manager at (301) 628-3430.

## Will treating underserved patients put me at risk?

Recent research suggests that low-income patients are less litigious than other patient groups. Like other charity care provided within your practice, treatment of Project Access patients is covered by your malpractice insurance.

Project Access is a program administered by the Primary Care Coalition of Montgomery County, Maryland, Inc., (PCC), and is funded in part by the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services.

PCC is making health care happen. Our vision is a county in which all residents will have the opportunity to live healthy lives. PCC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, all donations to PCC or its programs are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. A copy of our current financial statement is available upon request. Documents and information submitted to the State under the Maryland Charitable Solicitations Act are available from the Office of the Secretary of State for the cost of copying and postage.