



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HSSA Announces \$300,000 2017 “Access to Health Care” Grant Recipients

SPOKANE, WA – The **Health Sciences & Services Authority (HSSA)** of Spokane County announced it will fund in 2017 **\$300,000 for four (4) community non-profit organizations** of its annual **“Access to Care”** grant competition. The organizations that will be funded were judged by the HSSA Board, and those selected provide innovative health service delivery and increased access to health care to certain populations.

“HSSA’s mission includes increasing access to health care through innovative and collaborative health care delivery in Spokane County, as well as its on-going efforts to improve the capacity of the Spokane region in health sciences research,” said **Nancy L. Isserlis**, HSSA Board Chair.

The 2017 recipients of HSSA’s “Access to Care” grant competition are as follows:

- **Partners with Families & Children** will receive \$50,000 in 2017 to continue its mission to address the specialty child abuse needs for a growing number of children who suffer from physical and/or sexual child abuse, as well as conduct training for new medical personnel.
- **Spokane Neighborhood Action Partners (SNAP) Spokane Ride to Care** program will receive \$100,000 to provide transportation for persons who call the 911 system and need urgent care but not an emergency department visit, as determined by the Spokane Fire Department (SFD) paramedics or in-field physician consults. Two of the most significant barriers to healthcare access are cost and transportation. The system that serves all 911 callers, primarily serves the Medicaid eligible population. Currently, in the City of Spokane approximately 61% of area emergency calls are considered low-acuity, and 50% of these cases could be reduced by providing an alternate transportation mechanism.
- **Spokane Prescription Access Network** will receive \$30,000 to make available prescription drugs for moderate income under-insured people on Medicare and other

insurance plans with high deductibles and co-pays. This is the only organization in Spokane dedicated to providing expertise in accessing prescribed medication on a community-wide basis and claims an \$18 to \$1 return on investment for its funders, including HSSA.

- **Volunteers of America (VOA) Hot Spotters** program will receive in 2017 \$120,000 to provide improved health outcomes for high-need residents who often present to emergency departments, emergency responders, the community court system and mental health providers with a complex blend of social, medical, mental health and/or substance abuse matters. Sometimes referred to as “hot spotters” for the frequency of their high cost visits to emergency rooms.

HSSA’s twelfth grant competition helps to meet one of its strategic goals to increase access to health services in Spokane County for at risk populations, and represents a fund of about 15 percent of annual revenues designated for this purpose.

“We have now awarded \$1,515,220 to organizations in our County who do the important work with people who otherwise would not receive health care services or would seek these services from very expensive options,” Isserlis said. “Some even end up incarcerated at taxpayers’ expense, so we believe these grants provide some relief for our area health care patients and providers,” Isserlis said.

HSSA’s other strategic initiative is to increase local **health sciences research** and the infrastructure that supports it, and designates 75 percent of its revenues for that purpose. Research grants are **open year-round** for proposals who meet HSSA criteria in one of its research categories. HSSA has invested over \$5 million to date in health science research grants. This is in addition to over \$17 million in extramural federal grant funding to Spokane. More information about all HSSA grants may be found at www.hssaspokane.org.

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About HSSA:

The **Health Sciences & Services Authority (HSSA) of Spokane County** was established in 2007 by the Washington legislature, authorized county-wide by Spokane County in 2008, and began operating in 2009. Its mission is to invest in health sciences research to promote economic development, advance new therapies and procedures to combat disease, and to promote public health. HSSA invests funds to create and support a nationally competitive health sciences research cluster in Spokane County, and works to catalyze higher education research and the health sciences industry that will lead to higher wage jobs, long-term sustainability and economic diversification. For more information, visit our website at www.hssaspokane.org or call 509.385.2113.

About Our Board:

Nancy Isserlis, Attorney, Winston & Cashatt, and HSSA Board Chair; Michael Wilson, Consultant and HSSA Grants Committee Chair; Jason Thackston, Senior Vice President of Energy Resources, Avista Corp. and HSSA Finance Committee Chair; Olúgbémiga T. Ekúndayò, MD, MPH, Ph.D., Associate Professor & Research Director, EWU College of Health Science & Public Health; Dr. Dean Martz, Chief Medical Officer, Providence Urban Hospitals; Gary Pollack, Ph.D., Dean, WSU College of Pharmacy, WSU Spokane; Kevin Oldenburg, Ph.D., President, 2nd Sight Bioscience; David J. Vachon, Ph.D., CEO/Founder, Iasis Molecular Sciences/Novion Technologies, and Dr. Francisco Velázquez, President & CEO, PAML and PAML Ventures.