



For Immediate Release

June 26, 2013

Media Contact:

Pattie Mansur, Communications Director
Office: 913.432.4196 / Mobile: 816.674.2745

**REACH FOUNDATION TO INVEST \$200,000 IN MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
AND HEALTH INSURANCE MARKETPLACE LAUNCH**

MERRIAM, KANSAS – The REACH Healthcare Foundation this week announced it will designate \$200,000 in new “opportunity funds” to support regional projects focused on mental health and the launch of health insurance marketplaces in Kansas and Missouri. The \$200,000 came through a recent contribution made to the REACH Foundation from Community Health Group, the successor organization to Health Midwest, the nonprofit health care system that provided the REACH Foundation’s original assets.

Brenda Sharpe, president and CEO of the REACH Foundation, said the “unanticipated receipt of \$200,000 will allow the foundation to respond to opportunities emerging this year with the launch of health insurance marketplaces and local efforts to host a regional dialogue on mental health care in the fall.”

The REACH Board of Directors authorized use of the dollars to support projects in two areas:

Mental health services, community-based patient supports and improved patient experience for individuals with mental illness. Potential projects in this area may include support for consumer advocate and engagement specialists, care coordination programs, introduction and implementation of Health Home models that strengthen patient care, and strategies to better integrate oral health services and primary medical care with mental health care.

Consumer education and outreach to help individuals use the health insurance marketplaces that will launch on October 1. Potential projects in this area may include support for training of navigators and other assistors to help people use the new insurance marketplaces, educating local health providers about the marketplace and how to inform their patients of available insurance opportunities, and funding for technology tools to advance health reform goals.

Sharpe said the foundation will use the opportunity funds to further the foundation’s primary goals of increasing access to health coverage and services, and improving health care quality in the foundation’s six-county service area. Organizations whose work is focused on uninsured and other vulnerable populations are encouraged to share their suggestions with REACH. Suggestions can be sent to Brenda Sharpe at brenda@reachhealth.org, or to William Moore, Ph.D., Vice President of Programs, Policy and Evaluation at bill@reachhealth.org.

###

About the REACH Healthcare Foundation

The REACH Foundation was established in 2003 for the purpose of improving the health of medically indigent and underserved individuals. Since 2005, the foundation has invested more than \$35 million in health programs, special initiatives and advocacy efforts that create greater access to quality and affordable oral health, mental health and safety net health services. To learn more, visit www.reachhealth.org.