

Dear Colleague:

Before you throw this away, this is not a solicitation for money, but instead a request for your time, talents, and altruism. The reasons we became physicians are as unique and varied as our individual personalities. But we all have one thing in common: *a desire to help others*. In a perfect world, we'd be able to help everyone who needs us, regardless of ability to pay. And while this may not be possible, a program in Nashville is helping to connect the uninsured to providers like yourself in a way that works for our community.

It's called Project Access Nashville Specialty Care (formerly Bridges to Care Plus). Based on a proven program used by many other county medical societies across the nation – and praised by *The Wall Street Journal*– it's a simple, workable solution to helping people without health insurance who fall at 200% of the poverty level or less. I'm writing to ask you to join us in being a part of this solution.

Here's the request: That you agree to see one new patient a month at no charge. It can even be quarterly or bi-monthly, as only you determine how many charity patients you will see through Project Access Nashville. The important thing is that you join with us in making Project Access Nashville possible. In its tenth year, providers and patients in community clinics around Nashville rely on Project Access as a resource for specialty care, and it's crucial that we have the doctors available to keep up with that need.

If you are like many of us, you already provide charity care – but you are often frustrated because the rest of the health care system is stacked against the uninsured. They can't fill the drug prescriptions you provide, can't see the specialists you'd like to refer them to, and can't afford hospitalization. They can't access the professional network we all depend on to do our jobs.

Project Access Nashville connects the uninsured and you to this health care network. Now, when you donate care, you can be assured that patients will have access to the hospitals they need to follow the treatment you recommend. Medical centers in Davidson County (St. Thomas Midtown, Centennial, Nashville General, St. Thomas West, Skyline, Southern Hills, and Summit) have agreed to cover related in-patient and out-patient needs including surgery, imaging, and laboratory testing. Participating physicians will be able to access the medical centers with which they are affiliated in their usual manner for appropriate use of those resources.

This program solves many other problems commonly associated with charity care: it verifies that those receiving free care truly can't afford to pay for it; it enables you to plan how you will provide charity care versus simply responding to random requests; it provides a way for the Nashville medical profession to quantify the amount of free care it provides; and it restores dignity to charity patients, who must uphold their end of the bargain. They must pay a small co-pay, and if they miss appointments, they may be removed from the program.

This is a groundbreaking program, and an important one for physicians as it reestablishes physicians as leaders in our community's healthcare system. We need your support in this effort. Please give the enclosed enrollment forms serious consideration. A small effort from many physicians results in a huge impact in increasing access to healthcare.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles A. King". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.