

**Howard County General Hospital
Community Benefit Report**
Fiscal Year 2011



JOHNS HOPKINS
M E D I C I N E

INTRODUCTION

In FY 2011 Howard County General Hospital (“HCGH” or “Hospital”) was licensed to operate 238 beds. Because of ongoing construction, the Hospital actually operated an average of 234 inpatient beds throughout the fiscal year. During the same period the Hospital had 16,068 inpatient admissions and 3,229 births. The Hospital served 76,093 patients in its emergency department, and provided 62,313 other outpatient visits

I. DESCRIBING THE COMMUNITY SERVED BY THE HOSPITAL

Primary Service Area (PSA)

The PSA is defined as the Maryland postal zip code areas from which 60 percent of a hospital’s patient discharges originate during the most recent 12 month period available, where the discharges from each zip code are ordered from largest to smallest number of discharges. This information was provided by the Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC).

Table I

Primary Service Area zip codes	21042, 21043, 21044, 21045, 21046, 21075, 20723, 20794
Other Maryland hospitals sharing primary service area	Sheppard Pratt (Psychiatry only)
Percentage of uninsured patients	5.6%
Percentage of patients who are Medicaid recipients	5.6%

Community Benefit Service Area (CBSA)

A. Description of the community served by the hospital

The hospital considers its CBSA as specific populations or communities of need to which the hospital allocates resources through its community benefits plan. The Hospital defines its CBSA using the zip codes contained within the geographic boundaries of the Howard County jurisdiction as set forth by the Maryland Department of Planning and Zoning. The combination of HCGH’s status as the only acute care hospital in Howard County and the natural boundaries of the Patapsco and Patuxent rivers provide a level of “containment” of the local population for seeking health care and other services. Approximately 75% of HCGH’s patients reside in the community, further supporting the definition of the Howard County jurisdiction as its CBSA.

B. CBSA Demographics and Social Determinants

Table II provides significant demographic characteristics and social determinants that are relevant to the needs of the community.

Table II

		Data Source
Community Benefit Service Area (CBSA)	Howard County, Maryland 20701, 20723, 20759, 20763, 20777, 20794, 20833, 21029, 21036, 21042, 21043, 21044, 21045, 21046, 21075, 21076, 21104, 21163, 21723, 21737, 21738, 21771, 21784, 21794, 21797	MD Dept. of Planning Data Services Div. 2006

CBSA demographics, by sex, race, and age	<p>Total population: 278,071</p> <p>Sex Male: 138,551/49.82% Female: 139,520/50.18%</p> <p>Race White non-Hispanic: 169,122/60.8% Black non-Hispanic: 52,550/18.9% Hispanic: 14,431/5.2% Asian and Pacific Islander non-Hispanic: 33,496/12.0% All others: 8,472/3.0%</p> <p>Age 0-14: 54,254/19.5% 15-17: 13,519/4.9% 18-24: 24,150/8.7% 25-34: 33,667/12.1% 35-54: 89,938/32.3% 55-64: 34,505/12.4% 65+: 28,038/10.2%</p>	2010 Claritas, Inc. 2011 Thomson Reuters
Average Household Income	\$125,194	2010 Claritas, Inc. 2011 Thomson Reuters
Percentage of households with incomes below the federal poverty guidelines	<p>All families: 2.7% Married couple family: 1.1% Female householder, no husband present, family: 11.8% Female householder with related children under 5 years only: 15.6%</p> <p>All people: 4.0% Under 18 years: 4.4% Related Children under 18 years: 4.1% (Howard County, 2010)</p>	U.S. Census Bureau http://factfinder.census.gov
Estimated percentage of uninsured people within CBSA	5.3%	2010 Claritas, Inc
Percentage of Medicaid recipients	5.3%	2010 Claritas, Inc
Life Expectancy and Crude Deaths within CBSA	<p>82.2 years at birth</p> <p>1451 deaths (Howard County, 2010)</p>	<p>http://dhmh.maryland.gov/apps/SHIP/ http://vsa.maryland.gov/doc/prelim10.pdf</p>
Infant Mortality Rate within CBSA	6.8/1,000 live births	http://vsa.maryland.gov/doc/prelim10.pdf

<p>Access to Healthy Food: The percent of zip codes in a county with a healthy food outlet, defined as a grocery store or produce stand/farmers' market.</p>	<p>Howard county: 70% Maryland: 62% U.S.: 92%,</p>	<p>http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/maryland</p>
<p>Affordable Housing</p>	<p>% of Renters in Howard County paying 30% or more of Household Income in Rent (2009): 44.7%</p> <p>Baltimore MSA Data Qualifying Income Needed to Purchase Home of \$220,000: \$65,143</p> <p>Median Value, Owner Occupied Units: \$454,800</p> <p>2 BR Fair Market Rent (FMR) for 2011: \$1,263</p> <p>Income Needed to Afford 2BR FMR: \$50,520 % HH with income below \$50,000: 18.6% (US: 47.8)</p>	<p>http://factfinder.census.gov</p>
<p>Accessible Transportation</p>	<p>Scheduled bus services operated daily throughout Eastern Howard County. County provides specialized curb-to-curb for senior citizens and individuals with disabilities.</p> <p>3.9% of HH have no vehicle available</p>	<p>http://www.howardcountymd.gov/DisplayPrimary.aspx?id=6442460766</p> <p>http://factfinder.census.gov</p>

II. COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

I. Process used for identifying the health needs in CBSA and the resources used.

The purpose of the community health needs assessment is to identify the most important health issues surrounding the hospital using scientifically valid health indicators and comparative information. The assessment also identifies priority health issues where better integration of public health and healthcare can improve access, quality, and cost effectiveness of services to residents surrounding the hospital. This report represents the hospital's efforts to share information that can lead to improved health status and quality of care available to our residents, while building upon and strengthening the community's existing infrastructure of services and providers.

Methods

Primary Data Collection

HCGH personnel are regularly involved in data collection and data sharing to gather information and opinions from persons who represent the broad interests of the community served by the Hospital. Collection takes place in both formal and informal settings, and includes the following:

- *Consultation with community leaders and stakeholders concerning unmet health needs within the Hospital's marketplace.* The list of organizations/individuals consulted by Hospital leaders in FY 2011 is included in Exhibit 1.
- *Regular direct contact with community health and human service organizations.* HCGH executives and department directors serve on the governing boards of a significant number of the health and human service organizations serving Howard County, gaining real time exposure to the community health needs facing residents seeking these organizations' services. Some of the organizations in which Hospital leaders serve include the United Way of Central Maryland, Howard County Association of Community Services, Howard County Economic Development Authority, Coalition of Geriatric Services, Howard County Public School System Partnerships Board, American Cancer Society and American Heart and Stroke Association.
- HCGH is in regular discussions with the Howard County government leaders and the Howard County Health Department (HCHD) concerning health needs. Action planning coordination activities in FY 2011 included prenatal care services, access to care for uninsured and access to care for foreign born.

Secondary Data Collection

Secondary data are collected from a variety of government, academic and private sources to present a community profile of health status through a range of indicators, including access to health care, chronic disease incidence, social issues, and other health indicators. These include:

- *Analysis of utilization patterns for health care services both within the Hospital and within the broader community.* Hospital leadership regularly analyzes demand for hospital services and other community health programs. For example, excessive waiting times in the HCGH Emergency Department ("ED") and use of the ED for lower acuity conditions led Hospital leadership to partner with Patient First, a provider of urgent care services, to establish an urgent care facility in Columbia as an alternative to the HCGH ED for appropriate residents.
- *Analysis of data and reports compiled by county and state government agencies and private organizations examining health care services and conditions that contribute to health status within the Howard County community.* Examples of information reviewed include:
 - Howard County Human Services Master Plan
 - *Budget Trends, Howard County Health and Human Services, FY 2008 – 2011*, Policy Analysis Center, Columbia, MD.(May 2011)
 - *Howard County Maryland Self Sufficiency Indicators Report*, Policy Analysis Center, Columbia, MD, (September 2010)
 - Maryland DHMH State Health improvement plan (<http://dhmh.maryland.gov/ship/>)
 - Howard Health Counts (<http://www.howardhealthcounts.org/>) – a compilation of community health indicators published by the Horizon Foundation. This data source compares health indicators for Howard County to regional and national benchmarks.
 - Healthy People 2020 (http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/healthy_people/hp2010.htm)
 - Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (<http://www.cdc.gov/BRFSS>)

Overview of Key Findings

This overview summarizes some of the significant findings drawn from an analysis of the data.

- *On the whole, Howard County is a relatively healthy community.* Of 100 health indicators tracked in www.HowardHealthCounts.org, the Hospital's CBSA ranks in the top 50th percentile relative to comparative communities in 70 of the identified indicators. Moreover, Howard County was ranked the healthiest county in Maryland by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute in 2010. All Maryland counties were ranked on health outcomes and a series of health determinants (including, but not limited to, tobacco use, diet and exercise, access to and quality of care, education, employment and income, and air quality). Howard County was ranked the healthiest place to live in both Health Outcomes and Health Determinants categories.
- *Despite such positive health indicators, there remain community health challenges.* Specific community health concerns include:
 - Obesity: Low income pre-school obesity (16.4%)
 - Heart disease: High cholesterol prevalence (41.4%)
 - Breast Cancer: Breast Cancer Incidence Rate (131.6/100,000)
 - Mental Health Issues: Reduced governmental funding for mental health services is driving the chronically mentally ill out of institutional settings, straining community based (capacity hospital and freestanding) to care for these residents.
 - Health access for a growing uninsured population
 - Health access for a fast growing foreign born population, particularly of Hispanic and Asian origin.
 - Lyme disease incidence rate (95/100,000)
- HCGH, in cooperation with many partners throughout the community, is addressing several of these issues in the interest of improving further the health of all Howard County residents.
 2. In seeking information about community health needs, what organizations or individuals outside the hospital were consulted? *See Exhibit 1.*
 3. When was the most recent needs identification process or community health needs assessment completed?

In 2001 the Hospital participated in and supported a comprehensive community health needs assessment sponsored by the Howard County Health Department (HCHD). The assessment included a review of secondary data (e.g. demographics, state health department data, local health department data, hospital discharge data, and data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System) as well as administration of a detailed health survey. The assessment resulted in a collaborative focus on several health improvement priorities in the county, including smoking cessation, diabetes treatment, healthy nutrition and physical activity, and reduction of injuries.

In 2006 HCGH updated its strategic plan. This update included a comprehensive environmental scan, which identified health challenges in the community, including access to primary care and specialty physicians, heart disease and stroke, and mental health care access. This environmental scan is updated annually, and is used to shape annual operating objectives which include addressing community health needs.

4. Although not required by federal law until 2013, has your hospital conducted a community health needs assessment that conforms to the definition on the previous page within the past three fiscal years? If yes, provide a link or attach the document.

The Hospital has not conducted such an assessment in the past 3 years. However, HCGH, in partnership with the HCHD, the Horizon Foundation, and several key community stakeholders, is planning a comprehensive follow-up community health needs assessment to take place in the second half of FY 2012.

III. COMMUNITY BENEFIT ADMINISTRATION

1. Does your hospital have a Community Benefits ("CB") strategic plan?

HCGH does not today have a defined community benefit strategic plan. One of the intended outcomes of the comprehensive community health assessment noted in II.4 above is a community benefits strategic plan.

2. What stakeholders in the hospital are involved in your hospital community benefit process/structure to implement and deliver community benefit activities?

Ultimate leadership of the CB process begins at the governance level with the Hospital's board of trustees, which has identified community benefit as a fundamental goal of the Hospital articulated in its mission and vision. The board charges the president/CEO to carry out a community benefit program.

Operational leadership at all levels of the organization is involved in the community benefits administration process. At the executive management level, the CB Administration is co-led by the Hospital's Senior President for Finance (measurement and tracking) and Senior Vice President of Planning and Marketing (community needs assessment and planning). All members of the executive leadership team support this process through their respective divisions. While all members of middle management are responsible for tracking and reporting on community benefit initiatives within their departments, specific leadership responsibility falls to the manager of regulatory compliance (compilation) and the director of community health education (needs assessment). All executives and middle managers are responsible for delivering community benefit through service to community health and human service organizations.

Finally, numerous Hospital employees as well as members of the professional staff (i.e. physicians and allied health professionals on the medical staff) deliver community benefit through health education, health partnerships with community organizations, participation in hospital sponsored community health events (e.g. health fairs, screenings, etc.) and targeted programs.

3. Is there an internal audit (i.e., an internal review conducted at the hospital) of the community benefit report?

Both the compiled community benefits spreadsheet and community benefit narrative are reviewed internally.

4. Does the hospital's Board review and approve the completed FY Community Benefit report that is submitted to the HSCRC?

Because of tight reporting time frames the board of trustees does not review either the community benefit spreadsheet or narrative in advance of submission to the HSCRC. However the reports are reviewed with board subsequent to their submission.

IV. HOSPITAL COMMUNITY BENEFIT PROGRAM AND INITIATIVES

1. Brief introduction of community benefit program and initiatives.

HCGH provides community benefit to improve the health of Howard County residents through a wide range of initiatives, programs and partnerships with individuals and organizations that share its commitment to health improvement. These initiatives broadly include:

- Community health services: free screenings, education, support groups, etc.
- Education of health professionals: nurses, therapists, clinical technicians, etc.
- Mission driven services: direct care subsidized by hospital reserves.
- Financial contributions to health, human service and community organizations that share the hospital's mission of community health improvement.

- **Community building:** constructing or improving upon community based infrastructure to promote improvement of healthy living. For example, the Hospital continued its support of the healthy children's play area in the Columbia Mall, one of the centerpiece's of the Howard County community, to promote healthy habits in a fun educational manner.

Several of the more significant initiatives are summarized below and in set forth in detail in the following tables.

Healthy Howard (HH): HCGH is a major partner in the "health access plan" conceived and launched by Howard County government in 2009. HCGH has contributed in kind hospital services for all uninsured residents signing up for the HH Access Plan. During FY 2011 HCGH provided \$1,002,010.53 of care to Healthy Howard participants.

Mall Wellness Fairs: HCGH has sponsored themed community health fairs (e.g. heart health, children's health, fitness, cancer detection and prevention) at the Mall in Columbia for the past four years. Each event, generally four hours long on a Saturday, brings together the hospital's healthcare providers, community physicians and representatives from local health and human service organizations to provide screenings conduct health education and disseminate information about community health resources. Several hundred participants have taken advantage of the health offerings at each event.

Ethnic Health Fairs: In response to the unique health needs of emerging foreign born populations, HCGH has sponsored or co-sponsored several "ethnic targeted" health fairs each year for the past 7 years. In FY 2011 health fairs, were held to address needs of the fast growing Latino and Asian populations, as well as the indigent population in the southeast corner of the county.

Initiative 1. Healthy Howard

Identified Need	Hospital Initiative	Primary Objective	Single or Multi-Year Initiative Time Period	Key Partners in Development and/or Implementation	Evaluation Dates	Outcome	Continuation of Initiative
Access to Care	Healthy Howard Hospitalization Care	Increase access to health care in the acute hospital environment	Multi year	HCGH HCHD HC Government	Ongoing	1,906 patients were seen in HCGH in FY11	yes

Initiative 2. Wellness Clinics

Identified Need	Hospital Initiative	Primary Objective	Single or Multi-Year Initiative Time Period	Key Partners in Development and/or Implementation	Evaluation Dates	Outcome	Continuation of Initiative
Heart Disease, Stroke and Cancer Prevention	Mall Wellness Fairs	Health screenings to lower income populations	Multi Year	HCGH HCGH Medical Staff Local Non-profits General Growth Properties	Ongoing	# Screened Cardiovascular Clinic – 224 Fitness Clinic – 165 Healthy Families Clinic – 215 Cancer Prevention Clinic - 225	Yes

Initiative 3. Ethnic Health Fairs

Identified Need	Hospital Initiatives	Primary Objective	Single or Multi-Year Initiative Time Period	Key Partners in Development and/or Implementation	Evaluation Dates	Outcome	Continuation of Initiative
Heart Disease/Stroke/Cancer Detection and Prevention	Latino Health Fair Asian American Health Fair	Resources and free health screenings to foreign born residents	Multi year	HCGH HCGH Medical Staff Local Non-profit health and human service agencies	Ongoing	# Screened: Latino Fair (March 2010) - 545 Asian Health Fair (September 2010) - 400	Yes

Initiative 4. Community Blood Pressure Screening

Identified Need	Hospital Initiative	Primary Objective	Single or Multi-Year Initiative Time Period	Key Partners in Development and/or Implementation	Evaluation Dates	Outcome	Continuation of Initiative
Heart Disease/Stroke Prevention and Early Detection	Hypertension screenings in various locations throughout the county (hospital, senior centers, library)	Education, Prevention and Early Detection	Multi Year	HCGH HC Library HC Office on Aging Mall in Columbia	Ongoing	8 county sites – total screened in FY 11 - 4360	Yes

Initiative 5. Community Cardiovascular Project

Identified Need	Hospital Initiative	Primary Objective	Single or Multi-Year Initiative Time Period	Key Partners in Development and/or Implementation	Evaluation Dates	Outcome	Continuation of Initiative
Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention and Early Detection	Blood Pressure screenings support in Local Faith Communities	Education, Prevention and Early Detection	Multi Year	HCGH Local Faith Communities	Ongoing	22 Sites screened 1927 participants	Yes

2. Community health needs that were identified through a community needs assessment that were not addressed by the hospital

While community health needs assessments can point out underlying causes of good or poor health status, health providers and health related organizations—primary users of information found in CHNA’s—are not usually in a position to affect all of the changes required to address a health issue. For example, the ability to reduce poverty, improve educational attainment, or affect employment cannot be achieved by a health system alone. Nor can they affect basic demographics like age or gender distribution patterns.

The Howard Health Counts community health needs dashboard identifies a number of health challenges in the CBSA to which HCGH chose not to direct resources:

- Access to food and healthy food: Relative to other Maryland Counties Howard County rated in the lowest quartile for density of grocery stores and SNAP certified stores. While the hospital recognizes the importance of easy access to food, other organizations, including the economic development authority and health department are better positioned to address this issue.
- Certain Infectious Diseases: Howard County ranks in the upper half of Maryland Counties with respect to both syphilis and tuberculosis incidence rates. Beyond routine education concerning sexually transmitted diseases that is delivered through community and school based health fairs, the Hospital has not devoted resources to addressing these issues due to the relatively small numbers of individuals affected, and the belief that other organizations are better positioned to lead initiatives to improve in these areas.

V. PHYSICIANS

1. Description of gaps in the availability of specialist providers, including outpatient specialty care, to serve the uninsured cared for by the hospital.

HCGH has subsidized physicians in several specialties to incentivize them to accept on-call coverage responsibilities serving both the Hospital’s Emergency Department (ED) and consultation and treatment of Hospital inpatients. One of the issues (but certainly not the only issue) compelling physicians to refuse hospital call without financial subsidy, is the burden of uninsured patients.

Many physicians in nearly every specialty practicing in Howard County either limit the number of uninsured patients (and patients with Medical Assistance as well) in their panels or refuse to accept non-paying patients altogether. The hospital’s precise knowledge of this practice in the outpatient (community based private physician) setting is limited to information that physicians voluntarily report on their registration screens of the Hospital’s physician referral service. Few physicians complete this segment of the referral service profile. The Hospital’s physician referral service periodically receives calls from individuals who report that they have been unable to find a physician willing to accept an uninsured patient without the ability to pay.

2. Physician subsidies

Howard County General Hospital provides subsidy to physicians for a range of services that they would otherwise not furnish to the hospital. In FY 2011 HCGH paid a total of \$8,674,126 in subsidies to physicians for the following services, much of which was for call coverage in the emergency department (ED): general surgery, otolaryngology, orthopedic surgery, urology, cardiology, oral and maxillofacial surgery, neurology, obstetrics/gynecology, psychiatry and anesthesiology. The physician services provided through these subsidies are critical to the accomplishment of the HCGH mission to serve the health care needs of our entire community.

EXHIBIT 1

Organizations Consulted in FY 2011 Concerning Community Health Needs

- Howard County Health Officer and other Howard County Health Department staff
- Howard County Library
- Howard County Office on Aging
- Howard County Office of Citizen Services
- Howard County Fire and Rescue Services
- Howard County Police Department
- Howard County Public School System
- Howard County Mental Health Authority Horizon Foundation
- The Horizon Foundation
- The Columbia Foundation
- Chase Brexton Health Services (Federally Qualified Community Health Center)
- National Alliance for Mentally Ill, Howard County Chapter
- Korean American Citizen's Association of Howard County
- Gilchrist Hospice Care
- Numerous private practice physicians across many specialties serving Howard County
- HCGH Community Relations Council (a diverse collection of county residents representing the community who meet quarterly to provide feedback to hospital leaders about community health needs)
- Association of Community Services of Howard County
- United Way of Central Maryland, Howard County Partnership Board
- Maryland Department of Mental Hygiene
- Asian American Health Center of Howard County
- Alianza de la Comunidad
- Vantage House Retirement Community
- Howard County Muslim Foundation
- Conexiones
- Elected Officials representing Howard County, including County Executive, County Council Members, Maryland legislative delegation and U.S. legislative representatives

APPENDIX 1

CHARITY CARE POLICY DESCRIPTION

Description of Charity Care Policy


HCGH provides necessary emergency medical care to all people regardless of their ability to pay. Financial assistance is available for those patients who cannot pay the total cost of hospitalization due to the lack of insurance coverage and/or inability to pay. If you do not have insurance, our financial counselors will schedule an interview with you to determine payment arrangements and/or assist you in completing a Medical Assistance application. Non-resident aliens are also eligible for financial assistance. For additional information, call a financial counselor at 410-740-7675. (Source: HCGH Patient Welcome Book)

HCGH informs its patients about the Charity Care policy through a number of tactics, including:

- Signs in English and Spanish are posted in patient waiting and registration areas that summarize the charity care policy.
- A copy of the charity care policy or a summary thereof with financial assistance contact information, is provided to every patient upon admission.
- A summary of the charity care policy, with contact information for financial counselors, is provided to every patient without insurance who presents to the Emergency Department.
- All patients indicating a need for charity care are referred to a financial counselor who reviews with them the availability of various government benefits and programs, and assists them with application to such programs.

APPENDIX 2

CHARITY CARE POLICY

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POLICY

This policy applies to The Johns Hopkins Health System Corporation (JHHS) following entities: Howard County General Hospital (HCGH) and Suburban Hospital (SH).

Purpose

JHHS is committed to providing financial assistance to persons who have health care needs and are uninsured, underinsured, ineligible for a government program, or otherwise unable to pay, for medically necessary care based on their individual financial situation.


It is the policy of the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions to provide Financial Assistance based on indigence or excessive Medical Debt for patients who meet specified financial criteria and request such assistance. The purpose of the following policy statement is to describe how applications for Financial Assistance can be made, the criteria for eligibility, and the steps for processing each application.

JHHS hospitals will publish the availability of Financial Assistance on a yearly basis in their local newspapers, and will post notices of availability at patient registration sites, Admissions/Business Office the Billing Office, and at the emergency department within each facility.. Notice of availability will also be sent to patients on patient bills. A Patient Billing and Financial Assistance Information Sheet will be provided to inpatients before discharge and will be available to all patients upon request.

Financial Assistance may be extended when a review of a patient's individual financial circumstances has been conducted and documented. This should include a review of the patient's existing medical expenses and obligations (including any accounts placed in bad debt except those accounts on which a lawsuit has been filed and a judgment obtained) and any projected medical expenses. Financial Assistance Applications may be offered to patients whose accounts are with a collection agency and will apply only to those accounts on which a judgment has not been granted.

Definitions

- Medical Debt** Medical Debt is defined as out of pocket expenses for medical costs resulting from medically necessary care billed by the JHHS hospital to which the application is made. Out of pocket expenses do not include co-payments, co-insurance and deductibles. Medical Debt does not include those hospital bills for which the patient chose to be registered as Voluntary Self Pay(opting out of insurance coverage, or insurance billing)
- Liquid Assets** Cash, securities, promissory notes, stocks, bonds, U.S. Savings Bonds, checking accounts, savings accounts, mutual funds, Certificates of Deposit, life insurance policies with cash surrender values, accounts receivable, pension benefits or other property immediately convertible to cash. Liquid Assets do not include retirement assets to which the Internal Revenue Service has granted preferential tax treatment as a retirement account, including but not limited to, deferred compensation plans qualified under the Internal Revenue Code or non qualified deferred compensation plans.
- Immediate Family** If patient is a minor, immediate family member is defined as mother, father, unmarried minor siblings, natural or adopted, residing in the same household. If patient is an adult, immediate family member is defined as spouse or natural or adopted unmarried minor children residing in the same household.

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Medically Necessary Care Medical treatment that is absolutely necessary to protect the health status of a patient, and could adversely affect the patient's condition if omitted, in accordance with accepted standards of medical practice and not mainly for the convenience of the patient. Medically necessary care for the purposes of this policy does not include elective or cosmetic procedures.

Family Income Patient's and/or responsible party's wages, salaries, earnings, tips, interest, dividends, corporate distributions, rental income, retirement/pension income, Social Security benefits and other income as defined by the Internal Revenue Service, for all members of Immediate Family residing in the household

Supporting Documentation Pay stubs; W-2s; 1099s; workers' compensation, Social Security or disability award letters; bank or brokerage statements; tax returns; life insurance policies; real estate assessments and credit bureau reports, Explanation of Benefits to support Medical Debt.

PROCEDURES

1. An evaluation for Financial Assistance can begin in a number of ways:


For example:

- A patient with a self-pay balance due notifies the self-pay collector or collection agency that he/she cannot afford to pay the bill and requests assistance.
- A patient presents at a clinical area without insurance and states that he/she cannot afford to pay the medical expenses associated with their current or previous medical services.
- A physician or other clinician refers a patient for Financial-Assistance evaluation for either inpatient or outpatient services.

2. Each Clinical or Business Unit will designate a person or persons who will be responsible for taking Financial Assistance applications. These staff can be Financial Counselors, Self-Pay Collection Specialists, Administrative staff, Customer Service, etc.


3. Designated staff may meet with patients who request Financial Assistance to determine if they meet preliminary criteria for assistance.

- a. All hospital applications will be processed within two business days and a determination will be made as to probable eligibility. To facilitate this process each applicant must provide information about family size and income, as defined by Medicaid regulations. To help applicants complete the process, a statement of conditional approval will be provided that will list the paperwork required for a final determination of eligibility.
- b. Applications received will be sent to the JHHS Patient Financial Services Department for review; a written determination of probable eligibility will be issued to the patient.
- c. At HCGH, complete applications with all supporting documentation submitted at the hospital are approved via the appropriate signature authority process. Once approved and signed off on, the approved applications will be sent to the JHHS Patient Financial Services Department's dedicated Financial Assistance


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application to mail patient a written determination of eligibility.

4. To determine final eligibility, the following criteria must be met:
 - a. The patient must apply for Medical Assistance and cooperate fully with the Medical Assistance team or its' designated agent, unless the financial representative can readily determine that the patient would fail to meet the eligibility requirements. The Patient Profile Questionnaire (Exhibit B) is used to determine if the patient must apply for Medical Assistance. In cases where the patient has active Medical Assistance pharmacy coverage or QMB coverage, it would not be necessary to reapply for Medical Assistance unless the financial representative has reason to believe that the patient may be awarded full Medical Assistance benefits.
 - b. All insurance benefits must have been exhausted.
5. To the extent possible, there will be one application process for all of the Maryland hospitals of JHHS. The patient is required to provide the following:
 - a. A completed Financial Assistance Application (Exhibit A) and Patient Profile Questionnaire (Exhibit B).
 - b. A copy of their most recent Federal Income Tax Return (if married and filing separately, then also a copy of spouse's tax return and a copy of any other person's tax return whose income is considered part of the family income as defined by Medicaid regulations).
 - c. A copy of the three (3) most recent pay stubs (if employed) or other evidence of income of any other person whose income is considered part of the family income as defined by Medicaid regulations.
 - d. A Medical Assistance Notice of Determination (if applicable).
 - e. Proof of disability income (if applicable).
 - f. Reasonable proof of other declared expenses.
 - g. Non-U.S. citizens must complete the Financial Assistance Application (Exhibit A). In addition, the Financial Counselor shall contact the U.S. Consulate in the patient's country of residence. The U.S. Consulate should be in a position to provide information on the patient's net worth. However, the level of detail supporting the patient's financial strength will vary from country to country. After obtaining information from the U.S. Consulate, the Financial Counselor shall meet with the Director, Revenue Cycle and/or CFO (HCGH) or Director of PFS and/or CFO (SH) to determine if additional information is necessary.
 - h. If unemployed, reasonable proof of unemployment such as statement from the Office of Unemployment Insurance, a statement from current source of financial support, etc...
6. A patient can qualify for Financial Assistance either through lack of sufficient insurance or excessive Medical Debt. Medical Debt is defined as out of pocket expenses excluding copayments, coinsurance and deductibles for medical costs billed by a JHHS hospital. Once a patient has submitted all the required information, the Financial Counselor will review and analyze the application and forward it to the Patient Financial Services Department for final determination of eligibility based on JHMI guidelines. At HCGH, the Financial Counselor will forward to Director, Revenue Cycle and/or CFO for review and final eligibility based upon JHMI guidelines.

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- a. If the application is denied, the patient has the right to request the application be reconsidered. The Financial Counselor will forward the application and attachments to the Director of Revenue Cycle and or CFO (HCGH) or Director PFS or CFO (SH) for final evaluation and decision.
 - b. If the patient's application for Financial Assistance is based on excessive Medical Debt or if there are extenuating circumstances as identified by the Financial Counselor or designated person, the Financial Counselor will forward the application and attachments to the Director of Revenue Cycle and or CFO (HCGH) or Director PFS or CFO (SH). This committee will have decision-making authority to approve or reject applications. It is expected that an application for Financial Assistance reviewed by the Director of Revenue Cycle and or CFO (HCGH) or Director PFS or CFO (SH) will have a final determination made no later than 30 days from the date the application was considered complete. The Director of Revenue Cycle and or CFO (HCGH) or Director PFS or CFO (SH) will base their determination of financial need on JHHS guidelines.
7. Each clinical department has the option to designate certain elective procedures for which no Financial Assistance options will be given.
 8. Services provided to patients registered as Voluntary Self Pay do not qualify for Financial Assistance.
 9. A department operating programs under a grant or other outside governing authority (i.e.: Psychiatry Program) may continue to use a government-sponsored application process and associated income scale.
 10. Once a patient is approved for Financial Assistance, Financial Assistance coverage shall be effective for the month of determination and the following six (6) calendar months. If patient is approved for a percentage allowance due to financial hardship it is recommended that the patient makes a good-faith payment at the beginning of the Financial Assistance period. Upon a request from a patient who is uninsured and whose income level falls within the Medical Financial Hardship Income Grid set forth in Appendix B, JHHS shall make a payment plan available to the patient. Any payment schedule developed through this policy will ordinarily not last longer than two years. In extraordinary circumstances and with the approval of the designated manager a payment schedule may be extended.
 11. **Presumptive Financial Assistance Eligibility.** There are instances when a patient may appear eligible for financial assistance, but there is no financial assistance form on file. Often there is adequate information provided by the patient or other sources, which could provide sufficient evidence to provide the patient with financial assistance. In the event there is no evidence to support a patient's eligibility for financial assistance, JHHS reserves the right to use outside agencies in determining estimated income amounts for the basis of determining financial assistance eligibility and potential reduced care rates. Once determined, due to the inherent nature of presumptive circumstances, the only financial assistance that can be granted is a 100% writeoff of the account balance. Presumptive Financial Assistance Eligibility shall only cover the patient's specific date of service and shall not be effective for a six (6) month period. Presumptive eligibility may be determined on the basis of individual life circumstances. Unless otherwise eligible for Medicaid or CHIP, patients who are beneficiaries/recipients of the means-tested social service programs listed by the Health Services Cost Review Commission in COMAR 10.37.10.26 A-2 are deemed Presumptively Eligible for free care provided the patient submits proof of enrollment within 30 days of date of service. Such 30 days may be extended to 60 days if patient or patient's representative requests an additional 30 days. Appendix A-1 provides a list of life circumstances in addition to those specified by the regulations listed above that qualify a patient for Presumptive Eligibility.

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12. Patients who indicate they are unemployed and have no insurance coverage shall be required to submit a Financial Assistance Application (Exhibit A) unless they meet Presumptive Financial Assistance Eligibility criteria (see Appendix A-1). If patient qualifies for COBRA coverage, patient's financial ability to pay COBRA insurance premiums shall be reviewed by the Financial Counselor and recommendations shall be made to Director of Revenue Cycle and or CFO (HCGH) or Director PFS or CFO (SH). Individuals with the financial capacity to purchase health insurance shall be encouraged to do so, as a means of assuring access to health care services and for their overall personal health.
13. If a patient account has been assigned to a collection agency, and patient or guarantor requests financial assistance or appears to qualify for financial assistance, the collection agency shall notify PFS and shall forward the patient/guarantor a financial assistance application with instructions to return the completed application to PFS for review and determination and shall place the account on hold for 45 days pending further instruction from PFS.
14. Beginning October 1, 2010, if within a two (2) year period after the date of service a patient is found to be eligible for free care on the date of service (using the eligibility standards applicable on the date of service), the patient shall be refunded amounts received from the patient/guarantor exceeding \$25. If hospital documentation demonstrates the lack of cooperation of the patient or guarantor in providing information to determine eligibility for free care, the two (2) year period herein may be reduced to 30 days from the date of initial request for information. If the patient is enrolled in a means-tested government health care plan that requires the patient to pay-out-of-pocket for hospital services, then patient or guarantor shall not be refunded any funds that would result in patient losing financial eligibility for health coverage.

REFERENCE¹

JHHS Finance Policies and Procedures Manual

Policy No. FIN017 - Signature Authority: Patient Financial Services

Policy No. FIN033 - Installment Payments

Charity Care and Bad Debts, AICPA Health Care Audit Guide


Code of Maryland Regulations COMAR 10.37.10.26, et seq

Maryland Code Health General 19-214, et seq

Federal Poverty Guidelines (Updated annually) in Federal Register

RESPONSIBILITIES - HCGH, SH

¹NOTE: Standardized applications for Financial Assistance, Patient Profile Questionnaire and Medical Financial Hardship have been developed. For information on ordering, please contact the Patient Financial Services Department. Copies are attached to this policy as Exhibits A, B and C.

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Financial Counselor (Pre-Admission/Admission/In-House/Outpatient) Customer Service Collector Admissions Coordinator Any Finance representative designated to accept applications for Financial Assistance

Understand current criteria for Assistance qualifications.

Identify prospective candidates; initiate application process when required. As necessary assist patient in completing application or program specific form.

On the day preliminary application is received, send to Patient Financial Services Department's for determination of probable eligibility.

Review preliminary application (Exhibit A), Patient Profile Questionnaire (Exhibit B) and Medical Financial Hardship Application (Exhibit C), if submitted, to make probable eligibility determination. Within two business days of receipt of preliminary application, mail determination to patient's last known address or deliver to patient if patient is currently an inpatient. Notate patient account comments.

If Financial Assistance Application is not required, due to patient meeting specific criteria, notate patient account comments and forward to Management Personnel for review.

Review and ensure completion of final application.

Deliver completed final application to appropriate management.

Document all transactions in all applicable patient accounts comments.

Identify retroactive candidates; initiate final application process.

Management Personnel (Supervisor/Manager/Director)


Review completed final application; monitor those accounts for which no application is required; determine patient eligibility; communicate final written determination to patient within 30 business days of receiving completed application. If patient is eligible for reduced cost care, apply the most favorable reduction in charges for which patient qualifies.

Advise ineligible patients of other alternatives available to them including installment payments, bank loans, or consideration under the Medical Financial Hardship program if they have not submitted the supplemental application, Exhibit C. [Refer to Appendix B - Medical Financial Hardship Assistance Guidelines.]

Notices will not be sent to Presumptive Eligibility or ED Financial Assistance recipients.

Financial Management Personnel (Senior Director/Assistant Treasurer or affiliate equivalent) CP Director and Management Staff

Review and approve Financial Assistance applications and accounts for which no application is required and which do not write off automatically in accordance with signature authority established in JHHS Finance Policy No. FIN017 - Signature Authority: Patient Financial Services.

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SPONSOR

CFO (HCGH, SH)
 Director of Revenue Cycle (HCGH)
 Director, PFS (SH)


REVIEW CYCLE

Two (2) years


APPROVAL

 Vice President of Finance/CFO and Treasurer, JHHS

 Date

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1. Each person requesting Financial Assistance must complete a JHM/Financial Assistance Application (also known as the Maryland State Uniform Financial Assistance Application) Exhibit A, and Patient Profile Questionnaire, Exhibit B. If patient wishes to be considered for Medical Financial Hardship, patient must submit Medical Financial Hardship Application, Exhibit C.
2. A preliminary application stating family size and family income (as defined by Medicaid regulations) will be accepted and a determination of probable eligibility will be made within two business days of receipt.
3. The patient must apply for Medical Assistance and cooperate fully with the Medical Assistance team or its designated agent, unless the financial representative can readily determine that the patient would fail to meet the eligibility requirements. A Patient Profile Questionnaire (see Exhibit B) has been developed to determine if the patient must apply for Medical Assistance. In cases where the patient has active Medical Assistance pharmacy coverage or QMB coverage, it would not be necessary to reapply for Medical Assistance unless the financial representative has reason to believe that the patient may be awarded full Medical Assistance benefits.
4. Proof of income must be provided with the final application. Acceptable proofs include:
 - (a) Prior-year tax return;
 - (b) Current pay stubs;
 - (c) Letter from employer, or if unemployed documentation verifying unemployed status; and
 - (d) A credit bureau report obtained by the JHM affiliates and/or Patient Financial Services Department.
 - (e) For non-U.S. citizens, the Financial Counselor shall contact the U.S. Consulate in the patient's country of residence. The U.S. Consulate should be in a position to provide information on the patient's net worth. However, the level of detail supporting the patient's financial strength will vary from country to country. After obtaining information from the U.S. Consulate, the Financial Counselor shall meet with the Director, Revenue Cycle and/or CFO to determine if additional information is necessary.
5. Patients will be eligible for Financial Assistance if their maximum family (husband and wife) income (as defined by Medicaid regulations) level does not exceed each affiliate's standard (related to the Federal poverty guidelines) and they do not own Liquid Assets in excess of \$10,000 which would be available to satisfy their JHHS affiliate bills.
6. All financial resources must be used before the Financial Assistance can be applied. This includes insurance, Medical Assistance, and all other entitlement programs for which the patient may qualify. If it is clear that a non-U.S. citizen will not be eligible for Medical Assistance, a Medical Assistance Notice of Determination will not be necessary.
7. Patients who chose to become voluntary self pay patients do not qualify for Financial Assistance for the amount owed on any account registered as Voluntary Self Pay.
8. Financial Assistance is not applicable for non-essential services such as cosmetic surgery, convenience items, and private room accommodations that are not medically necessary. Non-hospital charges will remain the responsibility of the patient. In the event a question arises as to whether an admission is "elective" or "necessary," the patient's admitting physician shall be consulted. Questions as to necessity may be directed to the physician advisor appointed by the hospital.

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9. Each affiliate will determine final eligibility for Financial Assistance within thirty (30) business days of the day when the application was satisfactorily completed and submitted. The Financial Counselor will issue the final eligibility determination.
10. Documentation of the final eligibility determination will be made on all (open-balance) patient accounts. A determination notice will be sent to the patient.
11. A determination of eligibility for Financial Assistance based on the submission of a Financial Assistance Application (Exhibit A) will remain valid for a period of six (6) months for all necessary JHM affiliate services provided, based on the date of the determination letter. Patients who are currently receiving Financial Assistance from one JHM affiliate will not be required to reapply for Financial Assistance from another affiliate.
12. All determinations of eligibility for Financial Assistance shall be solely at the discretion of the JHHS affiliate.

Exceptions

The Vice President, Finance/CFO may make exceptions according to individual circumstances.


FREE OR REDUCED COST CARE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRID

# of Persons in Family	Income Level*	Upper Limits of Income for Allowance Range				
1	\$ 21,660	\$ 23,826	\$ 25,992	\$ 28,158	\$ 30,324	\$ 32,490
2	\$ 29,140	\$ 32,054	\$ 34,968	\$ 37,882	\$ 40,796	\$ 43,710
3	\$ 36,620	\$ 40,282	\$ 43,944	\$ 47,606	\$ 51,268	\$ 54,930
4	\$ 44,100	\$ 48,510	\$ 52,920	\$ 57,330	\$ 61,740	\$ 66,150
5	\$ 51,580	\$ 56,738	\$ 61,896	\$ 67,054	\$ 72,212	\$ 77,370
6	\$ 59,060	\$ 64,966	\$ 70,872	\$ 76,778	\$ 82,684	\$ 88,590
7	\$ 66,540	\$ 73,194	\$ 79,848	\$ 86,502	\$ 93,156	\$ 99,810
8*	\$ 74,020	\$ 81,422	\$ 88,824	\$ 96,226	\$ 103,628	\$ 111,030
**amt for each member	\$7,480	\$8,228	\$8,976	\$9,724	\$10,472	\$11,220
Allowance to Give:	100%	80%	60%	40%	30%	20%

*200% of Poverty Guidelines

**For family units with more than eight (8) members

EXAMPLE: Annual Family Income \$50,000
 # of Persons in Family 4
 Applicable Poverty Income Level \$52,920
 Upper Limits of Income for Allowance Range \$52,920 (60% range)
 (\$50,000 is less than the upper limit of income; therefore patient is eligible for Financial Assistance.)

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Appendix A-1

Presumptive Financial Assistance Eligibility

There are instances when a patient may appear eligible for financial assistance, but there is no financial assistance form on file. Often there is adequate information provided by the patient or through other sources, which could provide sufficient evidence to provide the patient with financial assistance. In the event there is no evidence to support a patient's eligibility for financial assistance, JHHS reserves the right to use outside agencies in determining estimate income amounts for the basis of determining financial assistance eligibility and potential reduced care rates. Once determined, due to the inherent nature of presumptive circumstances, the only financial assistance that can be granted is a 100% write off of the account balance. Presumptive Financial Assistance Eligibility shall only cover the patient's specific date of service and shall not be effective for a six (6) month period. Presumptive eligibility may be determined on the basis of individual life circumstances that may include:

- Active Medical Assistance pharmacy coverage
- QMB coverage/ SLMB coverage
- Primary Adult Care Program (PAC) coverage*
- Homelessness
- Medical Assistance and Medicaid Managed Care patients for services provided in the ER beyond the coverage of these programs
- Maryland Public Health System Emergency Petition patients
- active enrollees of the Chase Brexton Health Center (See Appendix C) (applicable for HCGH patients)
- active enrollees of the Healthy Howard Program (see Appendix D) (applicable for HCGH patient)
- Participation in Women, Infants and Children Programs (WIC)*
- Supplemental Nutritional Assistance program (SNAP) or Food Stamp eligibility *
- Households with children in the free or reduced lunch program*
- Low-income household energy assistance program participation*
- Eligibility for other state or local assistance programs
- Patient is deceased with no known estate
- Health Department moms – For non-emergent outpatient visits not covered by medical assistance
- Patients that are determined to meet eligibility criteria established under former State Only Medical Assistance Program
- Patients returned by SRT as not meeting disability criteria but who meet the financial requirements for Medical Assistance

*These life circumstances are set forth in COMAR 10.37.10.26 A-2. The patient needs to submit proof of enrollment in these programs within 30 days of treatment unless the patient requests an additional 30 days.

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**APPENDIX B
MEDICAL FINANCIAL HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES**

Purpose

These guidelines are to provide a separate, supplemental determination of Financial Assistance. This determination will be offered to all patients who apply for Financial Assistance.

Medical Financial Hardship Assistance is available for patients who are not eligible for Financial Assistance under the primary section of this policy, but for whom:

- 1.) Medical Debt incurred over a twelve (12) month period exceeds 25% of the Family Income creating Medical Financial Hardship; and
- 2.) who meet the income standards for this level of Assistance are met.

For those patients who are eligible for reduced cost care under the Financial Assistance criteria and also qualify under the Medical Financial Hardship Assistance Guidelines, JHHS shall apply the reduction in charges that is most favorable to the patient.

Medical Financial Hardship is defined as Medical Debt for Medically Necessary treatment incurred by a family over a twelve (12) month period that exceeds 25% of that family's income.


Medical Debt is defined as out of pocket expenses for medical costs for Medically Necessary treatment billed by the Hopkins hospital to which the application is made, the out of pocket expenses mentioned above do not include co-payments, co-insurance and deductibles.

The patient/guarantor can request that such a determination be made by submitting a Medical Financial Hardship Assistance Application (Exhibit C), when submitting JHM/Financial Assistance Application, also known as the Maryland State Uniform Financial Assistance Application (Exhibit A), and the Patient Profile Questionnaire (Exhibit B). The patient guarantor must also submit financial documentation of family income for the twelve (12) calendar months preceding the application date and documentation evidencing Medical Debt of at least 25% of family income.

Once a patient is approved for Medical Hardship Financial Assistance, Medical Hardship Financial Assistance coverage shall be effective starting the month of the first qualifying service and the following twelve (12) calendar months. It shall cover those members of the patient's Immediate Family residing in the same household. The patient and the Immediate Family members shall remain eligible for reduced cost Medically Necessary Care when seeking subsequent care at the same hospital for twelve (12) calendar months beginning on the date on which the reduced cost Medically Necessary Care was initially received. Coverage shall not apply to elective or cosmetic procedures. However, the patient or the patient's immediate family member residing in the same household must notify the hospital of their eligibility for the reduced cost Medically Necessary Care at registration or admission.

General Conditions for Medical Financial Hardship Assistance Application:

1. Patient's income is under 500% of the Federal Poverty Level.
2. Patient has exhausted all insurance coverage.
3. Patient account balances for patients who chose to register as voluntary self pay shall not counted toward Medical Debt for Medical Financial Hardship Assistance.
4. Patient/guarantor do not own Liquid Assets in excess of \$10,000 which would be available to satisfy their JHHS affiliate bills.
5. Patient is not eligible for any of the following:
 - Medical Assistance

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- Other forms of assistance available through JHM affiliates
6. Patient is not eligible for The JHM Financial Assistance Program or is eligible but the Medical Financial Hardship Program may be more favorable to the patient.
 7. The affiliate has the right to request patient to file updated supporting documentation.
 8. The maximum time period allowed for paying the amount not covered by Financial Assistance is three (3) years.
 9. If a federally qualified Medicaid patient required a treatment that is not approved by Medicaid but may be eligible for coverage by the Medical Financial Hardship Assistance program, the patient is still required to file a JHHS Medical Financial Hardship Assistance Application but not to submit duplicate supporting documentation.

Factors for Consideration

The following factors will be considered in evaluating a Medical Financial Hardship Assistance Application:


- Medical Debt incurred over the twelve (12) months preceding the date of the Financial Hardship Assistance Application at the JHHS treating facility where the application was made.
- Liquid Assets (leaving a residual of \$10,000)
- Family Income for the twelve (12) calendar months preceding the date of the Financial Hardship Assistance Application
- Supporting Documentation

Exceptions

The Vice President, Finance/CFO or designee may make exceptions according to individual circumstances.

Evaluation Method and Process

1. The Financial Counselor will review the Medical Financial Hardship Assistance Application and collateral documentation submitted by the patient/responsible party.
2. The Financial Counselor will then complete a Medical Financial Hardship Assistance Worksheet (found on the bottom of the application) to determine eligibility for special consideration under this program. The notification and approval process will use the same procedures described in the Financial Assistance Program section of this policy.


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MEDICAL HARDSHIP FINANCIAL GRID

Upper Limits of Family Income for Allowance Range

# of Persons in Family	300% of FPL	400% of FPL	500% of FPL
1	\$ 32,490	\$ 43,320	\$ 54,150
2	\$ 43,710	\$ 58,280	\$ 72,850
3	\$ 54,930	\$ 73,240	\$ 91,550
4	\$ 66,150	\$ 88,200	\$ 110,250
5	\$ 77,370	\$ 103,160	\$ 128,950
6	\$ 88,590	\$ 118,120	\$ 147,650
7	\$ 99,810	\$ 133,080	\$ 166,350
8*	\$ 111,030	\$ 148,040	\$ 185,050
Allowance to Give:	50%	35%	20%

*For family units with more than 8 members, add \$11,220 for each additional person at 300% of FPL, \$14,960 at 400% at FPL; and \$18,700 at 500% of FPL.

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**APPENDIX C (HCGH only)
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR CHASE BREXTON PATIENTS**

Purpose

Chase Brexton Health Services, Inc. is a non-profit, community based organization that provides a wide range of medical, psychological and social services on a non-discriminatory basis in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Howard County. Chase Brexton offers services to everyone regardless of their ability to pay. Chase Brexton cares for those who are uninsured or under-insured, those with Medicare and Medicaid, and those with commercial insurance. Chase Brexton has Case Managers that work with patients to determine eligibility for care at a low minimum fee, and/or appropriate programs and entitlements available to people with limited resources.

This procedure is for Howard County General Hospital registration sites, verification and scheduling and for Patient Financial Services. It outlines the treatment of patients that have qualified for Chase Brexton Health Services. It is the policy of HCGH to accept patients previously screened by Chase Brexton for financial assistance. Patients will not have to apply for assistance but will need to notify HCGH of their participation in this program.


Inpatient/Outpatient cases

All Chase Brexton inpatients are screened by the Howard County General Hospital's Financial Counselor for possible medical assistance. Appointments are made with Howard County General Hospital's in-house medical assistance Case Worker for the application process. If medical assistance is received, the claim is billed to Medical Assistance for payment. If the patient is not eligible for medical assistance, the insurance plan of FAR.PENDIN, FARB20, FARN40, FARN50, FARN70 FARN80, and FAR100 is assigned to the case and the claim will be automatically written off to the financial assistance/charity care allowance code when the final bill is released. The insurance code assignment is based on the level of charity care the patient has qualified for.

Insurance listed as:	Charity Care	Patient to pay:
FAR.PENDIN	Pending Verification	
FARB20	20% of charges	80% of charges
FARN40	40% of charges	60% of charges
FARN50	50% of charges	50% of charges
FARN70	70% of charges	30% of charges
FARN80	80% of charges	20% of charges
FAR100	100% of charges	0% of charges


PROCEDURE

1. When a patient presents for services at HCGH and states they are associated with the Chase Brexton health center, the registration staff will enter the insurance code of FAR.PENDIN into Meditech if the patient hasn't been seen within the last 6 months. If the patient is in the system with a service date within the last 6 months and the patient was already identified as a Chase Brexton patient that met a certain level of charity care the registrar can allow the insurance code of (FARB20, FARN40 etc,) to be pulled forward.
2. The Sr. Financial Counselor receives a daily report with all patients registered with a FAR code.
3. The Sr. Financial Counselor will review all patients on the report daily to validate they are active with the Chase Brexton health center and what level of charity care they qualify for.
4. The Sr. Financial Counselor is responsible for updating the insurance code to reflect the proper

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level of charity care and collecting the patient balance (if any).

5. The Sr. Financial Counselor is responsible for entering a form and through date into Meditech that the patient is eligible to receive this level of charity care.
6. The Sr. Financial Counselor is responsible for identifying registration errors and forwarding them to the Manager of Admissions for corrective action. These accounts will be changed to self pay and or other insurance as appropriate.

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**APPENDIX D (HCGH only)
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR HEALTHY HOWARD PATIENTS**

Purpose

The Healthy Howard Access Plan is a new program effective January 1, 2009, designed to connect Howard County residents to affordable health care services and help the community overcome barriers to healthy living. The Plan is not insurance, but offers basic medical and preventative care to eligible residents who would otherwise not be able to afford or obtain health insurance.

This procedure is for Howard County General Hospital registration sites, verification and scheduling, and Patient Financial Services. It outlines the treatment of patients that are enrolled in the Healthy Howard Plan.

Inpatient/Outpatient cases

It is the policy of HCGH to accept Healthy Howard plan patients for referred scheduled services, and emergent/urgent services.

It is the responsibility of the patient to provide their Healthy Howard identification card or inform the registration/scheduling staff of Healthy Howard coverage at the time of service or scheduling.

It is the responsibility of the HCGH registration/authorization staff to verify that coverage is still active by checking eligibility via MCNET (a web based system administered by JHHC).

For Healthy Howard patients utilizing the emergency department, \$100 co-pay is due. However; if admitted or placed into observation the co-pay is waived.

The patient should be registered using the insurance code HLTH.HOW.

The HLTH.HOW insurance code has been programmed to automatically write off the charges to the financial assistance code when the final bill is released.

Procedure

1. When a patient presents for services at HCGH and either presents a Healthy Howard insurance card or notifies the registration staff that they are a member of Healthy Howard the registrar should verify eligibility using MCNET to validate the patient is an active enrollee.
2. If active, the Admission Counselor will register the patient with the insurance code HLTH.HOW.
3. If not active, notify the patient of ineligibility and ask if there is other insurance or means to pay. If not, provide the patient with the HCGH financial assistance application.
4. The Sr. Financial Counselor prints a report on a daily basis of all patients registered with HLTH.HOW.
5. The Sr. Financial Counselor will review all patients on the report to validate they are active with Healthy Howard.
6. The Sr. Financial Counselor is responsible to monitor Healthy Howard in-house inpatient admissions to determine if at some point the patient may become eligible for MD Medical Assistance. If so, the Sr. Financial Counselor will meet with the patient to assist in the application process.
7. The Sr. Financial Counselor is responsible for identifying registration errors and forwarding them to the Manager of Admissions for corrective action. These accounts will be corrected as appropriate.

Exhibit A

I. Family Income

List the amount of your monthly income from all sources. You may be required to supply proof of income, assets, and expenses. If you have no income, please provide a letter of support from the person providing your housing and meals.

	Monthly Amount
Employment	_____
Retirement/pension benefits	_____
Social security benefits	_____
Public assistance benefits	_____
Disability benefits	_____
Unemployment benefits	_____
Veterans benefits	_____
Alimony	_____
Rental property income	_____
Strike benefits	_____
Military allotment	_____
Farm or self employment	_____
Other income source	_____
Total	_____

II. Liquid Assets

	Current Balance
Checking account	_____
Savings account	_____
Stocks, bonds, CD, or money market	_____
Other accounts	_____
Total	_____

III. Other Assets

If you own any of the following items, please list the type and approximate value.

Home	Loan Balance _____	Approximate value _____
Automobile	Make _____ Year _____	Approximate value _____
Additional vehicle	Make _____ Year _____	Approximate value _____
Additional vehicle	Make _____ Year _____	Approximate value _____
Other property		Approximate value _____
Total		_____

IV. Monthly Expenses

	Amount
Rent or Mortgage	_____
Utilities	_____
Car payment(s)	_____
Credit card(s)	_____
Car insurance	_____
Health insurance	_____
Other medical expenses	_____
Other expenses	_____
Total	_____

Do you have any other unpaid medical bills? Yes No
 For what service? _____
 If you have arranged a payment plan, what is the monthly payment? _____

If you request that the hospital extend additional financial assistance, the hospital may request additional information in order to make a supplemental determination. By signing this form, you certify that the information provided is true and agree to notify the hospital of any changes to the information provided within ten days of the change.

Applicant signature

Date

Relationship to Patient

Exhibit B

PATIENT FINANCIAL SERVICES
PATIENT PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE

HOSPITAL NAME: _____

PATIENT NAME: _____

PATIENT ADDRESS: _____
(Include Zip Code)

MEDICAL RECORD #: _____

1. What is the patient's age? _____
2. Is the patient a U.S. citizen or permanent resident? Yes or No
3. Is patient pregnant? Yes or No
4. Does patient have children under 21 years of age living at home? Yes or No
5. Is patient blind or is patient potentially disabled for 12 months or more from gainful employment? Yes or No
6. Is patient currently receiving SSI or SSDI benefits? Yes or No
7. Does patient (and, if married, spouse) have total bank accounts or assets convertible to cash that do not exceed the following amounts? Yes or No

Family Size:

Individual: \$2,500.00

Two people: \$3,000.00

For each additional family member, add \$100.00

(Example: For a family of four, if you have total liquid assets of less than \$3,200.00, you would answer YES.)

8. Is patient a resident of the State of Maryland?
If not a Maryland resident, in what state does patient reside? _____ Yes or No
9. Is patient homeless? Yes or No
10. Does patient participate in WIC? Yes or No
11. Does patient receive Food Stamps? Yes or No
12. Does patient currently have:
 Medical Assistance Pharmacy Only Yes or No
 QMB coverage/ SLMB coverage Yes or No
 PAC coverage Yes or No
13. Is patient employed? Yes or No
 If no, date became unemployed. _____
 Eligible for COBRA health insurance coverage? Yes or No

Exhibit C

MEDICAL FINANCIAL HARDSHIP APPLICATION

HOSPITAL NAME: _____

PATIENT NAME: _____

PATIENT ADDRESS: _____
(Include Zip Code)

MEDICAL RECORD #: _____

Date: _____

Family Income for twelve (12) calendar months preceding date of this application: _____

Medical Debt incurred at The Johns Hopkins Hospital (not including co-insurance, co-payments, or deductibles) for the twelve (12) calendar months preceding the date of this application:

Date of service	Amount owed
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

All documentation submitted becomes part of this application.

All the information submitted in the application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

Applicant's signature _____ Date: _____

Relationship to Patient _____

For Internal Use: Reviewed By: _____ Date: _____

Income: _____ 25% of income= _____

Medical Debt: _____ Percentage of Allowance: _____

Reduction: _____

Balance Due: _____

Monthly Payment Amount: _____ Length of Payment Plan: _____ months

APPENDIX 3

MISSION

Provide the highest quality of care to improve the health of our entire community through innovation, collaboration, service excellence, diversity and a commitment to patient safety.

VISION

To be the premier community hospital in Maryland.

VALUE STATEMENT

Our values are rooted in providing unsurpassed service to everyone we encounter – patients, their families and caregivers, and our co-workers. These values – Communication, Anticipation of and Response to others needs, Respect, and Engagement with others – reduced to the acronym CARE, are our credo for interactions with our patients and visitors as well as our co-workers.