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Without healthcare coverage, people tend to be less healthy and less productive – they are more likely to become bankrupt and they die sooner than those with access to healthcare. These are real issues that ultimately affect all Georgians. In Georgia, roughly 1 in 5 adults are without healthcare coverage and most of these people belong to families who are working, but go uninsured. Community Health Works, (CHW), formerly Health Care Central Georgia, Inc., (HCCG), is addressing these issues by changing the way healthcare is financed and delivered in central Georgia. A growing network of 5 hospitals, 3 public and behavioral health providers, over 60 physicians, 1 clinic and 20 pharmacies who together are delivering innovative and effective healthcare to the most complex and challenging uninsured patients at costs below the state and national average for treating such patients.

*“For the past 22 years, I have had health insurance through my employer and now I find myself in a different situation, with no insurance. I was willing to spend my whole paycheck, but I couldn’t get an appointment with a doctor and had to go to the Emergency Center to get my high blood pressure medicine refilled. Community Health Works has saved me – and when you feel better, you want to do better”, Portia Kidd, CHW member.*

### **How is CHW different?**

- ?? CHW accepts members meeting financial criteria who are diagnosed with one or more of the following diseases: hypertension, heart disease, diabetes and depression. These four diagnoses represent the vast majority of uninsured patients admitted to hospitals in the region and the majority of the cost associated with treating uninsured hospitalized patients.
- ?? The CHW provider network includes physician services, hospital based diagnostic services, medication and behavioral health services in a patient-centered, care management system.
- ?? The diversity of board level leadership is outstanding; regional representation includes physicians, behavioral health and county government, five hospital CEOs, the district health director and Family Connections.
- ?? CHW is one of six sites in the United States selected by the National Association of Counties to demonstrate Return On Community Investment when the basic medical needs of uninsured residents are adequately met.

### **What have we learned?**

- ?? The four chronic diseases targeted for enrollment are not only the most prevalent and the most costly in our region, but they are also the most prevalent and most costly nationally, therefore, CHW is serving as a national model for health system improvement.
- ?? These same four diagnoses have shown to be most amenable to outpatient, patient-centered care management, therefore, what is best for the health of the patient is also best for the financial health of the system.
- ?? Preliminary data shows decreased CHW member utilization of hospital emergency centers and reduced absenteeism from employment due to illness, therefore, access to basic healthcare services makes both physical and fiscal sense.