

NEK-CAP receives grant

(MSC News)-- NEK-CAP, Inc. (Northeast Kansas Community Action Program) was recently selected as one of ten community organizations throughout Kansas to receive funding to assist individuals enroll in Marketplace insurance, Medicaid, and CHIP.

This was made possible through a federal grant Thrive Allen County received from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to help underserved populations find affordable health insurance coverage with the assistance of Navigators. The grant is expected to provide \$2.9 million over a three-year period.

Navigators are federally trained and certified individuals who help consumers find and apply for Marketplace health insurance. According to CMS, “Since 2013, Navigators have helped Americans understand their health insurance options and facilitated enrollment in health insurance through the Federally-facilitated Marketplace. As trusted community partners, their mission focuses on assisting the uninsured and other underserved communities. Navigators serve an important role in connecting communities that historically have experienced lower access to health coverage and greater disparities in health outcomes to health coverage.”

NEK-CAP, Inc., a non-profit Community Action Program, provides social and education services for low-income individuals, families, and communities throughout 16 counties in Northeast and North Central Kansas – Atchison, Brown, Doniphan, Jackson, Jefferson, Jewell, Leavenworth, Marshall, Mitchell, Nemaha, Osborne, Pottawattamie, Republic, Riley, Smith and Washington. Through the Navigator Project NEK-CAP, Inc. staff will conduct outreach and education and provide coverage enrollment for individuals and small businesses into the Kansas Marketplace Exchange and other safety net services.

Established in 2007, Thrive Allen County is the pre-eminent rural health coalition in the state of Kansas. Thrive is on the leading edge of public health in the state, designing models of engagement with communities throughout Kansas by partnering with community organizations like NEK-CAP, Inc. Since 2013, Thrive Allen County has offered enrollment assistance services for the Marketplace and other health and safety net services through its Thrive CARES program. Thrive’s Care Coordinators are crucial fixtures in the community health ecosystem, providing a personal connection to those in need. They were instrumental in lowering Allen County’s uninsured rate from 21% in 2013 to under 9% in 2018.

Says Thrive President and CEO Lisse Regehr, “The impact Navigators have on healthcare access cannot be understated, and we are honored to help community

organizations implement what we have learned across the state.”

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