



**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRUST FUND COMMISSION**

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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR**

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Medication Assistance Grants awarded in high-need counties

RALEIGH – The North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission today announced \$400,000 in grants to local organizations in Cabarrus, Rowan and Rockingham Counties for medication assistance services. The grants will provide assistance to displaced workers, seniors and other low-income individuals of all ages in acquiring free, low cost or discounted medications. In addition, clients can receive counseling from a trained pharmacist on the safe and wise use of prescription drugs.

Last year, Medication Assistance grants were awarded to 23 organizations serving 60 counties. “The Commission plans to expand this important service statewide early next year, but the situation in these counties demanded immediate action,” said Lieutenant Governor Beverly Perdue, chair of the Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission.

Grants were awarded to the Community Care Clinic of Rowan County, the Community Free Clinic of Cabarrus County and the Rockingham County Dept. of Public Health. Staff trained in the operation of specialized software will help clients locate the lowest cost source for needed medications and will assist in applying for and dispensing the drugs. Pharmacists will counsel clients in resolving drug utilization issues such as drug-to-drug interactions and duplicative therapies.

The grant recipients were selected based on their experience and proven ability in providing these services. “Expanding services quickly to address the need is the goal here,” said Perdue. “However, we must be realistic that program expansion cannot happen overnight. Grantees will make local announcements as soon as they are ready to serve additional clients.”

The Commission also awarded a supplemental grant of \$35,000 to MedAssist of Mecklenburg County to serve as a mentor to other grantees in the region. “This is a complex service and MedAssist has a proven record of expertise and accomplishment that can be shared with other communities that are just starting out,” concluded Perdue.

The Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission was established by the General Assembly to receive and allocate 25% of North Carolina’s share of the multi-billion dollar national tobacco settlement agreement reached in 1999. The Commission is comprised of 18 individuals representing a wide background of health care experience throughout North Carolina.

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