

**Partners for a Prosperous Athens**  
**Mental and Physical Health Subcommittee**  
**May 22, 2006**

In the third meeting of PPA, the Mental and Physical Health Subcommittee listened to a presentation by Dr. Jack Chapman, President of Health Access Initiative, Kim Smith, RN, Executive Director of HAI, and Lynda Askew, Board Member of HAI. Based in Gainesville, Georgia, the Health Access Initiative is a physician-led organization working to provide appropriate access to health care for low income, uninsured adults in Hall County. HAI operates a centralized office that serves as a clearinghouse for the recruitment of volunteer physicians, enrollment and referral of patients, and gathering of data. It also helps link and coordinate the services of other agencies and organizations in the community that provide health care to the indigent. HAI services include: referrals to physicians who provide care; medication assistance to fill prescriptions; ancillary services like x-rays and lab work; and facilitation of translation services. In 2005, 116 physicians, representing 21 specialties, participated in the network and provided over \$3 million in donated services. More information on the Health Access Initiative can be found on their website: [www.healthaccessinitiative.com](http://www.healthaccessinitiative.com).

Following the presentation and discussion, sub-committee members met in their population groups to develop questions to be used in conversations with the uninsured and underinsured. The following are the results of those discussions.

*Children and Adolescents*

- What types of outdoor activities does your family participate in?
- How old should students be when sex education is taught in schools or by community agencies?
- What types of snacks do you make available to your children's class?
- Where would you go if you needed to talk about a problem (i.e. mental health professional, minister, family member)?
- What services do you currently use (health center, private physician) for the following:
  - a) pregnancy prevention/sex education;
  - b) mental health/substance abuse/suicide prevention;
  - c) obesity/healthy living;
  - d) family relationships/life skills; and
  - e) child abuse/neglect?
- What services would you use if they were made available in your community?

*Adults*

- What are your most important health care needs?
- What are the obstacles you encounter in accessing health care?
- What health services have you used and what was your experience?
- Do you know what services are available in the community?
- Where is your first stop for healthcare services?

### *Homeless*

- Who do you trust to get information regarding healthcare services?
- What are your barriers to healthcare?
- What does “good health” look like?
- If you could receive healthcare assistance today, what would you need (i.e. transportation)?

### *Chronically Ill and Disabled*

- Has your doctor or provider prescribed medications, supplies or treatments that you were not able to afford? If so, what were those things?
- Are you having to choose between spending money on medical care or spending it on food, rent, etc?
- Have you had trouble accessing your medical records?

### *Elderly*

- What do you believe is your greatest unmet healthcare need?
- What sacrifices do healthcare costs require you to make?
- What is most important to you with respect to your health?
- What keeps you from taking better care of your health?

### *Pregnancy and Infant Health*

Did not receive questions from this group.