

EMBARGOED UNTIL MARCH 14
March 14, 2010

Contact: Bob Trepinski
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Lack Of Health Insurance Devastating

They are our friends, neighbors and colleagues--forced to gamble every day that they won't get sick or injured. These are the over 200,000 Kansans (11-1/2 percent of our state's population) who lack health insurance. More than eight out of 10 are in *working* families, but in Kansas 50% of employers offer no health insurance to their employees. Living without health insurance is a risk no one should have to take.

The week of March 14-20 is national "Cover The Uninsured Week" a time designed to draw attention to the challenge of caring for those without health insurance. It is a challenge that is faced – and met – every day at Topeka's own Marian Clinic, a faith-based, non-profit health and dental clinic whose mission is to provide care for the uninsured who are living at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. During 2009, the Clinic treated over 5,220 patients during more than 17,200 patient visits and provided, at no charge, medications valued at over \$520,000. Patients without insurance must meet income and residency requirements for medical care and income requirements for dental care.

With a small staff and limited resources, the Marian Clinic can only deliver this kind of quality care through the efforts of more than 200 dedicated volunteer physicians, nurses, and other medical specialists, and the kindness of charitable donors. The Clinic relies heavily on donated support from St. Francis and Stormont-Vail hospitals, the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Health System, and numerous local specialty health care providers and community support agencies. Although no qualified patient is turned away for an inability to pay, nearly forty-percent of the Clinic's income comes from modest patient fees.

"When you're sick and can't afford to see a doctor or obtain medicine, your life suffers," stated Bob Trepinski, Executive Director. "Many times you can't work, and often you can't take care of yourself or your family. That's when safety-net clinics like the Marian Clinic and the Shawnee County Health Department in Topeka are truly the only hope for the uninsured in our area."

Donations for the Marian Clinic may be sent to Marian Clinic, 1001 SW Garfield, Topeka, KS 66604, or via the website at www.marianclinic.org.

For further information contact Bob Trepinski at 233-9780, ext. 1.

NOTE TO MEDIA: Upon arrangement, we can provide a patient for media interviews, along with our Executive Director.

1001 SW Garfield Avenue, Topeka, KS 66604 785-233-9780 www.marianclinic.org

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