## program results



January 2013 | www.rwjf.org

To gain access to more than 3.500 reports and learn about our programs, please visit www.rwjf.org/programresults.

Each year the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation produces close to 200 reports on the results of its funding to share findings and results and to build on the knowledge of achievements, difficulties, and lessons learned from our past grantmaking.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) believes in supporting programs that have measurable impact on the health of Americans and the quality of care they receive. For almost 40 years, we've worked with dedicated, expert partners who strive for meaningful and timely change. While progress may be slow, the steps taken can be invaluable to those who share our goal of helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need.

We are passionate about our responsibility to share information and foster understanding of the impact of our past grantmaking—what works, what doesn't, and why.

Since 1996 we've produced more than 160 Program Results on national programs, more than 3,200 describing individual projects, and more than 260 profiles of scholars and leaders whose essential work we have supported.

Program Results (formerly called Grant Results) describe RWJF's interest in the area and strategy for addressing the problem for those working in the field or interested in undertaking similar efforts. They explain the problem addressed; the activities undertaken; the results or findings from the work; lessons for the field; any post-grant activities—by the grantee or RWJF—and they include a bibliography of material produced during the project or program.

"Foundations need to be held accountable for the grants they make and grantees must answer for what they produce with Foundation funds. Program Results are an important tool because they provide evidence of project results and summarize lessons learned from Foundationsupported projects. This knowledge then makes its way into the communities of scholars, practitioners and policy-makers who work in the fields of health, health care and health policy."

Alan B. Cohen, ScD National Program Director Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Scholars in Health Policy Research Boston University Health Policy Institute In 2009, we also started producing Progress Reports on a small number of programs and large projects when they are at a midpoint in their lives. The reports are conversational in tone and are based on interviews with RWJF program staff, program/project staff, and people in the field describing results to date, challenges being confronted, lessons learned and plans for the future.

## **OUR PURPOSE**

Program Results serve four purposes:

- To create a historical record of research, applied interventions and lessons learned for program staff, grantees and partners.
- To document and describe the findings and lessons of our grantees' work and encourage reflection on them.
- To communicate the work of the Foundation openly to the public.
- To assemble a comprehensive body of work serving many purposes, including education, guidance, research, evaluation and analysis.

## **HOW THE REPORTS ARE PRODUCED**

Program Results Reporting (PRR), a joint effort of the Foundation's Research & Evaluation and Communications Departments, produces these reports.

For the first eight-plus years, two RWJF senior officers—one an experienced evaluator and the other an experienced journalist—led the unit. In 2010, upon the retirement of the evaluator, the journalist took over full responsibility.

Once a project or program has completed its work, she assigns it to a writer who reviews reports and publications from the initiative. The writer also interviews the project/program director and, if appropriate, the Foundation's program officer, to glean lessons from the work and to clarify and illuminate important aspects of what was accomplished.

An editor/reviewer then reads the entire file of materials against the report to be certain that the writer has not misconstrued or incorrectly described the work, and edits the report accordingly. PRR ensures clarity and accuracy through further review by the unit's director, the RWJF program officer and then the program/ project director. The report then is copy edited and posted to our website.

A similar process is followed for Progress Reports and Grantee Profiles.

## A FOCUS ON LEARNING

It's our responsibility as America's largest philanthropy devoted to improving health and health care to share the results and findings of our grant-supported work and the lessons we've learned—about both, what works and what doesn't—to foster improved work in the field. Researchers, policy-makers, journalists, educators or future grantees will find that the Program Results are useful tools to illuminate relevance and understanding of a problem and the work that's been done by the partners who share our vision.

"... public admissions of failure are rare to the point of near nonexistence. But there is one major exception—the practice of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation of posting...reports on grants completed, as well as some grant clusters... some of which report unsuccessful initiatives, usually providing only the facts of the grant without expressing a judgment that particular grants failed."

The Foundation: A Great American Secret; How Private Wealth is Changing the World by Joel L. Fleishman