



This Van Makes Housecalls: Escorted Minivans Allow Care Providers to Access HIV-Infected Children Living in High-Risk Areas

Home care program for HIV-infected children in high-risk NYC neighborhoods

SUMMARY

Beginning in 1993, St. Mary's AIDS Home Care Program (HCP) developed the AIDS VAN (Vehicular Access to Neighborhoods) Program. It employs minivans, security escorts, and drivers to bring nursing care and rehabilitation therapy to HIV-positive and AIDS-diagnosed children living in neighborhoods deemed too unsafe for health care providers to access them otherwise.

Key Results

- Twenty patients living in unsafe and underserved areas of Brooklyn and Queens received AIDS VAN service.
- HCP expanded the service to 28 patients in the Bronx and lower Westchester County.

Funding

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) supported the program with two grants totaling \$98,300 from June 1993 to November 1998.

THE PROBLEM

HIV-positive and AIDS-diagnosed children usually wish to remain with their families in their current home or in a supportive residential environment while receiving medical and psychosocial care. But in some cases they live in areas that lack adequate medical services and that may be unsafe for medical personnel.

THE PROJECT

With two grants from RWJF beginning in 1993, St. Mary's AIDS Home Care Program (HCP) developed the AIDS VAN (Vehicular Access to Neighborhoods) Program, which employs minivans, security escorts, and drivers to bring nursing care and rehabilitation therapy to HIV-positive and AIDS-diagnosed children living in neighborhoods deemed too unsafe for health care providers to access them otherwise.

The first grant (ID# 021775) allowed HCP to serve children in Brooklyn and Queens, N.Y. The second grant (ID# 037211) allowed expansion of the service into the Bronx and lower Westchester County.

The HCP program enabled these children to remain at home or in supportive residential environments.

In addition, through a grant provided under the Ryan White CARE (Comprehensive AIDS Resource Emergency) Act, Title I, a federal program administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration, HCP expanded to provide a full range of mental health services to HIV/AIDS-diagnosed children in New York City, including those served by the VAN Program.

RWJF support also leveraged that of several other foundations, corporations, and private donors, according to the project director. They include, most notably, the Hearst Foundation (\$70,000), CRDA-Vogue Initiative (\$35,000), Liz Claiborne Foundation (\$20,000) and Hasbro Foundation (\$20,000), for a total of \$179,530. (See the [Appendix](#).)

The project relied on external funding (for vehicle purchase and escort/driver salaries) for only the first two years of the operation of each van. After that, the increased volume of Medicaid reimbursable services allowed it to become and remain self-supporting. HCP now operates four vans, two in Brooklyn/Queens, one in the Bronx/lower Westchester County, and one in Manhattan; each costs approximately \$130,000.

RESULTS

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- **HCP expanded the service to 28 patients in the Bronx and lower Westchester County.**

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Program area: Vulnerable Populations

APPENDIX

Additional Supporters of Expansion

(Current as of the end date of the program; provided by the program's management; not verified by RWJF.)

Additional Supporters of Expansion of the AIDS VAN Program into Brooklyn and Queens

- The Hearst Foundation, \$35,000
- The Laura B. Volger Foundation, \$2,500
- Gannett Outdoor, \$5,000
- CFDA-Vogue Initiative, \$35,000
- Con Edison, \$5,000
- Private donors, \$17,030
- Committee Concerned for Children, \$129,000

Additional Supporters of Expansion of the AIDS VAN Program into the Bronx and lower Westchester County

- The Hearst Foundation, \$35,000
- Liz Claiborne Foundation, \$20,000
- Hasbro Foundation, \$20,000
- HIP Foundation, \$5,000

Additional Supporters of Expansion into Manhattan

- E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, \$40,000
- Magic Johnson Foundation, \$10,000

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Current as of date of the report; as provided by the grantee organization; not verified by RWJF; items not available from RWJF.)

Print Coverage

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"Helping Hand for Poor Kids with AIDS," in the *New York Daily News*, October 24, 1997.