

## **Uninsured: Projected Need for Specialty Care**

***What is the unmet need for specialty care and how are uninsured patients getting care now?***

**This study is being completed in two phases.**

### **Phase I: Projection of Specialty Demand by the Uninsured (2007)**

#### **Summary:**

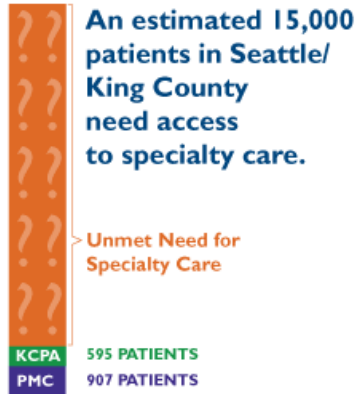
How many specialty referrals are needed for the uninsured population of King County? PHPDA contracted with MCPP consultants to review more than 20 different studies that looked at the demand for specialty care in populations of 100,000. These studies reflected a variety of delivery models in different locations as well as nationwide estimates of the physician workforce. After arraying the studies from low to high projections the 50th percentile or median was selected as the comparison point for this analysis.

Using this staffing benchmark, MCPP projected the number of full time providers needed in key specialties as applied to the population of 127,192 low-income patients reported in 2006 by Seattle King-County Public Health. This established a projection of specialty providers needed for the 2006 safety net population.

Next, using productivity targets based on operations at a public, multi-specialty physician organization, the demand for FTEs by specialty was converted into an annual projection of visits per specialty.

Lastly, using Pacific Medical Center's estimate of approximately *three visits per year per specialty referral*, the visits projection was restated as the projected number of annual referrals by specialty. This process was also carried out for each clinic in addition to the total safety net population.

**Results:** MCPP projected that the uninsured patients at safety net clinics in King County will need more than 15,000 referrals for specialty care each year.



*There are an estimated 15,000 patients in Seattle/ King County in need of access to specialty care, based on projections from the 2007 System Study. King County Project Access and Pacific Medical Centers were able to provide specialty care services for approximately 10% of those patients.*

## **Phase II: Projection of Specialty Referrals Needed in King County**

**Summary:** PHPDA contracted with Milliman Consulting to produce estimates of the physician staff required (by specialty) to meet the health care needs of an uninsured adult population in King County with family income at or below 200% of the [Federal Poverty Line](#) (FPL). The PHPDA then retained Heineccius Consulting to develop a projection of specialty referrals needed by the uninsured.

**Results:** Results from this work are expected in January 2010.