

**REQUEST FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION**

**Version 6/10/19**

Completed by County Counselor's Office:

Res/Ord No.: 5401

Sponsor(s): Theresa Cass Galvin

Date: September 14, 2020

<p><b>SUBJECT</b></p>	<p>Action Requested  <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ordinance</p> <p>Project/Title: Appropriating \$5,590,000 in CARES Act funding for use by Swope Health Services, KC CARE, and Samuel U. Rodgers to make modest, but critical facility improvements, needed supplies and equipment, and reimburse for expanded staffing needs to address the current COVID-19 pandemic response and authorizing the County Executive to execute an agreement with each of the above agencies for the purpose of addressing the COVID—19 needs of our safety net providers.</p>														
<p><b>BUDGET INFORMATION</b>  <i>To be completed By Requesting Department and Finance</i></p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Amount authorized by this legislation this fiscal year:</td> <td>\$5,590,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Amount previously authorized this fiscal year:</td> <td>\$0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total amount authorized after this legislative action:</td> <td>\$5,590,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Amount budgeted for this item * (including transfers):</td> <td>\$5,590,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Source of funding (name of fund) and account code number: FROM: 040-9999-32810 CARES Act Fund, Undesignated Fund Balance</td> <td><b>FROM ACCT:</b> \$5,590,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TO: <b>CARES Act Fund</b> 040-7601-56790 Swope Health Services – Other Contractual Services 040-7704-56790 KC CARE Health Services – Other Contractual Services 040-7713-56790 Samuel U Rodgers Health Center– Other Contractual Services</td> <td><b>TO ACCT:</b> \$3,400,000 \$1,165,000 <u>\$1,025,000</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>Total:</b></td> <td><b>\$5,590,000</b></td> </tr> </table> <p>* If account includes additional funds for other expenses, total budgeted in the account is: \$</p> <p><b>OTHER FINANCIAL INFORMATION:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No budget impact (no fiscal note required)  <input type="checkbox"/> Term and Supply Contract (funds approved in the annual budget); estimated value and use of contract:  Department: _____ Estimated Use: _____</p> <p>Prior Year Budget (if applicable): N/A  Prior Year Actual Amount Spent (if applicable): N/A</p>	Amount authorized by this legislation this fiscal year:	\$5,590,000	Amount previously authorized this fiscal year:	\$0	Total amount authorized after this legislative action:	\$5,590,000	Amount budgeted for this item * (including transfers):	\$5,590,000	Source of funding (name of fund) and account code number: FROM: 040-9999-32810 CARES Act Fund, Undesignated Fund Balance	<b>FROM ACCT:</b> \$5,590,000	TO: <b>CARES Act Fund</b> 040-7601-56790 Swope Health Services – Other Contractual Services 040-7704-56790 KC CARE Health Services – Other Contractual Services 040-7713-56790 Samuel U Rodgers Health Center– Other Contractual Services	<b>TO ACCT:</b> \$3,400,000 \$1,165,000 <u>\$1,025,000</u>	<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$5,590,000</b>
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<p><b>PRIOR LEGISLATION</b></p>	<p>Prior ordinances and (date):  Prior resolutions and (date):</p>														
<p><b>CONTACT INFORMATION</b></p>	<p>RLA drafted by Troy Schulte, County Administrator at 881-1079</p>														
<p><b>REQUEST SUMMARY</b></p>	<p>This ordinance appropriates a total of \$5,590,000 in CARES Act funding to the Jackson County safety net of Federal Qualified Health Center (FQHC) for the purpose reimbursing for COVID-19 eligible expenses that have been or will be incurred by the safety net health centers. Swope Health will receive \$3.4 million for necessary building modifications, behavioral health needs of Jackson County residents and COVID-19 screening and testing costs, or other costs deemed reasonable under Federal CARES Act guidelines. KC CARE Health Services will receive \$1,165,000 for necessary COVID-19 building modification, equipment and supplies, or other costs deemed reasonable under Federal CARES Act guidelines. In addition, KC CARE will receive funding for expanded staffing costs associated with the pandemic response. Samuel U. Rodgers will receive \$1,025,000 for necessary building modifications and transportation support of Jackson County residents, or other costs deemed reasonable under Federal CARES Act guidelines. The ordinance further authorizes the County Executive to enter into agreements with each of the above agencies for reimbursement of these costs.</p>														

CLEARANCE	<input type="checkbox"/> Tax Clearance Completed (Purchasing & Department) <input type="checkbox"/> Business License Verified (Purchasing & Department) N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 6 Compliance - Affirmative Action/Prevailing Wage (County Auditor's Office)	
COMPLIANCE	<input type="checkbox"/> MBE Goals <input type="checkbox"/> WBE Goals N/A <input type="checkbox"/> VBE Goals	
ATTACHMENTS		
REVIEW	Department Director: <i>Chief Administrative Officer: [Signature]</i>	Date: 8-31-2020
	Finance (Budget Approval): <i>If applicable</i>	APPROVED By Mark Lang at 12:50 pm, Aug 27, 2020
	Division Manager: <i>Tracy M. Schulte</i>	Date: 8-31-2020
	County Counselor's Office: <i>Bryan Cornejo</i>	Date: 7/4/20

Fiscal Information (to be verified by Budget Office in Finance Department)

- This expenditure was included in the annual budget.
- Funds for this were encumbered from the \_\_\_\_\_ Fund in \_\_\_\_\_.
- There is a balance otherwise unencumbered to the credit of the appropriation to which the expenditure is chargeable and there is a cash balance otherwise unencumbered in the treasury to the credit of the fund from which payment is to be made each sufficient to provide for the obligation herein authorized.

- Funds sufficient for this expenditure will be/were appropriated by Ordinance # \_\_\_\_\_
- X Funds sufficient for this appropriation are available from the source indicated below.

Account Number:	Account Title:	Amount Not to Exceed:
040-9999-32810	CARES Act Fund, Undesignated Fund Balance	\$5,590,000

- This award is made on a need basis and does not obligate Jackson County to pay any specific amount. The availability of funds for specific purchases will, of necessity, be determined as each using agency places its order.
- This legislative action does not impact the County financially and does not require Finance/Budget approval.

## Supplemental Appropriation Request Jackson County, Missouri

Funds sufficient for this appropriation are available from the source indicated below.

Date: August 27, 2020

Ord # 5401

Department / Division	Character/Description	From	To
<b>040 CARES Act</b>			
9999 -	32810 Undesignated Fund Balance	\$ 5,590,000	\$ -
7601 Swope Health Services	56790 Other Contractual Services		3,400,000
7704 KC CARE Clinic - AIDS	56790 Other Contractual Services		1,165,000
7713 Samuel Rodgers Health Center	56790 Other Contractual Services		1,025,000
		<u>\$ 5,590,000</u>	<u>\$ 5,590,000</u>

**APPROVED**  
By Mark Lang at 12:50 pm, Aug 27, 2020

Budget Office



**SAMUEL U. RODGERS**  
HEALTH CENTER



May 18, 2020

To: The County Executive & Members of the Jackson County Legislature  
415 E 12th Street  
2nd Floor  
Kansas City, MO 64106

From: Mr. Jeron L. Ravin – CEO, Swope Health Services  
Mr. Wil Franklin – CEO, Kansas City CARE Clinic dba KC CARE Health Center  
Dr. Faisal Khan – CEO, Samuel U. Rodgers Health Center

**RE: Funding for Critical Health Care Safety Net Needs in Jackson County, MO**

Dear County Executive & Jackson County Legislators,

On behalf of the Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) listed above, each members of Jackson County's safety net, we are writing you to request immediate and favorable consideration of our immediate funding needs to support critical safety net healthcare in Jackson County.

The three FQHCs listed above collectively serve 54,206 men, women, and children in Jackson County. These patients utilize our quality medical, dental, and behavioral health services delivered by knowledgeable, qualified, and selflessly committed teams of providers and support staff.

A common misconception associated with FQHCs is that we are flush with federal funds and therefore do not need local and state assistance. In actuality, federal funds comprise approximately just one-fourth of our total operating budgets. The vast majority of our budgets are funded through provision of billable medical services (Medicaid, Medicare, Private Insurance, 340B Program reimbursement) and fundraising.

The COVID-19 crisis has had a potentially devastating impact on our financial health. Revenue streams from billable services have plummeted as patient encounters have necessarily reduced. While emergency federal aid has helped keep us afloat, it is barely enough to meet three consecutive payroll periods. Our staff (doctors, nurses, dentists, ancillary staff, etc.) are our most valuable asset. Keeping them engaged in patient care is vital to the health and wellbeing of all Jackson County and Greater Kansas City residents that we collectively serve.

Furthermore, COVID-19 has already permanently altered the world of medical, dental, and behavioral health practice. Hospital Systems, FQHCs, and Private Practices all across the country are having to adjust to a new reality – one that demands a redesign of our patient flow systems (entry and exit points, waiting rooms, dental operatories, etc.) – to mitigate risks for the spread of COVID-19. As we head in to fall of 2020 and the arrival of the annual influenza season, infection prevention and control redesign measures will come into even sharper focus as a mission-critical need.

The world of dental practice has been irretrievably altered by COVID-19. The pandemic has given birth to "Dentistry 2.0." A Dental Operator is one of the major aerosol producing areas in any hospital or health center. All dental procedures were shut down in mid-March 2020 based on guidance from the American Dental Association and the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, with the exception of emergency dental at KC CARE. As you may imagine, this has resulted in adult and pediatric patients going without much needed preventive dental care for several months. As we consider the necessary modifications needed to reopen our dental practices, the safety of our staff, our patients, and their families remains our foremost priority. To that end, you will see that our funding requests include buildout to ensure that we minimize the risk of COVID-19 exposure in our dental facilities.

Enclosed, you will find each FQHC's separate funding request. The budgets and narratives are included for your review and consideration. We request three separate contracts (one for each FQHC).

We also propose a joint set of performance metrics to reflect the investment made by Jackson County in the health and wellbeing of its residents. Each FQHC will submit biannual reports to include the following outcomes:

- The number of Jackson County residents served at each site for each agency.
- Jackson County dental patients (adult and pediatric) and their quality of care outcomes.
- Jackson County diabetic patients and their quality measures for diabetes care such as Hemoglobin A1c, Podiatry care, etc.
- Jackson County residents who are treated for cardiovascular disease, including hypertension, and their clinical outcome measures.
- Jackson County children who receive their well-child visits and immunizations and the clinical quality measures associated with those services.

We will gladly present further testimony and justification to support these funding requests in front of any legislative committee requested.

Our health centers remain ready to serve the people of Jackson County. We anticipate and are preparing for an increase in the number of uninsured and/or Medicaid-dependent patients we will serve, as a result of the economic fallout from COVID-19. Now more than ever before, our healthcare safety net needs your help. If we do not rise to this challenge together, we will fail our community.

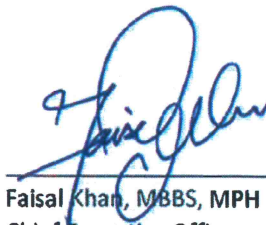
Sincerely,



\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeron L. Ravin, JD  
Chief Executive Officer  
Swope Health Services



\_\_\_\_\_  
Wil Franklin  
Chief Executive Officer  
KC CARE Health Center



\_\_\_\_\_  
Faisal Khan, MBBS, MPH  
Chief Executive Officer  
Samuel U. Rodgers Health Center

### **Proposal Summary**

Samuel U. Rodgers Health Center, Swope Health Services, and KC CARE Health Center are three community health centers (CHC) serving the Greater Kansas City region. Community health centers are a network of safety net healthcare providers that not only fill an important role in the active response to the coronavirus pandemic, but will also critically serve the individuals impacted by its economic repercussions. Millions of Americans have lost their jobs and subsequently their families' health insurance benefits and livelihoods. We now face the challenge of preparing to serve a wave of uninsured individuals in need of healthcare.

During the COVID-19 crisis, community health centers face many challenges including: responding to a critical increase in local need for affordable healthcare as patients lose jobs and access to health insurance; staying prepared as stay-at-home orders are lifted, with many forecasting model showing rising COVID-19 infection rates; reacting to steep declines in patient visits that impact patient revenue, despite increased telehealth visits; and addressing the need for increased behavioral health services as COVID-19 impacts all of us and has heavy implications for people suffering from mental illness and substance use disorders.

Below you will see requests from each of these CHCs detailing the renovations, equipment, and more needed to respond to these challenges and to fortify the safety net for Jackson County residents.



## Background

Kansas City CARE Clinic dba KC CARE Health Center (KC CARE) became a Federally Qualified Health Center in 2015 and serves the low-income, medically underserved target population primarily from 91 zip codes in the Kansas City, Missouri area that includes Jackson County, as well as some areas in neighboring counties to the north and south, and areas in Kansas.

KC CARE exists to promote health and wellness by providing quality care, access, research, and education to the underserved and all people in our community, with or without insurance. KC CARE has four sites in urban Kansas City, Missouri, with the main location situated in Midtown on Broadway Blvd. and additional sites at Research Medical Campus on Meyer, in the historical northeast on Independence Ave., and Homeroom Health at 30th Street and Troost.

Although known widely in the community for our longstanding primary care services and HIV work, KC CARE is increasingly recognized for its multifaceted, integrated care in its commitment to treat the whole patient, not just their conditions. By offering co-located and integrated primary, dental, and behavioral healthcare enhanced through medical social work, case management, peer support, and patient navigation, KC CARE truly serves as the medical home for many of Kansas City's most underserved individuals.

KC CARE offers quality, affordable, accessible, integrated healthcare to those who need it most in the Kansas City area. As an FQHC and safety net provider, we are unique in our commitment to the uninsured. In 2019, KC CARE served 5,984 uninsured individuals, comprising 50% of all patients, and 65% of billable visits. KC CARE also served 8,964 Jackson County residents with and without insurance.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, KC CARE has made significant changes to our operations to continue providing safe, quality healthcare to the at-risk populations we serve, as well as a safe work environment for our staff working on the front line of the COVID-19 crisis. These include rapid implementation of telehealth technology, visitor screening, triage practices and facility layout, and requiring remote work for non-patient-facing employees. Additionally, as a community health center, it is our responsibility to relieve the burden and costs placed on local hospitals as COVID-19 causes new challenges.

Since March 15, 2020, 611,642 people have filed for unemployment in Missouri, over three times more than were filed during the whole of 2019. As a safety net healthcare provider, we must quickly adapt to meet the needs of the growing numbers of uninsured in Kansas City. Access to affordable healthcare has never been more critical. KC CARE is innovating to ensure that all Kansas Citians have access to quality, affordable, accessible healthcare in times of crisis and beyond. While quickly adapting to CDC guidance on providing a safe care environment for both patients and staff, we also rapidly expanded our telehealth offerings, allowing our patients to see a doctor from the safety of their homes. In just one month, telehealth appointments increased by over 400%. Since many of our patients have chronic

health conditions or are immunocompromised, uninterrupted access to ongoing care is critical for their health and wellbeing. Offering telehealth allows them to access care without risk of COVID-19 or another exposure.

These difficult times call us to do more, and we seek support to do just that. KC CARE operates on a razor-thin margin during business as usual. KC CARE, along with the other members of Jackson County's healthcare safety net, must act quickly to prepare for the next phase of the COVID-19 crisis. Our request covers: 1) COVID-19 Renovation, Equipment and Supplies, 2) Expanded Staffing for COVID-19 Capacity Needs, and 3) Mobile Pediatric Dental Services.

### **Justification**

#### *COVID-19 Renovation, Equipment, and Supplies*

KC CARE has suspended all non-emergent dental services in keeping with recommendations from the American Dental Association (ADA). As government mandates lift and dentists reopen practices, KC CARE continues to follow ADA guidelines in the Return to Work Interim Guidance Toolkit and COVID-19 Hazard Assessment with recommendations before, during and after appointments to protect dentists, patients and staff. As we reopen, KC CARE will need to make minor alterations and renovations to ensure our staff and patients' health. Expenses include an air purifier, intraoral camera and minor space alterations to provide greater protection from respiratory droplets. Additionally, PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) is an ongoing need for oral health providers and technicians.

In preparation, not only for current and new patients, but for the strong likelihood of another COVID-19 outbreak in the fall, KC CARE is acquiring PPE, making technology upgrades and capital improvements. KC CARE recently received a small grant from the FCC to improve our ability to serve patients through telehealth for things like software licenses. However, if we want to be able to fully implement this software technology, we will also need hardware upgrades, including keyboards, monitors and computer mice, IT infrastructure like backbone and drop cabling, and PC mounting equipment. A pharmacy computer monitor to allow patients in the waiting room to maintain social distancing when picking up prescriptions. KC CARE will also use funding to ensure that this telehealth technology (both software and hardware) is suitable for increased telehealth encounter volume to partially support our IT costs and patient tracking software. Telehealth changes made now can continue to help patients even after COVID-19 is less of a threat, especially for those that struggle with transportation, time limitations, and other boundaries associated with physically getting to a doctor's appointment.

Capital improvements include the planning and creation of temporary and permanent wall structures, paneling, and alterations to maximize our small space and increase organizational capacity while still adhering to social distancing guidelines. All these changes will be necessary to KC CARE's future success as we offer quality, affordable, integrated health services to everyone in the community with the promise of dignity and personalized care.

These changes will help KC CARE to serve approximately 8,500 Jackson County residents safely in person and via telehealth.

#### *Expanded Staffing for COVID-19 Capacity Needs*

Preparing for an increase in demand for behavioral health services and for uninsured individuals are key components to being Kansas City's safety net in this time. Behavioral health research has established links between social isolation and stress to poor mental health; polling from April shows 45% of adults report their mental health has been negatively impacted, citing stress from job loss and fear of getting COVID-19. Frontline workers are also likely to experience burnout and increased anxiety due to the physical, mental and emotional demands of their jobs. The decline and slow recovery of our economy



has heavy implications for those who lost their jobs and with those jobs, their healthcare insurance. Financial analysts state that the hope for a “V” shaped recovery is already gone due to the permanent closures of many small businesses who did not receive government aid within the first few months of the COVID-19 crisis.

In response to this anticipated increase in demand, KC CARE seeks to hire a Behavioral Health Case Manager, a COVID-19 Response Social Worker (SW) or Community Health Worker (CHW), and a Medical Assistant. A Behavioral Health Case Manager would deliver mental healthcare for conditions like depression, anxiety, and PTSD. A COVID-19 Response SW or CHW would be assigned to patients with history of COVID 19 infection to help navigate complex health needs that result. A Medical Assistant would be critical to increasing screening capacity, especially in the evening hours.

#### *Mobile Pediatric Dental Services*

This fall, KC CARE will launch a Mobile Pediatric Dental Unit (MPDU) to provide critical oral healthcare services to underserved and uninsured children in urban Kansas City, Missouri. The MPDU is a logical expansion of services offered at Homeroom Health, KC CARE’s newest location, which opened in 2019, offering integrated medical, dental, and behavioral healthcare for children, teens, and young adults (ages 0-24 years). By bringing quality care to children at school or other locations in the community, we will make oral healthcare accessible and reduce barriers to care for Kansas City families.

KC CARE’s MPDU can help reach the projected increase of children in need of dental care this fall due to COVID-19. KC CARE can bring the MPDU into the community and provide safe, quality dental care to children on the unit itself, making it uniquely poised to meet this critical need – adapting as the public health situation does. We will also provide an opportunity for families to connect with comprehensive, integrated health services at Homeroom Health and KC CARE’s three other locations.

KC CARE projects the MPDU will serve 900 pediatric patients through 1,200 encounters with a dentist and dental assistant within a 12-month period. We also will measure and track the following outcomes:

- Total number and percent of children ages 6-9 at moderate or high risk for cavities who receive dental sealants on one or more of their first permanent molar teeth. At our dental offices, we achieved our baseline goal of 50%. KC CARE would like to see the MPDU follow the same trajectory.
- Total number and percent of children who receive an oral examination. Goal: 100%.
- Total number and percent of children identified for follow-up treatment with a dental provider; we estimate that 50% of children will need follow-up due to extensive dental needs, including fillings, crowns, etc.

KC CARE has an in-house Quality Improvement (QI) team with demonstrated sound data collection and evaluation activities and multi-level recordkeeping and outcomes tracking that meet federal, state, and local standards. The QI team reports monthly numbers of patients served, UDS encounters, units of service, etc. Staff/volunteers use eCW to record vital statistics, diagnoses, procedures, patient demographics, etc., at each visit.

#### **Budget**

- COVID-19 Renovation, Equipment, and Supplies: \$795,739
- Expanded Staffing for COVID-19 Response and Recovery: \$175,286
- Mobile Pediatric Dental Services: \$192,467

Total: \$1,163,492



# SAMUEL U. RODGERS HEALTH CENTER

## Background

The Samuel U. Rodgers Health Center is a Federally Qualified Health Center located in Kansas City. We have served the people of the greater Kansas City area for over 50 years since our founding by the legendary Dr. Samuel U. Rodgers. Today, we operate out of four locations in the greater Kansas City area and serve 25,000 registered patients.

As with all Federally Qualified Health Centers, a significant part of patient population includes the underserved, the uninsured, the under-insured, the indigent and the very poor. The Samuel U. Rodgers Health Center is also unique in the sense that we serve a very diverse patient population. Nearly 70 percent of our patients are best served in Spanish while there are 40 other languages spoken by the remaining 30 percent of our patients. We serve a significant population of refugees, new migrants and asylum seekers.

It goes without saying that the need for sustained high quality primary health services (medical and dental) for men, women and children has never been greater.

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit us hard as an agency. We have been forced to close and severely limit medical clinics and shut down all dental operatories owing to the high risk of aerosol generation.

This has been a devastating blow to our finances which rely very heavily on revenue generated from billable services for Medicaid, Medicare and Private Insurance. Only, 1/4<sup>th</sup> of our total operating revenue comes from the Federal government in the form of an annual grant through the Health Resources and Services Administration. The remaining 3/4<sup>ths</sup> of our operating budget depends on billable services and fund raising.

The sharp drop in revenue from billable services has forced us to make sharp cuts in our budget. While the emergency relief funding from the federal government has provided us some breathing room, it will only last for two –three consecutive pay periods. If we are forced to lay off or furlough staff, it will be an irreparable catastrophe for us in terms of meeting the desperate needs of our patients through this pandemic and beyond.

Furthermore, the pandemic has forced the redesign of critical clinical service areas such as dental operatories to incorporate risk mitigation structural changes such as negative pressure systems, airtight doors, Ultraviolet Light systems to constantly disinfect clinical examination rooms and dental operatories etc.

These are the undeniable stark new realities of the pandemic world and will remain a feature of medical and dental practice for decades to come.

We are submitting this request to Jackson County for favorable consideration of our needs related to the issues described above so that we may continue to serve the people of Jackson County as well as the greater Kansas City area.

Our request covers two areas of need: *“COVID-19 Redesign”* and *“Transportation Support”*

## **Justification**

### *COVID-19 Redesign (of our clinical areas and dental operatories)*

The pandemic has forced all health care facilities (including us) to fundamentally re-consider the design of their clinical workplaces, examination rooms, patient waiting areas and perhaps most importantly dental operatories.

As we begin to resume dental care services, the greatest threat to the health and well-being of our invaluable team and patients comes from the high-risk aerosol generating procedures that are a routine part of dental practice.

In order to find standardized Centers for Disease Control & Prevention recommended risk mitigation designs, we reached out to the St. Louis County Department of Public Health to learn more about the negative pressure system they installed in their state-of-the-art Tuberculosis Clinic. The vendor, Johnson Controls, is a nationally recognized authority on negative pressure systems for clinical areas.

These systems essentially create a negative air pressure gradient in each room so that all aerosols get sucked out of the room and are vented out of the building away from any inflow air ducts.

Coupled with the aggressive use of personal protective equipment and disinfecting Ultraviolet Light, these provide a formidable risk mitigation platform to protect our patients, their families and our staff against COVID-19 as well as all other aerosolized infections such as influenza.

Since the Samuel U. Rodgers Health Center serves a large number of refugees, asylum seekers and new immigrants from resource poor countries, these systems also serve to protect against the risk of Tuberculosis infection. The overwhelming majority of all Tuberculosis cases in the United States occur in foreign born individuals especially migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

Installation of these negative pressure systems at our two major locations (Euclid Avenue and Cabot Westside) will require the redesign and buildout of the existing HVAC duct system that runs the length of the dental operatories in a linear fashion. Those were ideally designed for pre-COVID-19 world.

We remain highly concerned that the gaps in dental and medical care (particularly pediatric dental and medical care) will result in a significant decline in all health status indicators across the Kansas City region. Fear of COVID-19 is driving people to stay away from much needed medical and dental care. Fighting that fear and reassuring individuals and families that it is safe to return to the fold of primary care requires the expeditious redesign of our clinical areas to mitigate the risk of COVID-19.

At Samuel Rodgers Health Center the total Jackson County patients seen in 2019 across all our sites and services are 15,200. This redesign will be critical to these patients.

### *Circulation/Transportation Services*

The pandemic has created tremendous economic hardship for our patients across the region including Jackson County. As individuals and families have struggled with the loss of income and residential and food insecurity, they have also encountered a formidable transportation barrier to get to their scheduled medical and dental appointments. Transportation remains a significant barrier for our patients.

In calendar year 2018, Rodgers Health spent \$43,688.24 to provide 3,747 no-cost health care rides for 481 Jackson County residents. The average cost per ride so that Jackson County residents could access quality health care was \$11.66.

Rodgers Health initiated its Circulation transportation project to help eliminate transportation as a significant barrier to health care access for patients. Circulation uses a software platform to provide HIPAA-compliant rides to and from Health Center sites for patients. In addition to primary care, oral health, and behavioral health appointments, Rodgers Health provides rides for Imaging, laboratory, WIC, and Healthy Start appointments, and to enable patients to pick up prescriptions from our Pharmacy.

Currently, we offer free transportation to patients living within 10 miles of the Health Center practice they need to visit. In 2020, we will expand the parameters so that Jackson County residents living within 15 miles of Rodgers Health will have access to no-cost transportation. We anticipate that the expanded transportation zones will allow us to offer free rides to a minimum of 75 additional Jackson County residents.

**Budget**

- Installation of Negative Pressure System in dental operatories: \$600,000
- Redesign and rebuild of the HVAC System for Euclid Avenue & Cabot Westside to accommodate negative pressure systems: \$350,000
- Transportation Support for Jackson County Residents: \$75,000

Total: \$1,025,000



## Background

Swope Health continues a robust response to the pandemic: 1) testing at the main location as well as at community sites, and, 2) continuing essential care and services including telehealth, and updating its website daily, with reader-friendly, comprehensive information for every area resident. Swope Health serves the most medically vulnerable, nearly 44,000 patients annually including 30,000 Jackson County residents and among them, 10,544 uninsured Jackson Countians in 2019. According to the US Census projections, in 2019 there are over 700,000 individuals residing in Jackson and 10-15% were uninsured or underinsured. Swope Health patient numbers show more than 40% of the most vulnerable Jackson County residents received care from the organization in 2019.

The main building on Swope Parkway is over 30 years old; staff is working diligently to reconfigure programs and services for social distancing and the safety of patients, clients, and staff in accordance with public health mandates. The Independence satellite clinic in eastern Jackson County continues operations as a "well site", open to those in need of health care who are asymptomatic for COVID-19.

As with other safety net providers and all health care systems, COVID-19 is impacting Swope Health financially. Patient revenue is the most sustainable income source, principally MO and KS Medicaid (both fee-for service and managed care), Medicare, commercial insurance and uninsured patients' payments. Total patient revenue derived from all sources was expected to account for 37% of annual revenue. Medicaid, Medicare, private insurance, and patient payments was anticipated to exceed \$19 million by the end of 2020. Through no fault of the agency, patient revenue fell dramatically in March and April, with further reductions projected, potentially reaching into the fall of 2020. Swope Health remains committed despite this loss and the cancellation of its sole fundraising event as a result of COVID-19 closures. The health center is turning to Jackson County for much needed assistance to serve the county's most vulnerable population and most detrimentally impacted by the disease.

## Justification

### *Capital Expenditures*

Swope Health continues to care for Jackson County's most vulnerable population, people of color: 53%, of Swope Health patients reported Black/African American race; nearly 19% of patients identify as Hispanic/Latino ethnicity and approximately 5% of patients reported another racial minority. Among all patients, 41% are uninsured with this percentile anticipated to increase dramatically due to the unprecedented increase in pandemic-related unemployment and exacerbated by the continued decrease in Affordable Care Act Marketplace enrollment.

From the Associated Press, "[Health conditions that exist at higher rates in the black community -- obesity, diabetes and asthma -- make African Americans more susceptible to the virus.](#) They also are more likely to be uninsured."

Swope Health must ensure vulnerable population of Jackson County residents continue to receive health care to the benefit of our entire region. Renovation to the lobby and within the aging building at the Swope Health main site within Adult Medicine Clinic, Dental, the Pharmacy, Radiology, and Optometry,

is essential to social distancing and safe provision of care. Within the Independence clinic, health care providers are currently spread throughout different areas of the clinic, negatively impacting workflow, patient wait time, and real time health team communications. Small spaces throughout the building will not allow for social distancing. Two exam rooms cannot be utilized for translation services via the Language Line due to poor acoustics. Planned renovation will better utilize the space to fit current patient care and workflow requirements.

These capital expenditures will benefit future patients served in Jackson County through a safer health center configuration, designed to mitigate transmittable disease and updated for patient ease and comfort. Renovated spaces will comply with the new recommended practices in the health care field. Better patient flow will reduce wait times and promote prompt care, increasing patient satisfaction and reducing patient anxiety, with stress already high per the behavioral impact of COVID-19. Departments will continue to operate during most of the renovation at both sites with minor disruptions in patient care. Projects identified include:

- Main site: 1) Renovating the entry areas to reduce congregating and update waiting areas, 2) Relocate the pharmacy from the front entryway to reduce traffic and allow for a drive thru pharmacy further reducing patients sitting in waiting areas for prescriptions, and, 3) Renovating patient waiting areas in clinics as feasible and adding plexiglass enclosures for registration and security desks.
- Independence clinic: 1) Creating a 7-person bullpen for enhanced real time medical team communications, improving workflow efficiencies **and** accountability, and ensuring critical collaboration and physician expertise during patient triage and/or for unusual or complex patient presentations, and, 2) Renovating two exam rooms for patient flow and sound quality when utilizing translation services.

#### *Behavioral Health*

The Swope Health Behavioral Health Department must prepare for an influx of Jackson Countians with mental illness. The Behavioral Health Department has continued to provide care and services to those in need, using telehealth and continuing in-person appointments with some of the area's residents with severe and persistent mental illnesses. As one of few Federally Qualified Community Health Centers in the nation that is also a designated Community Mental Health Center, comprehensive behavioral health and addiction care and treatment represent almost fifty percent of all services provided. Prior to COVID-19, the Swope Health Independence

Clinic noted annually increasing rates of eastern Jackson County residents who report opioid and meth addictions. In addition to telehealth services, Independence Clinic clients are referred to appropriate treatment in Jackson County. Mental health needs and substance abuse are anticipated to rise exponentially as individuals and families grapple with unemployment, financial hardships, illness and the death of loved ones, and increasing rates of domestic violence and trauma.

Per the Washington Post, research confirms a likely increase in suicides, overdose deaths and substance use disorders during and post COVID-19 yet only a very small portion of federal funding was allocated for mental health.

Leading the field, Swope Health began providing telehealth in 2018 and was seeing continual growth in acceptance and demand. This spring, Swope Health's telehealth was already in place with trained staff and digitized consent forms in English and Spanish. Support for additional IT staff and equipment is needed for telehealth and Swope Health has identified a new platform, Doxie, much more user-friendly and with a sole requirement of a smart phone, designed to be compatible with the work of therapists, counselors, and other mental health professionals. In addition, more care coordinators must be added

to help individuals and families access social supports and encourage those in need to seek therapy and care. The demand for Behavioral Health and substance abuse treatment and services is growing; Swope Health must be prepared to offer the help desperately needed, during and post COVID-19.

#### *COVID-19 Screening and Testing*

Swope Health is testing on-site at its main location and sending compassionate health professionals into the community to test residents throughout Jackson County. Screening of all presenting at the health center must continue.

The main health center location is providing drive-through and walk-up testing. Swope Health continues to send trained staff into the community to test for COVID-19, answering the call after numerous requests throughout Jackson County, despite limited SHS testing resources and Personal Protective Equipment. This week, Swope Health is providing free drive-up and walk-up testing at the Kansas City Public Library- Trails West Branch with additional testing throughout Jackson County in the next seven months, including senior centers and within the faith-based community. Testing will continue as long as Swope Health has the supplies to provide them. Unlike some agencies that have had to shutter operations, **all** uninsured, low-income individuals with health care needs will be welcomed into Swope Health.

Requested testing funds will support efforts for the next seven months to conduct 50 tests daily and includes an outreach team for tests in the community, the cost of essential IT equipment, and PPE. Funding will also support screening: all who enter the Swope Health main building are immediately screened with temperatures recorded. Those who can proceed are directed to the appropriate clinic and staff are screened before reporting to serve patients and clients. Funds will support four trained screeners, masks, sanitizers, and thermometers, as well as added compliance staff for seven months. These efforts are critical to mitigating the spread of COVID-19. If federal funds are secured for some testing and supplies, that portion of requested support would be allocated toward the purchase of equipment for on-site rapid test analysis in-house at both the main site and Independence clinic.

#### *Physician and Nurse Support Line*

Swope Health proposes the Jackson County Physician & Nurse Support Line, to assist our colleagues grappling with the pandemic. Modeled after the national program serving physicians, Swope Health will open a support phone line to provide support and wellness to Jackson County physicians as well as nurse practitioners and other nursing staff during and after the COVID-19 epidemic. Swope Health will assemble a cadre of psychiatrist colleagues who are uniquely trained in mental wellness and with similar shared experiences of the profession. Free and confidential support will be provided to Jackson County health care providers. Expenditures include one-time startup costs, a program director/recruiter, a small stipend to psychiatrists, and nominal expenses to increase awareness of the available support.

#### **Budget**

- Capital Expenditures: \$2,259,933
- Behavioral Health: \$170,000
- COVID-19 Screening and Testing: \$768,000
- Physician and Nurse Support Line: \$200,000

TOTAL: \$3,397,933