COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund
Medical Care and Access Working Group

The Medical Care and Access Working Group seeks to help support the health needs of direct service providers and impacted populations without healthcare access. Of interest are vulnerable sub-populations, including older adults, people experiencing homelessness, people who are immunocompromised, low-income communities, and other marginalized populations. In our conversations with our nonprofit partners and stakeholders, we have identified several of the most current critical needs specifically for medical care and access.

Immediate needs center around support for:

1. Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and other community-based health care providers to cover their financial obligations and enable them to provide primary care services in underserved areas; and
2. Acquisition and equitable distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE); and
3. Services targeting relief and assistance for health care providers and other essential frontline staff, including transportation assistance, childcare assistance, meal assistance, and mental health and wellness support.

Given our current knowledge of immediate needs for providers and the medical care community, the Medical Care and Access Working Group’s initial funding priorities will include:

- Financial support to licensed community-based health care providers (FQHCs), whose businesses are struggling due to social distancing mandates, to pay for expenses like rent, utilities, and staff-related costs.
- The purchase of equipment, including software, for health care providers and patients in order to conduct online learning, telemedicine, case management, or other means of support for access to medical care.
- Efforts to assist workers or businesses in creating temporary and immediate opportunities to support the region’s medical community, including centralized acquisition of PPE, development of blood donation centers, and providing individual support services for health care providers.

Our immediate goal is to provide rapid support for health providers and impacted populations with limited healthcare access during this initial phase of the pandemic and social distancing. As the situation unfolds, we expect the working group’s priorities to evolve and shift. In addition to our work outlined above, we are coordinating with federal, county, and local government responses to complement and align our efforts. We are also working with our advocacy partners to ensure that what we are learning about the needs of our region’s health care providers and the vulnerable groups impacted by the COVID-19 crisis are included in the response.