

# The Fund's Mission, Strategy, and Goals

Five years ago, the Fund's board of directors adopted a set of goals to guide the foundation's work through July 2000. The goals selected at that time reflected current thinking about health and social issues that have historically been of concern to the Fund, as well as the directors' own frank assessment of what could reasonably be done within the Fund's limited resources. Having agreed on the agenda, the board then authorized the Fund's staff to implement it as effectively as possible.

The Fund's Goals 2000 have framed the foundation's programs since 1995. Our national programs have adhered to four broad goals:

- Improve health care services
- Better the health of minority Americans
- Advance the well-being of elderly people
- Develop the capacities of children and young people

Within each of those goals, more specific objectives have challenged us and given practical direction to our work. At the same time, the Fund has maintained commitments to fostering international exchange and to enhancing the quality of life in New York City.

This year, with July 2000 approaching, it was time for stock-taking. Working together, the Fund's staff and directors asked some difficult questions: What has the Fund accomplished over the last five years? What lessons have we learned? And how can we use those lessons and build on recent accomplishments to improve health care for Americans over the next five years? That process led eventually to a new set of goals, endorsed in July 2000 by the Fund's board of directors.

The newly adopted Goals 2005 address two of the most far-reaching issues in health care today: access to health care, and the quality of the care received. Like Goals 2000, the new goals give particular attention to assisting vulnerable groups, especially those with serious and neglected problems. As before, the stakes are high: problems in health care quality and access sharply limit the effectiveness of our nation's health care system today and threaten the future health and well-being of millions of Americans. We believe that the goals we have chosen are challenging but attainable, given the Fund's resources, strengths, and history.

## GOALS 2005

Over the next five years, the Fund will pursue four major goals. Within each goal area, the Fund will strive to fulfill certain specific objectives.

### **Goal: Improve health insurance coverage and access to care for all Americans**

- Increase the knowledge of the public and of policy leaders about the uninsured and the consequences of inadequate coverage
- Find and assess policies and practices with the potential to expand coverage, either by improving participation in existing public or private programs or through new initiatives
- Stimulate new efforts to expand insurance coverage through direct support of action strategies and formulation of policy options
- Analyze and help develop policies to enhance access and financial protections of Medicare beneficiaries and secure the financial future of the Medicare program

- Explore and analyze nonfinancial barriers to care — especially those related to income, racial or ethnic status, educational attainment, area of residence, or health status — in order to help develop or stimulate policies or practices that ease or remove those barriers
- Improve coverage and access to care in New York City

### **Goal: Improve the quality of health care services and stimulate innovation in health care delivery**

- Increase the knowledge of the public and of physicians, hospital leaders, and other health care professionals and providers regarding opportunities to improve the quality of health care at all levels of delivery and for all populations
- Develop or stimulate the development of methods that enable patients and their families to learn more about the quality of their health care providers (including hospitals, physicians, and long-term care facilities) and to become more informed and selective about their care
- Create information tools that help individuals obtain better care and lead healthier lives
- Foster the growth of the knowledge, leadership, and capacity needed to address the health care needs of a growing minority population

- Identify (or selectively develop), assess, replicate, and diffuse practices that improve:
  - the ability of professionals and staff at all levels of the health care system to deliver sensitive and appropriate care to all patients
  - equity in health outcomes for minority, low income, and other underserved populations and the elimination of existing disparities
  - long-term institutional and home care, and the quality of life of all elderly Americans
  - the availability of child development information and services for families with children from birth to age three
  - patient safety and reduce the occurrence of errors in health care practice and delivery systems

**Goal: Promote international exchange on health care policy and practice**

- Sustain and continue to develop a growing international network of policy-oriented health care researchers and practitioners
- Continue to help keep health care policymakers in the United States informed of developments in, and transferable lessons from, other industrialized societies
- Foster the development of international collaborative programs to improve care

**Goal: Enhance the quality of life in New York City**

- Improve public spaces and services in New York City

**NEW DIRECTIONS**

Over the coming year, the Fund will move decisively to implement its new goals. As a first step, we have redesigned our programmatic framework to encourage greater coordination and efficiency in our national program areas. The Fund's work to improve access to health care will largely take place through existing programs, although those programs will now be linked more closely. Efforts to improve the quality of care will be organized under several new or reformulated programs.

The Fund's new Health Care Quality Improvement program will have three priorities. First, it will seek to expand the availability and accessibility of information that can help patients select physicians, enable physicians and health care managers to enhance the quality of care, and strengthen patient-physician interactions. Second, it will work to advance the coordination and continuity of care by encouraging physicians and other health care personnel to work together in teams and to develop tools and processes that improve care across

sites and over time. Third, it will examine the “business case” for improving the quality of care and aligning payment incentives to reward higher quality.

Building on the work of the Fund’s Bettering the Health of Minority Americans program, the new program on Quality of Care for Underserved Populations will seek to enhance the current understanding of problems in quality of care for minority and low income populations, while also identifying and supporting practices capable of reducing disparities in the health care received by those patients. Specific objectives include measuring and reporting on the quality of care delivered to different racial or ethnic populations; improving patient–physician interactions; improving the clinical care received by minority and low income patients; and raising the quality of care for Medicaid beneficiaries and other patients who receive care through public hospitals, community clinics, and safety net providers.

The Fund also plans to share the advances made through Healthy Steps for Young Children by developing the

capacity of pediatric clinicians to provide child developmental services in primary care settings. Healthy Steps and Assuring Better Child Health and Development are part of the Fund’s efforts to improve the quality of care for young children.

The Fund’s long-term determination to help improve the well-being of elderly Americans will also be sustained under the new program plan. The Picker/Commonwealth Quality of Care for Frail Elders program will concentrate on the complex issue of ensuring high-quality care for elderly Americans, especially those receiving long-term care in nursing homes.

These national programs are intended to maintain the continuity of much of the Fund’s past work and build on the strengths of the foundation’s accumulated experience and expertise, while also sparking new approaches and engaging new partners.

A total of \$116.8 million has been budgeted for programs over the five years ending in fiscal year 2005. Of that amount, 19 percent will be devoted to improving insurance coverage and access to care; 45 percent to improving the quality of health care services; 13 percent to international health policy; 11 percent

to communications; 7 percent to other programs, including projects to improve public spaces and services in New York City; and 5 percent to the research and evaluation unit responsible for Fund surveys and the integrity of Fund-sponsored research.

**Planned spending  
Fiscal years 2000-01 through 2004-05**

Five-year total in millions

