Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Winona-Rochester
FY2019 Program Service Accomplishments
Medication Application Service (MediAppS)

The MediAppS program mission is to improve the health and well-being of low-income, uninsured or underinsured individuals living in southern Minnesota by helping them obtain needed prescription medications that they cannot afford on their own. With skyrocketing medication and insurance costs, many people just cannot afford to meet their deductible, pay their co-pays, or pay the cash price of their medications. Many are in a coverage gap and cannot afford to pay what the insurance companies dictate for their prescriptions. Some are between jobs and are currently without insurance. Others have applied for medical assistance or other insurance but are waiting for coverage to begin. Some have insurance coverage such as Medicare, but do not have a Part D plan (prescription coverage) and most insurance companies don’t cover medical devices or over the counter needs that are prescribed by physicians.

MediAppS consists of two parts: **Emergency Assistance** and **The Patient Assistance Program**. Emergency Assistance provides short-term help to individuals that do not have insurance and live in Winona, Fillmore, and Houston counties. We help pay for prescriptions or medical supplies that have been prescribed by a licensed provider. To be eligible for Emergency Assistance a person must have a household income of 300% or below the federal poverty level. Emergency Assistance addresses a short-term need, often during an emerging crisis when a person is suddenly without insurance and/or a means to purchase their medication. We work with local pharmacies to secure prescriptions at the lowest cost possible and often use discount cards and coupons for the cash price of medications.

Individuals who have insurance are considered on a case by case basis for Emergency Assistance and often are seeking help to cover co-pays.

The MediAppS Caseworker works with each client and advocates to get the insurance coverage and help they need for their future medication needs. There are limitations to how much a client can receive through Emergency Assistance each year.

The **Patient Assistance Program (PAP)** is a longer-term solution and involves working with pharmaceutical companies who offer medications at no cost to individuals who qualify. We assist clients with the application and enrollment in PAPs. We work with prescribing providers to obtain necessary signatures and written prescriptions which are required for each pharmaceutical company’s program. Eligibility requirements vary from company to company. We currently work with medical providers across southeastern and central Minnesota and southwest Wisconsin. The MediAppS Caseworker assists
each client through the entire PAP enrollment period by tracking medication orders, acquiring new prescriptions, and ordering refills.

Many of the medications we assist with (through both Emergency Assistance and PAPs) treat chronic diseases such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, depression, anxiety, chronic pain, and more. Not only can these medications lengthen one’s life but they also promote a higher quality of life and wellbeing.

Our MediAppS Caseworker also serves as an advocate for clients and assists them by making recommendations and/or referrals to other agencies for services.

MediAppS does not charge a fee to clients and our unique services are unduplicated in our area. Referrals come from county social service departments, medical providers, pharmacies, and other agencies. The MediAppS Program employs one part-time Caseworker who currently works 20 hours per week in the program.

In fiscal year 2019, the MediAppS program:

- Provided immediate Emergency Assistance to 109 clients for medications/medical devices at a cost of $29,670.
- Secured 422 prescriptions valued at over $591,497 through Patient Assistance Programs which served 98 clients.
- Provided Emergency Assistance for six clients through the Bishop’s Fund for a total of $1,033.15

TESTIMONIALS

One elderly woman told us that her medication was unaffordable because she and her husband had put all of their kids through college, never ended up with a pension after retiring, and that, frankly, they had lived too long. We were honored and privileged to assist this woman with application to a pharmaceutical company’s Patient Assistance Program so she could receive her expensive medication free of charge and have it delivered right to her home.

We sat with a manic 46-year old man who had not been without his mental health medication in over 30 years. He had recently lost his job of 20 years and his insurance coverage along with it. He had gone a week without his medication when he called to meet with our MediAppS Caseworker. He was so severely affected by the lack of his medication that he missed a job interview the previous day because he was unable to focus long enough to properly dress himself. Fortunately, we were able to secure a 90-day supply of his medications through Emergency Assistance and allow him the time to find other employment and insurance or apply for medical assistance.
We each deserve the opportunity to live a long and healthy life and not have to worry about whether we will buy food, pay the rent, or buy the medication we need to keep ourselves well and functioning. The MediAppS Program is committed to serving those that cannot afford the means to obtain their medication.