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Editorials

Health Care: Access Now

By [Staff Reports](#)

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Free clinics, community health centers, and public health agencies do great good in providing medical care to individuals without health insurance and the means to pay for treatment on their own. They cannot do everything, however. Enter Access Now.

Access Now provides specialized treatments that clinics and the like are not able to perform. The Richmond Academy of Medicine sponsors Access Now, which relies on physicians and other practitioners who volunteer their time and expertise.

Access Now accepts patients referred by various clinics, centers, and departments. Its services relieve hospitals of the costly burden of treating uninsured patients in emergency rooms. The patients enjoy the benefit of personalized care. During the past two years, Access Now has provided more than \$4 million in specialized care and services. It receives about 2,000 new patients annually.

Medicine is a vocation. Many consider it a calling. Doctors, nurses, and aides truly serve. Access Now allows them to express the sweet sentiments that drew them into the profession. Healing includes many dimensions. We suspect that participation in Access Now enhances technical expertise and personal manner.

The health care reform enacted this year may prove salvational. History suggests it will not live up to the expectations of its supporters. Yet even if it does, cracks in the system will remain. There always will be people in need. Access Now ensures that those needs are met, and those individuals will be treated with the tenderness that is humanity's birthright.