



**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRUST FUND COMMISSION**

**MICHAEL EASLEY
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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR**

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Local Organizations Awarded Prescription Assistance Grants for Seniors

RALEIGH – The North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission today announced grants to local organizations throughout the state for prescription assistance. The grants will provide assistance to seniors and low-income individuals of all ages in acquiring free, low cost or discounted medications. In addition, any senior can receive counseling on the safe and wise use of prescription drugs.

“Educating seniors about appropriate drug use is a unique feature of our State’s prescription drug benefit program, *Senior Care*. Seniors especially need help paying for their prescription drugs, but this grant also will help people of any age who cannot afford their medication. This innovative medical management program will help all our seniors get the proper treatment they need and deserve. It is a real win for North Carolina’s communities and our elderly, ” said Lieutenant Governor Beverly Perdue, chair of the Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission.

Funded organizations will contract with local pharmacists to counsel seniors in identifying drug utilization issues such as drug-to-drug interactions and duplicative therapies. Seniors who are eligible for *Senior Care* will receive counseling services at no cost. Other seniors will be able to use the service through payment of a minimal fee, based upon ability to pay.

Under this initiative, 23 new and existing community-based programs were selected by the Commission to receive a total of approximately \$3 million annually. In awarding these grants, the Commission gave priority to organizations proposing to serve diverse populations, ensured geographic dispersion, and building capacity within local communities to respond to area health needs.

The Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission was established by the General Assembly to receive and allocate 25% of North Carolina’s share of the multi-billion dollar national tobacco settlement agreement reached in 1999. The Commission is comprised of 18 individuals representing a wide background of health care experience throughout North Carolina.

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