

# Strategic Direction

## Sharpening Our Focus

Our Strategic Direction begins with the mission, vision and values of the Foundation and specifies its significant relationship with Moses Cone Health System. It continues to identify the functions of the Foundation in regards to its mission.

## Relationship with Moses Cone Health System

A critical element of the Foundation's strategic design is its relationship with the Moses Cone Health System. The Foundation is a supporting organization of the Health System and the majority of the Foundation board members are appointed by the Health System. The Health System is represented on the Foundation's Program (Grant) Committee and there is Foundation representation on the Fund Development Board of the Health System. In addition, Foundation staff members participate on the Health System Leadership Council and the Department Head Group. The Foundation's advocacy strategy is also closely integrated with that of the Health System. Beyond these ongoing relationships, Foundation and Health System staff join together on projects such as the Health System's smoke free campus initiative, reduction in infant mortality and the Foundation's community-wide obesity initiative.

## Principal Functions

**Analysis and Research; Knowledge Management** ~ The Foundation will work in collaboration with the Guilford County Department of Health and academic communities to stay abreast of the status of the community's health and of the various indicators of community health. It is important that the Foundation be knowledgeable about both evidence based and promising interventions in areas of Foundation priorities. This body of knowledge is immense and growing. Foundation staff will build their own knowledge and rely on experts to help them monitor and evaluate both evidence based and measurably successful programs in the Foundation's areas of focus.

**Catalyst and Convener** ~ The Foundation takes a proactive approach to building community partnerships and coalitions. The strategy is to join together with others to do what needs to be done using Foundation and partner resources. This involves identifying like-minded community organizations, fostering relationships and encouraging vision and action. We want to build relationships with other foundations and investors so that through coordinated efforts, we can make the most effective use of our collective resources. The Foundation does not intend to operate community programs.

**Health Program Investor** ~ The Foundation makes its assets available to support projects and programs aimed at improving the health of the community. The term Investor is designed to emphasize Foundation interest in outcomes

directly related to valid measures of health status; i.e., a return on investment. The Foundation is interested in knowing that the funds invested actually had the predicted impact on the lives of the people targeted by the investment.

Implications of this strategy are two-fold: The Foundation will be increasingly proactive and explicit with regard to the outcomes or returns on investment it seeks, as specified in our Requests for Proposals, and will favor those grantees that reflect an understanding of this fundamental premise and a commitment to its fulfillment. The Foundation will also exercise increased decision-making discipline, favoring those proposals that reflect the Foundation's return on investment philosophy and objectives. Grantees in turn will be held to a high standard of reporting progress against interim markers of success, expenditures, and ultimately achievement of the outcomes on which the Foundation's investment was initially predicated.

Advocate and Communicator ~ The Foundation considers it vitally important to connect with the community it seeks to serve. Many health issues facing the community are matters of behavior and lifestyle; indeed as much as half of the health status of the individual and of the community is determined by these factors. Public policy and the environment are also major factors influencing the community's health. The Foundation will carefully expand its role from that of just communicator to that of advocate within the framework of the Foundation's health investment priorities.

#### Strategic, Scalable and Sustainable

The Foundation expects projects to be strategic, scalable and sustainable. Strategic projects are those that result in permanent and positive change to one or more fundamentals that influence the health of the community. Scalable projects are those that can be expanded to community-wide scale. Sustainable projects are those that allow a project or program to become self-sustaining. The Foundation will fund core-operating support in the priority areas, with the understanding that its support is dependent on the achievement of its mission and not intended as an endowment of any kind.