



Recognizing A Visionary Leader In Health Care

by Jeffrey Lewis

(NAPSA)—While legislators and other stakeholders have struggled to address the complex issue of health care, a few visionary leaders have devised solutions that don't rely on government intervention.

One such man is Ken Trogdon, chief executive officer of Welvista,



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an innovative non-profit health care network serving the uninsured of South Carolina.

Under his leadership, the nonprofit network developed partnerships with 12 pharmaceutical companies and 4,000 health care providers, hospitals, free medical clinics and pharmacies to supply needed medical information, treatment and name-brand medications to qualified, low-wage, uninsured residents. With his direction, Welvista grew to serve more than 15,000 patients per year and to dispense more than \$47 million in prescription drugs.

Soon afterward, Welvista opened the first of four pediatric, school-based health care centers that provide children of limited-income families in rural communities with appropriate dental care. Smiles for a Lifetime, supported by corporate sponsorships, has served thousands of South Carolina children.

In 2006, he was given the Order of the Palmetto, the highest

civilian award granted by the governor of South Carolina, for a lifetime of service. Welvista was also selected as a Best Practice Initiative by the Department of Health and Human Services. The company's programs are now recognized as models for nongovernment health care intervention.

Most recently, Trogdon brought Welvista into a national partnership with the Heinz Family Philanthropies and global pharmaceutical companies Abbott and Merck, to provide HIV medications to those who cannot afford them but do not qualify for Medicaid assistance. Though the joint state-federal AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) was set up for this purpose, at least 12 states, including South Carolina, now have so many patients waiting for these lifesaving medications—and such restricted budgets—that they cannot serve them all.

The program exemplifies how philanthropy, business and nonprofits can work together to devise market-based solutions. Welvista's stated vision is to "become the leading health resource in the nation for the uninsured." Through Trogdon's relentless efforts and personal dedication to helping those in need, it has certainly achieved this goal.

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