

# It Takes an Entire Community to Build a Clinic

## Issue

Traveling long distances to get medical care sounds like an issue of the past, but it was the present situation for many residents of Asotin County, Washington. Local health care was scarce in this small county and some residents drove over 100 miles to get medical treatment or even pick up prescriptions.

## Intervention

The solution seemed simple—open a local health clinic. However, this is not an easy task and the Asotin County Health District knew that it couldn't happen without the support and involvement of the community. So in 2007, the Asotin County Health District used Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant funding to form the Access to Care Committee. Membership included a broad range of individuals and organizations such as public health, the Department of Social and Health Services, local hospitals, the United Way, local government and residents of Asotin County.

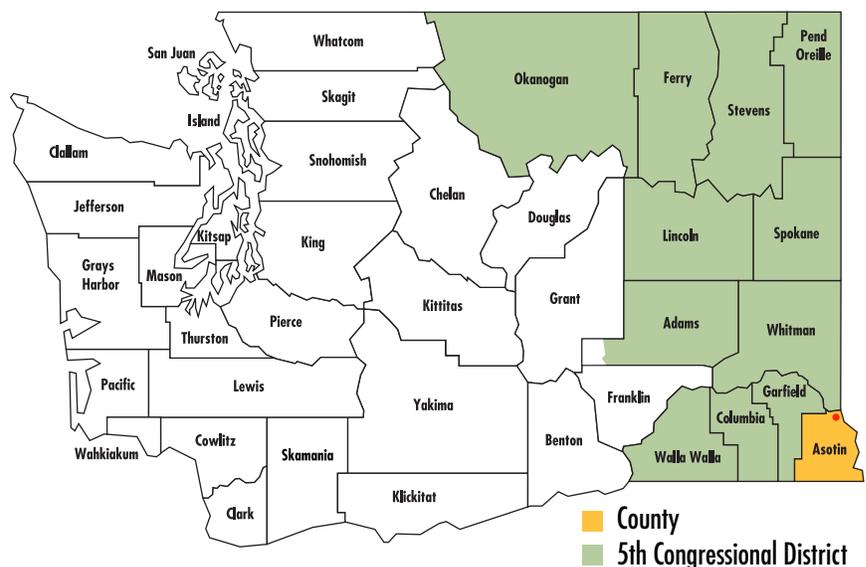
The Access to Care Committee met with representatives from local government, talked with other community health clinics, and collected data on the need for health care in Asotin County.

## Impact

The Access to Care Committee is working on a plan with the Community Health Association of Spokane to open a satellite clinic in Asotin County. Significant impacts include:

- **Strong community partnerships** developed through the Access to Care Committee
- The **federal designation of a Health Professional Shortage Area** that allows recent graduates of medical and dental schools to work in the clinic and have some of their student loans repaid
- **Public awareness through newspaper and television stories** about the shortage of health care providers in the area
- The **donation of office space** for the clinic by St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center in Lewiston

**With funding from the block grant and the formation of the Access to Care Committee, the Asotin County Health District is working to keep their residents close to home for their medical care.**



County population\*: 21,300

**Asotin County Health District**  
Clarkston, Washington  
<http://ac-hd.org/>