



## **Belington Community Medical Services Association to Receive \$1.15 Million In Stimulus Money**

*Story by Hilary Magacs  
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*The association is one of 126 centers nationwide getting funding, and the the only health center in West Virginia receiving any money.*

BELINGTON -- Eric Ruf is the executive director of the Belington Community Medical Services Association. He's excited that the association will be receiving more than \$1 million in federal stimulus money.

"The money mainly will be used to help us expand and grow our mission, which is to support and take care of the uninsured or underinsured," says Ruf.

Ruf says more than 6,200 people visited the Belington Medical Clinic last year and 30 percent were underinsured or uninsured. A physician's assistant at the clinic says the money is coming at just the right time.

"We have a large population that comes in here that have marginal income and have lost their health insurance. And with the change in the economy recently, it's gotten worse," says Tom Harward, a physician assistant at the Belington Medical Clinic.

The association not only owns the Belington Medical Clinic, but also the Belington Wellness Center and the Brandon Wellness Center, which provides medical care to students and staff at Philip-Barbour High School. Ruf says the money will help all three organizations improve healthcare and create jobs.

"We currently employ 25 or so full and part time employees. With the additional funding, we might be able to expand that as high as 40 to 45," says Ruf.

Ruf says the stimulus money will also help the medical association transition from paper files to electronic health records.

The association will receive the funding over the next two years.

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