



HEALTHWELL  
FOUNDATION®

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## News Release

### Patients Find Assistance for Costly Out-of-Pocket Health Care Expenses

*HealthWell Foundation reduces barriers to care for patients  
with serious and chronic illnesses*

**New York, NY (March 22, 2007)** – With out-of-pocket health care costs expected to grow more than five percent annually\*, Americans are increasingly searching for assistance to cope with the rising expenses. Today in New York, patients with serious and chronic illnesses gathered from around the country to share their personal stories of how the Gaithersburg, MD-based HealthWell Foundation has changed their lives.

Representatives of the HealthWell Foundation and health care provider Brian Spohn of the Mid-Ohio Oncology and Hematology Center, who has referred over a hundred patients to HealthWell for financial assistance with their cancer treatments, were also on hand.

“There’s nobody who personally understands more than I do just how much it means to be able to afford the medication that I need to live normally,” said 59-year-old Keith Parke of Middleburg, Florida. When Parke was diagnosed with macular degeneration at age 50, he risked blindness by choosing to pay for his daughters’ education instead of his own treatment. Now, with financial assistance from the HealthWell Foundation, Parke says, “HealthWell has truly given me a new shot at life.”

Rheumatoid arthritis forced 64-year-old Margaret Wall of Dallas into early retirement. As the sole caregiver for two children, \$400 per month for treatment was a real hardship. “HealthWell changed my life,” Wall says. “Now I can get the medication that lets me live my life without always being in pain. I want other people who are sick to know that they’re not alone, and that there are places out there that can help.”

Beatrice Szeles of Orange, California also has rheumatoid arthritis. She was required to make a \$250 co-pay for each treatment, and, while her children helped as much as they could, Szeles refused to burden them and instead stopped treatment. “Without my medication, I couldn’t function at all,” she says. “I wouldn’t be able to afford it if it weren’t for HealthWell.”

“With health care costs spiraling, even patients who have health care coverage cannot always afford the out-of-pocket costs for the treatment they need,” says Stephen M. Weiner, President of

*(more)*

the HealthWell Foundation. "Since 2003, we have helped more than 25,000 patients like Keith, Margaret and Beatrice to begin and continue critically important medical treatment."

The HealthWell Foundation was established to assist patients with the often burdensome out-of-pocket costs associated with the treatment of many diseases. The Foundation currently offers assistance to people living with many life-threatening or chronic conditions, including breast cancer, colon cancer, asthma, chronic renal failure, Hodgkin's Disease, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, and others.

*\*According to economists at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, February 2007.*

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*Established in 2003 to help patients with serious conditions meet their cost-sharing obligations for treatment, the HealthWell Foundation is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit association that provides financial assistance to cover the cost of prescription drug coinsurance, copayments and deductibles, health insurance premiums, and other selected out-of-pocket healthcare costs. The Foundation considers individual financial, medical and insurance situations when determining assistance eligibility. For more information, please visit [www.healthwellfoundation.org](http://www.healthwellfoundation.org).*