

For Internal Use Only

GRANTMAKING LESSONS

1. The success of the effort to create rural, pediatric emergency services should encourage risk taking. Creating an emergency medical system for children was seen by RWJF staff as a moderate risk given such obstacles as the traditional autonomy of health care providers, the financial pressures facing many rural hospitals, and the sheer size of the target region, which could pose significant logistical problems. However, it was also recognized that if successful, the project could improve emergency care for an area with more than 165,000 children and provide a model for other rural and remote areas, which it has done. (PO/Beachler, W, R2)

2. When a project is able to build on work supported earlier by other agencies — in this case, the federal Health and Research Services Administration — it may be possible to implement an ambitious project in a relatively short period of time and with fewer resources. Under the federal grant, REI had already established and staffed a center in California on emergency medical services for children, which had conducted research and carried out a needs assessment. The federal grant also continued to pay for certain expenses not directly related to the RWJF-funded project. Because the groundwork had been laid by the earlier grant, costs were reduced and the project was able to get started quickly and to proceed relatively smoothly. (PO/Beachler, W)

3. Software and multimedia product development require careful oversight and should be undertaken with realistic budgets, timelines, and expectations. When a grantee lacks the specialized skills required to budget and complete a multimedia project, it may be advisable for RWJF to help a grantee seek professional advice on budgetary, contractual, and production matters. (R/Feiden)

4. RWJF should consider providing guidance for grantees on appropriate business practices regarding dealing with third parties in the for-profit sector. REI has been unable to obtain the final CD-ROM product from the third-party vendor with which it contracted, and REI is seeking legal recourse. Had REI not already paid the vendor in full, this situation might have been avoided. Grantees may be tempted to make advance payments when a grant nears its conclusion, but this case illustrates the risk in doing so. (W/Stokes, R/McKaughan)