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**Cleveland Township  
Emergency Food  
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# Press Release

**FOR RELEASE: OCT. 1, 2007**

## **Basic Needs Ministry to Distribute Wake County's New Prescription Drug Discount Cards**

### Program Has No Cost to Taxpayers

**Garner, NC, October 1, 2007:** Garner's Basic Needs Ministry, a public charity, is a distributor of Wake's new NACo Prescription Drug Discount Card, which is available free to all residents. The card program was developed and promoted by the National Association of Counties (NACo) and its North Carolina affiliate to permit Wake's County Commissioners to give 100,000 uninsured and many more underinsured residents access to lower cost prescription drugs. There are no enrollment fees, no forms to fill out, no age or income requirements, and no medical condition restrictions. The entire family is covered with just one card and virtually all commonly prescribed medicine is covered. There is no cost to the county, county commissioners, or consumers to participate. Caremark negotiates the costs directly with participating pharmacies. Neither NACo nor the participating counties receive any revenue from the program. 18 million U.S. residents have the cards, 47 North Carolina counties cover all residents, and almost 56,000 pharmacies accept the card. Consumers always receive the lowest price. If a drug store ever prices its medicine lower than the NACo price, the customer is guaranteed the lowest rate.

Ronald Still, Basic Needs' Director, started using and promoting an individual version of the card after AdvancePCS and the State Medical Plan reduced prescription benefits to active and retired state employees. He introduced the cards at Basic Needs after waiting over two years for the local commissioners to bring the program to Wake and Johnston counties. Although the program was also free for the individuals, Basic Needs could only order the cards when they had volunteers, working Internet access, and toner for the printer. It was definitely more difficult in the beginning when each card was ordered and then mailed to the client. After a merger and a buyout Caremark

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and CVS permitted the order form to be filed over the Internet, where their server would design the individual's card and display it for Basic Needs to print. It could be used the same day.

One of Basic Needs' first users sent a note of appreciation that she was going to get seven Wendy sandwiches for her kids with the savings on one prescription. Her second thought was how to get her county commissioners to put the program in place for all her neighbors. Like Johnston County, they are still waiting.

"It's not every day elected officials get a three-page letter thanking them for something they've done. That day came for Johnson County Commissioner Dolores Furtado recently when she got a letter from a resident who's saved about 50 percent on their prescription medications with a discount card the county started providing a month ago. "I received a three-page handwritten letter detailing the positive impact on a constituent," Johnson County Commissioner Dolores Furtado said at Thursday's County Commission meeting." - *The Olathe News, Kansas*

Since May 2003, Basic Needs provided over \$8 million in benefits through the generosity of its friends and neighbors. To volunteer or find more information about its programs, go to its Internet site at <http://4042needs.org/> or call 919-661-6565.