

MIND OVER BODY: HOW FREE CLINICS HELP DEAL WITH JOB LOSS by Anup Shah

In the midst of a controversial health care debate this summer, I came to NPR wanting to do a story that took a unique perspective. Everyone was doing stories about the uninsured, or the insurance companies, or stories about elderly Americans on Medicare, so I decided on a mental health approach to the story. The reason I'm proud of this piece is because of the hoops I had to jump through to get these interviews. I was trying to find a patient in the DC-Maryland-Virginia area that had recently lost health insurance and felt depressed. Eventually, I got my interviews (2 of which were conducted in Spanish) and got the story I wanted. A patient whose job loss caused him to lose his health insurance and a combination of the two left him feeling depressed. The difficult part of this piece was writing it to the length of a print piece, but keeping the audience engaged for every second like a broadcast piece. The most important lesson here was, if you lose the listener at any point in the piece, you're probably not going to get them back.

This story originally aired in July 2009 on NPR's website as part of "Intern Edition."