



## NYIC 2016 City Policy & Budget Priorities

### Making Health Care Equitable and Accessible for Immigrant Communities

#### Recommendation

Ensure that New York City's health care system provides culturally competent, accessible and affordable care to all immigrants living in New York City

- **The City should create and convene a formalized Community Advisory Board to ensure the new Direct Access pilot reflects the full range of needs and concerns of uninsured immigrants.** This level of transparency would be consistent with the inclusive nature of the Mayor's Taskforce on Immigrant Health Access, which leveraged the input of numerous immigrant-serving advocates and service providers.
- **The Council should increase funding for Access Health NYC from \$1 million to \$5 million and should administer it through a transparent, accessible request for proposals (RFP) process.** Access Health NYC provides critical resources to increase the capacity of trusted CBOs to educate the communities they serve about health access, coverage, and protections.

#### History

**2014:** Office of the Mayor convenes the Mayor's Taskforce on Immigrant Health Access, with four workgroups of diverse stakeholders focused on Care and Coverage, General Barriers, Language Access, and Data Gaps.

**2015:** The NYC City Council funds Access Health NYC and the Immigrant Health Initiatives.

**2016:** The Mayor's Office announces the launch of Direct Access, a pilot program to provide reliable and coordinated access to immigrants excluded from federal and state coverage, in light of gaps in access to care identified by the Mayor's Taskforce on Immigrant Health Access.

#### Opportunity and Talking Points

- Although many exciting health care access efforts are underway, work remains to ensure that new and existing programs work efficiently to achieve health equity for immigrants.
- An analysis by the New York City Comptroller notes that 962,000 NYC residents remain uninsured, particularly in neighborhoods such as Jackson Heights, Corona, and Bushwick where many immigrants live.<sup>1</sup>
- Even when insured, NYC immigrant communities report major linguistic, legal, and financial barriers to NYC health care institutions and continue to report challenges in finding culturally competent and accessible care.
- Access Health NYC, Immigrant Health Initiative, Direct Access pilot, primary care expansion and other complementary programs require coordination to maximize investments.

For additional information, please contact Claudia Calhoun at [ccalhoon@nyic.org](mailto:ccalhoon@nyic.org) or Max Hadler at [mhadler@nyic.org](mailto:mhadler@nyic.org).

<sup>1</sup><http://comptroller.nyc.gov/newsroom/comptroller-stringer-analysis-finds-that-more-than-962000-new-yorkers-lack-health-insurance/>