

Addressing Health Disparities

An Action Agenda for New York State of Health

A report
by
the Public Policy and Education Fund
Make the Road New York
and
The Alliance for a Justice Society

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ACA and Disparities

Advances Health Equity

The ACA improves access to coverage primarily by funding Medicaid expansion and by lowering the cost of private insurance on NY State of Health, the NYS exchange.

The ACA addresses disparities by increasing coverage rates among people of color and by making special provisions for efforts to overcome disparities based on race and culture.

Creates New Opportunities for State Action

- ✓ Supporting enrollment to reduce gaps in coverage that particularly affect people of color, immigrants and others.
- ✓ Increase the availability and quality of care in communities where high-quality care historically has been limited.
- ✓ Monitoring disparities over the long-term and incorporating attention to disparities into ongoing health policy activities.

Unequal in the Empire State



African American infants are more than twice as likely to die as white and Latino infants.

Compared to whites, African Americans experience HIV/AIDS mortality rates that are 20 times higher and Latinos face rates that are 11 times higher.

The diabetes mortality rate is more than 50 percent higher for Latinos than for whites.

Twenty percent of lesbian and gay people and almost 24 percent of bisexual people in New York City lack insurance, compared to 15 percent of straight people.

New York is on the Road to Reform

- ✓ Navigators rely on diverse community based organizations.
- ✓ No requirements for verification of immigration status in SHOP beyond federal law requirements.
- ✓ Adopting pre-authorization and one-year continuous eligibility for Emergency Medicaid.
- ✓ Building on federal requirements for adequate provider networks.
- ✓ Adopting a Basic Health Program.



NEW YORK



WE CAN DO MUCH MORE TO ADDRESS
DISPARITIES: RECOMMENDATIONS

OUTREACH AND ENROLLMENT

- Target community outreach and enrollment efforts toward diverse communities, use a variety of communication methods and reach people through one-on-one contacts.
- Set targets for enrollment of various demographic groups.



LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL ACCESS



- Ensure competent interpretation and translation at all levels of the Marketplace, in Marketplace publicity and public information and by health plans.
- Require insurers to cover interpretation and translation in the clinical setting.
- Ensure that the Marketplace meets the cultural needs of diverse New York communities.
- Translate the NYSOH website into the six most common non-English languages spoken by New Yorkers.

ADEQUATE PROVIDER NETWORKS

- Set and enforce network adequacy standards to meet the needs of diverse communities. This requires research that highlights inadequacies and recommends remedies.
- Remedies should be provided for inadequate networks or changes in networks.

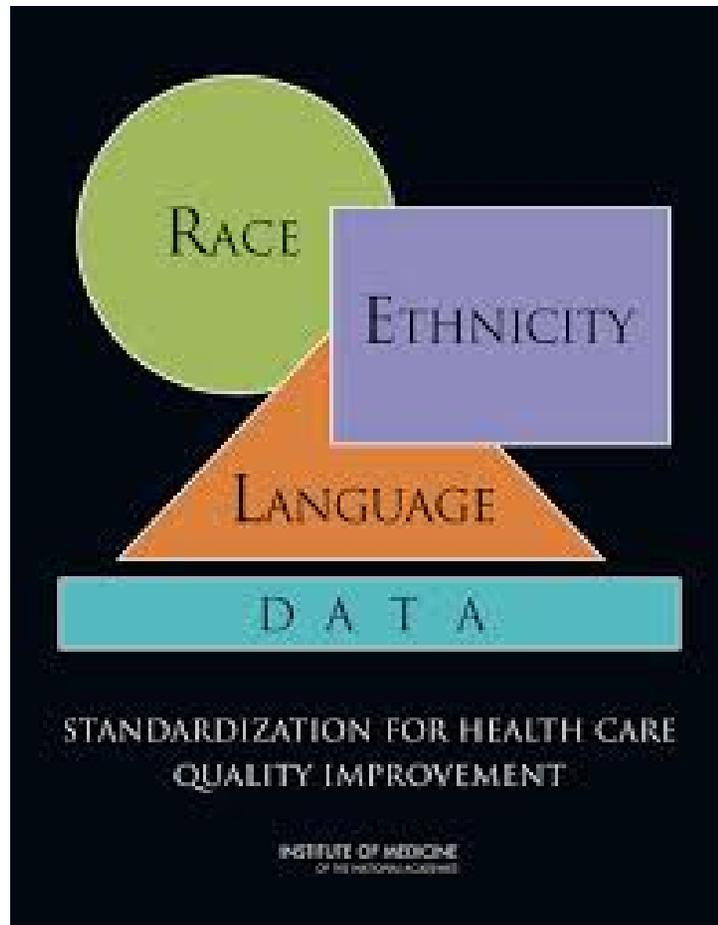


QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND SETTING STANDARDS FOR HEALTH PLANS SOLD THROUGH THE MARKETPLACE

- NYSOH should monitor and strongly enforce ACA requirements that health plans establish and maintain strategies to address disparities.
- Health plan strategies should be made public.



DATA COLLECTION



- NYS should collect and analyze data concerning health outcomes, broken down by factors like race, ethnicity, primary language, gender, disability and LGBT status and publicly disseminate this data.
- As a first step, data should be made available on the demographics of Marketplace enrollees (partially done since the report's release).

EXPANDING COVERAGE OPTIONS:

MAKING COVERAGE A REALITY FOR ALL NEW YORKERS

- Assure that cost sharing in the new Basic Health Program is affordable and assure access by traditionally excluded communities, particularly immigrants.
- Develop an insurance product that will cover undocumented immigrants not covered through health reform.



FORMALIZE EFFORTS TO ADDRESS DISPARITIES AND ENFORCE CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS



New York State of Health should create mechanisms for ongoing attention to disparities and enforcement of relevant civil rights laws.

Example: Establish a stakeholder task force on disparities.

Examples of Actions Advocates Can Take

- Press for a review of insurance company provider network adequacy.
- Require that insurance company quality improvement plans be systematically reviewed and the results made public.
- Do op-eds and other media activities to promote steps to address health disparities with a focus on language access standards.
- Request that legislative hearings be held on disparities and the exchange.

For Further Information

Copies of our report: *Addressing Health Disparities Through the Marketplace: An Action Agenda for New York State of Health*, are available on the websites of the Public Policy and Education Fund, Alliance for A Just Society and Make the Road New York.

www.ppefny.org

www.allianceforajustsociety.org

www.maketheroad.org

You can obtain the state open enrollment report, county-level data and zip code level data at:

info.nystateofhealth.ny.gov/2014OpenEnrollmentReport