



NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION RELEASES *HEALTHCARE REFORM AT THE LOCAL LEVEL: FRAMEWORK FOR A NAVIGATOR PROGRAM IN NEW YORK CITY*, A PLAN TO IMPLEMENT EDUCATION AND ENROLLMENT ASSISTANCE UNDER FEDERAL HEALTH CARE REFORM IN THE CITY

Plan Outlines Ways to Best Serve New Yorkers by Engaging Existing Resources and Data to Deliver Coordinated and Effective Health Insurance Help Through a Federally Mandated Navigator Program

May 09, 2011- The New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) released a brief today on implementing a Navigator Program, a required part of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) commonly known as federal health care reform, in New York City. Entitled [*Healthcare Reform at the Local Level: Framework for a Navigator Program in New York City*](#), the brief looks at the most effective ways to implement the education and enrollment assistance services to be provided by Navigator Programs while maintaining New York State and City’s already high rate of coverage for residents. Currently, nearly three million low-income residents in the City have public health insurance, and only 4.5 percent of children are uninsured – the lowest rate for children among the nation’s eighth largest cities.

The ACA sets up “Insurance Exchanges”, which will serve as places where individuals and small businesses can enroll in health insurance and, if eligible, receive subsidies to lower the cost of private coverage. To ensure that consumers and business owners takes advantage of Exchanges created by the law, ACA requires each Exchange to create a Navigator Program, which will give grants to qualified organizations to provide health insurance education and enrollment assistance.

“New York City is proud to have made significant investments and achievements ensuring residents and business owners understand and have ready access to their health insurance options,” said HRA Commissioner Robert Doar. “As we implement health care reform, with this brief we hope to highlight the need to build on our existing resources, initiatives and technologies alongside the Navigator Programs to continue providing efficient health insurance information and access.”

The brief, authored by HRA’s Office of Citywide Health Insurance Access (OCHIA), describes how an effective discrete Navigator Program should be established at the local level to serve New York City residents. The plan’s recommendations for creating a successful and efficient NYC Navigator Program include:

- Building on City expertise and technology initiatives, such as HHS Connect, 311, ACCESS NYC, NYC Business Express, and NYC Health Insurance Link to efficiently reach and serve residents and small businesses in the City. Already well known and used within the City, these resources should serve as essential components of a Navigator Program in NYC.
- Continuously using data to identify populations the Navigator Program should serve and to determine the best entities (grantees) and methods to reach them.
- Providing ongoing training and monitoring of grantees on the education and enrollment help they provide and on their use of referral tools; these tools should be used to help residents who have coverage or care needs outside of the Exchange, such as undocumented individuals and others who can't or choose not to get health insurance in the Exchange.
- Collaboratively developing and evolving outreach strategies to meet changes in the needs of the uninsured over time.

“We hope this brief will inform discussion among State and local officials as well as other stakeholders about the elements of a locally administered Navigator Program,” said Marjorie A. Cadogan, OCHIA Executive Deputy Commissioner. “These recommendations can guide establishment of a NYC Navigator Program that succeeds both in helping uninsured New Yorkers gain health coverage and in delivering the most coordinated, cost-effective services possible.”