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Message from the CMO

Last winter, the NYC Health Department released a report documenting omicron-related hospitalization inequities between Black and White New Yorkers (read report here: <https://on.nyc.gov/3LqzggF>). Our analysis found that during the omicron surge between December 2021 and January 2022, Black New Yorkers were hospitalized twice as much as White New Yorkers – due in part to lower rates of boosters. As we prepare for this winter, encouraging our patients – especially those over 65 years and Black patients – to be vaccinated with the recommended number of doses is critical to preventing a reoccurrence of last winter’s harmful trends.

Currently, bivalent vaccines are recommended for any New Yorker over the age of 12 for the Pfizer booster and over the age of 18 for the Moderna booster. These vaccines currently include Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 components to improve protection from variants that have been able to evade the immune system with the previous formulations.

Read here for more information and to stay up to date on the latest in COVID-19 information: <https://bit.ly/3dRQ4bU>

To help patients find a vaccine center near them, please click here: <https://vaccinefinder.nyc.gov/>

CMO Strategic Plan Updates

Read below to learn more about each domain of the CMO Strategic Plan.

Domain 1: Bridging Public Health and Health Care

Release of Inaugural CERCA Report

We are excited to share with you our inaugural report for the Coalition to End Racism in Clinical Algorithms (CERCA). This report contains a detailed description of CERCA, the first nine months of work including what has been achieved thus far and future directions for the Coalition.

Race modifiers in clinical algorithms have been called into question because of disparate, often inequitable impacts on black patients due to now unacceptable race-as-biology theories. Members of the Coalition have been working to de-implement race-based equations in their health systems. Over the last nine months, CERCA members have been able to drive implementation of non-race-based, decision-making equations utilizing a wide toolkit including institutional level commitment, team level support, resident, and medical student advocacy as well as provider education. This work has come across some challenges to implementation, which include reticence to behavioral changes; competing priorities and staffing – particularly on a backdrop of COVID-19 challenges; technical algorithm specific challenges; and complexity of implementation across a large network. As we move into the second year of the Coalition, members are planning patient engagement strategies centering patients who have experienced delays in care. In the next year we intend on growing this work by engaging with medical schools around medical education and curriculum, using analytic approaches for prospective assessment and redress of race-adjusted algorithms, continuing to advocate for changes in medical guidelines through advocacy and policy, and further engaging in patient advocacy and support. We look forward to sharing more on the successes of the second-year activities of CERCA with all of you soon.

Read the report here: <https://on.nyc.gov/3Rhe6uy>

Domain 2: Advancing the NYC Health Department’s Commitment to Anti-racism in Public Health Practice and Policy

Update on NYS’ 1115 Waiver— Health Equity Regional Organization (HERO)

The State’s 1115 Waiver Amendment submission to CMS (New York Health Equity Reform—NYHER) is an opportunity to improve outcomes of the NYS Medicaid population in general, while also decreasing the disparities within subsets who, in addition to income discrimination, also experience marginalization due to race/ethnicity, ability, behavioral health diagnoses, housing status, sexual orientation, and/or justice involvement.

The proposed Social Determinant of Health Networks are a long overdue way to reach scale in the assessment and provision of health-related social need services to improve Medicaid outcomes. While addressing health related social needs will take us a long way it won’t solve many of the health inequities that pervade our communities, particularly our black and brown communities.

With this said, the HEROs are one of the most exciting new additions to the Medicaid landscape. HEROs are regional, mission-based organizations composed of a coalition of stakeholders intended to become hubs for regional collaboration, coordination, and decision making to inform future Value Based Payment arrangements focused on health equity (<https://on.ny.gov/3dKUz8d>). It will allow us to laser focus our attention on the improvement of outcomes of the most marginalized within Medicaid. We look forward to the launch of the HERO in NYC that can facilitate coordination between City Agencies and Medicaid stakeholders to address health-related social needs and build consensus on how to center equitable outcomes for Medicaid recipients.

Domain 3: Building Institutional Accountability

Birth Equity Initiative—Clinton Global Initiative Commitment to Action

On September 19th Dr. Michelle Morse and Dr. Zahirah McNatt took the stage with former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton at the 2022 Clinton Global Initiative annual meeting. The Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) brings together leaders across sectors to address grand challenges including global climate change, health equity, and economic growth and stability.



During the reproductive and maternal health session, Clinton formally announced the Birth Equity Initiative and the agency's commitment to reducing birth inequities among Black women and pregnant persons across the city, starting in Brooklyn. This was the first time that the initiative was publicly shared.

Clinton highlighted the current programming led by the agency, as well as efforts to engage diverse stakeholders, and establish a maternal medical home model. CGI hopes this initiative will serve as a model for closing the health inequity gap for all women, but especially Black women in New York City, across the state, and the United States.

To view the announcement recording, click here: <https://bit.ly/3SjZM5U> (5:55 to 10:30).

CMO Spotlight: Update on MPXV

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene continues to work with community partners to stop the Monkeypox (MPXV) outbreak. Cases continue to decline as over 130,000 doses of the vaccine have been administered across the city. To increase access to vaccines, over 30,000 new appointments will open today, October 6th at 4pm. Adopting a pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) model, the City is also expanding eligibility guidelines to include:

- people of any sexual orientation or gender identity who have or may have multiple or anonymous sex partners, or participate or may participate in group sex;
- people of any sexual orientation or gender identity whose sex partners are eligible per the criteria above;
- people who know or suspect they have been exposed to MPXV in the last 14 days; and
- anyone else who considers themselves at risk for MPXV through sex or other intimate contact.

Those who have received their first dose of the MPXV vaccine at least 28 days prior can now schedule an appointment for a second dose to complete the series.

In addition, on September 9th, 2022, a new Tremont monkeypox vaccination clinic in the Bronx was opened for first dose-walk in clients. This site can serve as many as 100 people per day and is open Monday-Saturday from 11am-7pm.

These efforts have only been successful because of the people of New York. Our community members and advocates have been relentless in their pursuit to protect themselves and their community. To learn more about the MPXV response, and for information on treatment and prevention, please visit the DOHMH website: <https://on.nyc.gov/39ZHupl>.

Program Spotlight: Prenatal Nutrition and Gestational Diabetes Workshops

To promote holistic health for women and birthing people, the Bureau of Bronx Neighborhood Health is launching a virtual prenatal nutrition and gestational diabetes workshop series. This series which will be led by a registered dietician, will occur every Wednesday from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm EST from September 28, 2022 to October 26, 2022.

It will include an overview of pregnancy, screening and managing gestational diabetes, safe movement and nutrition for the baby and parent, and how to prepare for childbirth. Everyone is welcome to attend. Participants who attend every session will be eligible for a free gift.

Participants can register here: bit.ly/PrenatalNutritionBX or contact tprince@health.nyc.gov for more information

New Releases, Updates and Recent Events

New Coding for MPV Related Services

On July 22nd, 2022, the American Medical Association (AMA) updated orthopoxvirus (MPV) CPT codes related to a new laboratory test code and two vaccine codes:

Category	CPT	Short Descriptor
Laboratory	87593	ORTHOPOXVIRUS AMP PRB EACH
Vaccine	90611	SMALLPOX&MONKEYPOX VAC 0.5ML
Vaccine	90622	VACCINIA VRS VAC 0.3 ML PERQ

For more information, click here: <https://bit.ly/3SnKflt>

Letter to American Thoracic Society

We are excited to share with you our letter to the American Thoracic Society to address the use of race in spirometry. Race adjustment in spirometry, incorrectly assumes that Black and Asian individuals have innately lower lung capacity compared to White individuals. Tragically, Black patients experience significantly worse outcomes in chronic lung disease and asthma as a result. This demands action from the American Thoracic Society in the form of new guidelines removing race adjustment. This is a most urgent health equity issue that we strive to address as part of the work of the Coalition to End Racism in Clinical Algorithms (CERCA).

Read here: <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/cmo/world-lung-day-letter.pdf>

Event Calendar

- **Inaugural NYP Dalio Center for Health Justice Conference: Race, Racism, & Health**
On Monday, October 3rd, the Inaugural NYP Dalio Center for Health Justice Conference was held at the Brooklyn Museum with keynote speaker, Heather McGhee, JD. Other featured speakers included Dr. David R. Williams, Dr. Howard C. Stevenson, and Dr. Michelle Morse. Access the event recording at: nyp.org/daliocenter
- **3rd Annual Cornell Center for Health Equity Symposium**
Thursday, October 20th, 2022 (5:00 PM to 7:00 PM) to Friday, October 21st, 2022 (8:30 AM to 5:00 PM), Cornell Center for Health Equity will host its third annual symposium. RSVP Here: <https://centerfortheequity.cornell.edu/save-the-date-3rd-annual-cornell-center-for-health-equity-symposium/>
- **Seventh Coalition to End Racism in Clinical Algorithms (CERCA) meeting**
On Friday, November 18th, at 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM, CERCA will hold its seventh meeting. If you are interested in learning more about CERCA or joining the coalition, please email Adriana Joseph at ajoseph4@health.nyc.gov.

For more updates, follow [@nychealthy](#) and [@nychealthcmo](#) on Twitter.