



NYIC State 2021 Priorities

Creating Healthy Communities: Health Care and Coverage for All Immigrants

New York State's ability to protect immigrant residents during and after the COVID-19 pandemic requires a strong and equitable health care system that provides the right physical and behavioral services and information in the right places at the right times. The health and economic toll of the COVID-19 pandemic has compounded anti-immigrant policies and rhetoric of the last four years, causing a sustained increase in anxiety and stress linked to fear and uncertainty. This toxic mix has exacerbated an existing lack of behavioral health services for immigrant communities.

Recommendations

Create a temporary state-funded Essential Plan for New Yorkers ([A01585/S2549](#)) up to 200% of the federal poverty level who have had confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 and who are otherwise ineligible for coverage because of their immigration status. Immigrant New Yorkers have been at the forefront of the state's fight against COVID-19, representing one-third of the state's essential workers and playing a key role in all sectors of our battle against the pandemic, from food production and delivery to construction and frontline health care provision. This is a matter of life or death for the **400,000+ New Yorkers who are uninsured** because of their immigration status and ultimately need a permanent state-funded coverage solution ([A00880/S1572](#)).

Pass and fully implement the New York Health Act, which would create a single-payer, improved Medicare for All-style universal coverage system for all residents of New York State regardless of immigration status.

Allocate Indigent Care Pool funds exclusively to Enhanced Safety Net Hospitals to more effectively target limited resources toward the communities and providers that need them most, and increase Medicaid reimbursement rates to these providers. We must protect Medicaid, our safety net institutions and other critical health and human services during this unprecedented time of crisis. Strengthening the fiscal health of hospitals and community health centers is more important than ever given hospital funding cuts and an increasing uninsured population caused by the "public charge" rule and unemployment due to COVID-19.

Reverse the proposed "340B carveout" and ensure community health centers and safety-net providers who rely on the prescription drug program and its funding can continue to provide vital services in immigrant communities across the state.

Allocate \$5 million to support health outreach and education by expanding the capacity of community-based organizations to inform immigrant families of their health access rights.

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