

Health and Mental Health Committee Meeting  
June 7, 2022  
Cynthia Gonzalez, Committee Chair

Topic(s)

NYS Department of Health, NYS Health Insurance Marketplace  
Presenter: Stana Nakhle, Regional Director

Metro Plus Health, NYC Health and Hospitals  
Presenter: Shinese Brathwaite, Supervisor for the borough of Brooklyn

Mr. Jeremy Laufer took the roll call.

Ms. Gonzalez welcomed Cynthia Felix to the committee. Because health insurance is such a complex topic, and in the limited time we had, each presenter was given 20 minutes to present, and the committee and the community had 15 minutes to ask questions. Ms. Gonzalez asked everyone to hold their questions until the end of the presentation.

Ms. Nakhle of New York State of Health shared that this is a new Health Plan Marketplace. Individuals, families, and small businesses can use it to buy health insurance. It lets you shop and compare many health plans. It is the only place to get help lowering the cost of health coverage. There will be links to materials in Spanish, Chinese and Arabic in the Zoom chat. Ms.

The NYS Health Plan Marketplace was established in 2013 because of the American Care Act. Individuals can go online to shop for affordable plans to see how much they would cost. They can shop by zip codes and can get assistance with enrollment and see if they are eligible for financial assistance. The marketplace is open to all New Yorkers that are lawfully present in the state. Open enrollment begins November 2022 through January 2023. Medicaid, Child Health Plus, and the Essential plan enrollment are open year-round.

Essential Plan Categories are:

Free preventive care, inpatient care, outpatient services, maternity and newborn care, emergency services, lab and imaging, prescription drug, rehabilitative and habilitative, mental health and substance abuse disorder services, wellness and chronic disease services, and pediatric dental and vision services.

Ms. Nakhle explained how The American Rescue Plan enacted by President Biden increased the amount of financial assistance to consumers. This will be available until the end of this year. She shared information on how to navigate the website. Assistance and materials are available in 27 languages 6 days per week. The website allows you to look up both plans and providers (hospitals and doctors). They are also active on all social media platforms. How to enroll:

[HTTP://info.NYStateofHealth.NY.gov/findassistor](http://info.NYStateofHealth.NY.gov/findassistor)

Customer Service Center: 1-855-355-5777

Website: NYStateofHealth.NY.gov

Joan Botti asked if enrollment differs from income and neighborhoods. Ms. Nahkle clarified that the 5 boroughs have the same plan choices with the same rates, but you need to see if they are in your neighborhood. Ms. Gonzalez asked if there were services for the hearing impaired. Ms. Nahkle informed that not all plans provide this coverage. Some plans, however, cover specialized services to consumer needs. David Sosa inquired about Coverage for All, specifically for excluded seniors 65 and older. Ms. Brathwaite was familiar with this plan that covers undocumented workers. She informed that this will not be available until January 2023. This will be available through the Human Resources Administration and is not part of the federal plan. Ms. Nahkle will make materials available to the community board in English, Spanish, Chinese and Arabic.

Ms. Brathwaite from Metro Plus Health and her colleagues, Jacqueline Rivera, and Siu Keung (Edmond) Lee translated in Spanish and Chinese during the presentation. Since 1985, MetroPlus Health Plan, Inc., a prepaid health services plan, has been offering low or no-cost quality health insurance to eligible New Yorkers. Their services include Identifying health, mental health and/or substance use needs early, providing support in the home and community, and preventing the need for emergency room visits, hospital stays, or out-of-home placements.

Ms. Brathwaite shared that Metro Plus has focused on educating, enrolling and being community focused for the past 35 years. They are presenting tonight in Mandarin and Spanish. Mr. Lee presented a slide show of 2021-2022 NYS of Health Marketplace Update and shared the contents in Mandarin. He gave information on Medicaid Managed Care, Child Health Plus and The Essential Plan. Covered in his presentation were the following: Children and Family Services, Coordination of Care, Good 4 You Family Library, HIV Support Services, LGBTQ Resources, Member Rewards, NYC Social Services, and the Pill Pack Program. There were no questions from the Chinese community. Cynthia Felix thanked Mr. Lee for clarifying issues of public charge to the community. She also addressed the hindrance to some of having to upload documents onto the portal. Ms. Brathwaite stated that they offer in person enrollment to anyone not comfortable uploading their documents on the website. They have offices in all 5 boroughs and are in all the hospitals to assist with enrollment. Mr. Lee shared his contact information. [leesuik@metroplus.org](mailto:leesuik@metroplus.org) Tel: 917-581-2482.

Ms. Brathwaite introduced Jacqueline Rivera who presented in Spanish and English. Her presentation was focused to the undocumented. Her presentation mirrored that of Mr. Lee in explaining the services available and how to enroll. The services products and rates as well as Medicare Advantage programs were explained. Ms. Gonzalez inquired about services specific to children gender identity issues. Ms. Rivera stated that they have social work and case management professionals that can provide services to families with these issues. Ms. Brathwaite informed that since they are part of the Health and Hospitals Corporation, they have access to specialty doctors that can address these concerns. They work in the schools and within DYCD. Their website has specialty services that families can access. They also provide walk-in services at the city municipal hospitals who can triage and direct consumers to

specialists. Ms. Brathwaite will provide the slide presentation to the board and has provided contact information on the chat.

Ms. Gonzalez thanked the presenters for this important information and encouraged everyone to reach out to the community board for materials and guidance.

### **Toll-Free Crisis Hotlines**

- Child Abuse & Neglect / Abuso y Negligencia de Niños y Jóvenes:
  - 1-800-342-3720
  - TDD/TTY: 1-800-638-5163
- Abandoned Infant / Infante Abandonado
  - 1-866-505-7233
- Domestic Violence / Violencia Doméstica
  - 1-800-942-6906
- Justice Center HOTLINE/Centro de Justicia
  - 1-855-373-2122
- Foster Care and Adoption/Cuidado de Crianza y Adopción
  - 1-800-345-5437 (KIDS)
- Child Care Complaint Line/Línea de Quejas sobre Cuidado Infantil
  - In NYS: 1-800-732-5207
  - In NYC: 311 or 1-800-732-5207
- Adult Protective Services/Servicios Protectores para Adultos
  - 1-844-697-3505