

COVERAGE AND ACCESS



An effective and equitable health care system is not possible without universal, affordable, and accessible health insurance that offers comprehensive coverage. Though New York State has made great strides in boosting coverage, significant gaps remain.

**Over
1 million**
New Yorkers
lack health
insurance coverage,
and many more are
underinsured

44%
of New York's
young children
live in low-income
households

6 million
vulnerable New
Yorkers—including
2.2 million
children—depend
on Medicaid

Shining a Light on Children and Families Affected by the Opioid Crisis

The opioid crisis is not the United States' first drug crisis, but it is its most deadly. Every year, opioids now claim more lives than car crashes.

Yet one aspect of the epidemic that has received little attention is the effect on children and families and their lack of access to needed services.

A new United Hospital Fund effort aims to change that. *The Ripple Effect: The Impact of the Opioid Epidemic on Children and Families* examines the impact of parental opioid addiction on youngsters' mental health, development, and family responsibilities.

To initiate the project, United Hospital Fund hosted a meeting in October 2018 that brought together some 40 specialists in opioid addiction, child development, and family policy. Their presentations,



observations, and discussions laid the foundation for the creation of a research agenda, policy options, and practice guidelines.

Supported by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, the project is jointly led by Suzanne Brundage, director of UHF's Children's Health Initiative, and Carol Levine, director of UHF's Families and Health Care Project. The Milbank Memorial Fund is collaborating on the initiative.

Despite significant challenges, many of the attendees at the UHF meeting were optimistic about solutions. Said Ms. Brundage: "The ramifications of childhood trauma are broad and quite pronounced, but it is not destiny. The brain is resilient and malleable, and a lot of good can be done when working with children despite the adversities they have been exposed to."

But working with children affected by opioids requires access to essential services, noted Ms. Levine. "It takes the entire community coming together to make sure affected children and families get the services they need."

UHF has prepared a report on the issue, which includes recommendations that can help states and communities provide needed assistance.



UHF advanced efforts to improve access to health insurance through analysis, convenings, consensus building, and collaboration with policymakers.

In 2018, we...



Strengthened New York's Medicaid program by playing a leadership role in efforts to ensure its long-term sustainability through analysis of broad program trends and specific policies.



Helped bridge the health and justice gap by supporting seminal work by the Legal Action Center to examine and share lessons from efforts in New York to ensure that recently incarcerated people can access immediate and appropriate physical and behavioral health care.



Promoted a strong health insurance market by analyzing market trends, assessing the impact of federal regulations on the New York market, and offering policy options for keeping the market robust and affordable.



Supported housing security by identifying New York City neighborhoods where high housing instability and Medicaid enrollment and utilization overlapped and by highlighting opportunities for Medicaid providers and plans to address housing issues and support better quality care.



Brought together 400 health care leaders from across New York State for the 10th annual Medicaid Conference.