

The Hospital Collaborative on Vulnerable and Marginalized Populations

May 6, 2013

Dear City Councillors:

This letter is to express our support for the City of Toronto Report on **Medically Uninsured Residents** in Toronto. The Hospital Collaborative on Vulnerable and Marginalized Populations believes that the recommendations in the report will improve access to healthcare services for people without health insurance making them less susceptible to adverse health outcomes.

The Hospital Collaborative is a group of senior level hospital representatives from the 18 hospitals<sup>1</sup> within the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network (TC LHIN) and key public policy and research facilities. We promote cooperative planning to address care challenges with marginalized populations by working together to reduce health inequities.

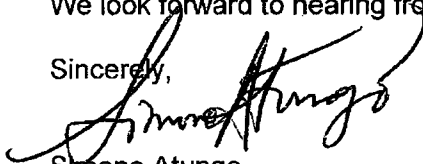
The lack of access to primary healthcare treatment and preventive services for non-insured people creates further disparities which makes this population even more vulnerable and is evidenced by their poorer health outcomes. Ultimately, this results in preventable hospital admissions and over utilization of emergency rooms; the most expensive point of care within the healthcare system. This population's health concerns can be more effectively managed through accessing primary healthcare in the community. Urgent Care is not the appropriate access point to receive care addressing the complex health care issues and concerns of non-insured clients.

In addition, the Hospital Collaborative has previously endorsed a statement issued by the Ontario Medical Association calling for the elimination of the three (3) month waiting period for OHIP and has written to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration to request that the recent changes and reductions to the coverage for refugees through the Interim Federal Health Benefits are reinstated. It is imperative that the members of Toronto City Council support these efforts to implement the necessary policy changes at the municipal, provincial and federal government levels to ensure greater access to healthcare services for the medically uninsured.

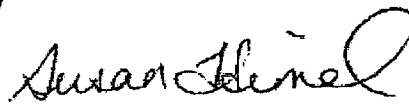
Given the lasting and serious consequences to the health outcomes of the uninsured, we are respectfully requesting that you support the City of Toronto report on **Medically Uninsured Residents** to ensure that all members of our society have equal access to healthcare services. We would be very pleased to have further dialogue with you pertaining to this matter and are prepared to work collaboratively with you towards achieving the recommendations outlined in the report.

We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Simone Atungo  
Co-Chair



Susan Himel  
Co-Chair

On behalf of the Hospital Collaborative on Vulnerable and Marginalized Populations

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<sup>1</sup> Hospital Collaborative members include: Baycrest Geriatric Health Care, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, Bridgepoint Health, Centre for Research on Inner City Health, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Hospital for Sick Children, Mount Sinai Hospital, Providence Health Care, Runnymede Healthcare Centre, St. Joseph's Health Centre, St. Michael's Hospital, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, Toronto Department of Public Health, Toronto East General Hospital, University Health Network, The Wellesley Institute, West Park Healthcare Centre, Women's College Hospital