



SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Despite spending twice as much on health care than any other western country, United States has some of the widest disparities in health outcomes, particularly in areas of sexual and reproductive health (SRH). In addition, recent policy changes have disproportionately affected the health and rights of our most vulnerable communities – low-income women and their families, at-risk teenagers and the uninsured – putting the city’s public health at risk.

For New York City, where nearly a fifth of the population lives below the poverty line, and more than 700,000 adults lack health insurance, access to SRH services is essential to positive health outcomes. PHS’ SRH work crosses three major areas: we operate two health centers in some of the poorest neighborhoods of New York City serving 4,000 women, men, and adolescents each year; we connect with over 5,000 teenagers annually in public schools to provide SRH education and support; and we build the capacity of primary care practices across the city to provide contraceptive information and services.

PHS’ SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CENTERS

New York State’s unintended pregnancy rate is 10% higher than the national average. Recent data indicates that rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) such as gonorrhea and chlamydia are also significantly higher in New York City than in the rest of the nation, with one in every four infections occurring in teenagers.

Nearly two-thirds of the clients we serve, including adults and teens, live below the poverty line; more than half rely on public health insurance programs; and almost a quarter lack health insurance altogether.



PHS’ SRH centers provide safe, affordable and comprehensive health care services that include free walk-in pregnancy testing, gynecological exams, prenatal care, birth control (including IUDs and implants), emergency contraception (morning after pill), men’s sexual health care, teens’ sexual health care, STI testing and treatment, HIV testing and counseling and mental health services.

All of our services are completely confidential. Our services are accessible to all clients, regardless of their income levels or their immigration status. We offer services for free or low-cost based on an affordable sliding fee scale, and accept many Medicaid plans. If our clients do not have health insurance, we help them get enrolled through our onsite PHS health insurance enrollment specialists.

HEALTH CARE FOR TEENS

Through teen SRH programs, PHS provides essential health care for adolescents that is free of cost and completely confidential. PHS' health educators provide an evidence-based curriculum in six Brooklyn schools, and serve as positive role models and act as needed confidants for the teenagers who may not have else to turn to with sexual health questions.

We also provide prenatal care to teens and actively work to connect these young women to additional support and resources, such as home visiting programs for first-time mothers.

Both our health centers take part in the *New York City Teens Connection* program, in which we are partnered as referral clinics for local high schools. We are featured in the Teens in NYC Pocket Guide, give tours, and provide same-day appointments (post tour) to students from participating schools.



FAMILY PLANNING CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

Despite low-income patients and under-served communities having high unmet contraceptive needs, many health care providers get little training or support to offer contraceptive information, counseling, and services. PHS' Family Planning Capacity Building Program (FPCBP) supports primary care practices in ensuring that underserved patients are screened for contraceptive needs and have access to high-quality services, including a full range of contraceptive methods.

PHS' support to health centers includes quality improvement, coaching, training, and technical assistance on health education, counseling, and clinical service provision, as well as proper revenue cycle management and billing and coding procedures to ensure sites maximize financial resources available to support these services.

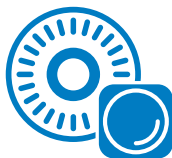
Participating Federally Qualified Health Centers and adolescent clinics, from New York City to South Carolina, have seen remarkable improvements, screening more patients for pregnancy intention and observing more patients initiate or continue the use of contraception, indicating increased access.

AS A RESULT OF THE PILOT PROJECT,



ANNUAL SCREENING FOR PREGNANCY INTENTION INCREASED FROM 3% TO

76%



PATIENTS NOT SEEKING PREGNANCY WHO INITIATED OR CONTINUED USE OF AN EFFECTIVE CONTRACEPTIVE METHOD INCREASED FROM 2%

68%

FROM 2016 TO 2019, OVER 20 ADDITIONAL SITES SAW COMPARABLE RESULTS AND PHS CONTINUES SUPPORTING MORE.

THIS PROGRAM BRINGS NY CLOSER TO CLOSING INEQUITABLE GAPS IN HEALTH CARE

PHS' related toolkit and resources, *Improving the Quality of Contraceptive Care in Primary Care Settings: A Toolkit for Practitioners*, is available for download on the PHS website. Visit healthsolutions.org to learn more about PHS' work, locations and contact information.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Without access to PHS' free services, many of our clients would be forced to forgo critical care, leading to an uptick in unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. With your support, we can continue to offer free services and expand our reach, ensuring that everyone has access to the services they need. Your gift of \$100 can provide 250 pregnancy tests to women in need. \$250 can provide a woman with an IUD, and \$500 can mean that 45 women receive monthly contraceptives for a year. Your gift of \$1,000 could help pay for HPV vaccine for a teenager.

For more information or to make a donation, please contact Jessica Ecker, at jecker@healthsolutions.org.