



Attorney General Andrew Cuomo
Office of the Attorney General, State of New York
120 Broadway
New York, NY 10271-03332

Dear Attorney General Cuomo,

I am a member of the Bronx community and I am very concerned about the discrimination that my community faces when we try to access the health care system. In particular, I am troubled that private hospitals in New York City segregate patients who need outpatient care based on the type of health insurance they have. Individuals who are on Medicaid and those who are uninsured are almost always sent to the hospital's clinic system, while patients with private insurance are seen in the doctors' private offices in the hospital.

Such practices create a **system of health care that is separate and unequal**. In New York City, more Blacks and Latinos receive Medicaid or are uninsured than whites. This means that when a hospital segregates patients on the basis of insurance - or the lack of it - it is also segregating on the basis of race and ethnicity.

These clinics provide unequal care in several ways. Hospitals often staff their clinics with residents and student doctors. This means that patients who are sent to clinics often receive care from less experienced doctors, and generally do not see the same doctor each time they go to the clinic. Also, there are usually longer wait times to get appointments. This means that low-income patients of color receive poorer quality health care compared to patients who are more affluent and white.

I oppose this kind of discrimination. Hospitals should adopt policies that ensure that all patients receive the same high quality care regardless of the type of insurance they have.

The problem of separate and unequal health care is of particular concern for residents of the Bronx. **People in the Bronx have some of the greatest health needs in all of New York City. So when the opportunities for high quality health care are closed to people of color and people who receive public benefits such as Medicaid, we take notice!**



Making Health Equality a Reality

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