

Network on Uninsured Clients Study

Fact Sheet #4: Information Needs

The Research Committee of the Women's College Hospital Network on Uninsured clients set out to capture the richness of experience and knowledge held by the Network's members. It conducted a "Qualitative Research Project on Health-Care Access for the Uninsured." The research findings were used to create four fact sheets. Network members identified several needs related to information required to enact policy change and more general information required about the undocumented and uninsured population. Three key information needs identified by the Network are:

- 1. Cost-Analyses:** information is required regarding:
 - > Health care system costs of denying care.
 - > Cost impacts of policy options such as removing the 3 month wait period.
 - > Comparative cost-analysis between hospitals within Ontario.
 - > Comparative cost-analysis between provinces.

Network members anticipate that cost-analyses would provide support for extending coverage and would help reduce cost-related delays in seeking and obtaining preventive care and appropriate care for the undocumented and uninsured. These delays in care are believed to lead to increased severity and poorer health outcomes that ultimately require more complicated and expensive treatments.

- 2. Descriptive Statistics:** information is required regarding how many individuals are uninsured and undocumented in Ontario. This may help motivate policy change by demonstrating the seriousness of this issue, and is required information for an accurate cost-benefit analysis.
- 3. Stories:** we need to document the stories of the uninsured and undocumented. Individual stories can help to raise awareness of the hardship, stigma and discrimination experienced by this group.

Education

Network members also identified the need to educate politicians/policy makers, the public, and health care providers about the health issues and challenges facing the uninsured and undocumented population. Training and education for health care professionals is considered by Network members to be a key driver to improving access and reducing discrimination and stigma. Health care professionals can lack sensitivity to the challenges faced by the undocumented and uninsured population and lack awareness of which services are available to, and paid for, for this population. Education for politicians and the public is also important to raise awareness, decrease stigma and discrimination, and potentially move policy change forward.

For more information on the network and the research, please visit

<http://www.womenscolleghospital.ca/programs/network-on-uninsured-clients.html>

Policy Brief written by Carolyn Steele Gray, Michaela Hynie, Linda Gardner and Angela Robertson. June 2010.
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