

September 23, 2020

Dear Commissioner,

As a Board Member at Norwegian American Hospital and former Chair on the Norwegian Hospital Foundation, providing mobile health for children in impoverished areas of Chicago, I am aware of the healthcare inequities in our society and its impact on individual lives. Given that Norwegian American Hospital serves a very disadvantaged and racially diverse population, I understand the value of providing preventative care, education, and low-cost clinical services to maintain health and quality of life. Ultimately, it is less expensive to serve a population that can be managed with sustained non-acute care vs. suffering through the cost and risk to life of acute care episodes. I urge you to please continue funding Access to Care in 2021 and beyond.

As a business man, I know they operate very efficiently with their small budget and that they know what they're doing. They often serve as a community social service resource center as well, for no additional cost by providing information on resources that go well beyond health care, addressing issues that impact health in the underserved communities (employment, food insecurity, housing, immigration and the like). These address the health equity gap that exists in our society.

Covid-19, has made the societal disparities even more visible and acute. Access to Care is also providing education and link to resources on the pandemic to its members, who are mostly from the Hispanic community, a group most hard hit by it. They are a bilingual organization which is also very impactful.

Access to Care is needed always, but especially now with the stress and leveraged disparities caused by Covid, Access to Care services are more vital than ever.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Adam H. Boris".

Adam Boris | Managing Partner, Healthcare Practice

TechCXO[®]
experience > acceleration

312-848-8338 | adam.boris@techcxo.com

Audrey Kaufman
901 S. Plymouth Ct. Apt 1405
Chicago, IL 60605

September 28, 2020

Dear Commissioner

I am a Cook County, Illinois resident and am very concerned about health care access for those most vulnerable among us. I urge you to consider funding Access to Care in 2021, as the program is the only option for health care for many people living in Cook County.

This organization ensures critical health care for the underserved and is a trusted source in the communities it serves. Access to Care is crucial in linking these underserved people with community groups that can help them directly and can help address the health equity gap that exists in our society.

During Covid-19, all of the societal inequities have become more obvious and have more dire consequences. Access to Care is also involved in providing education about the pandemic to its members, most of whom are Hispanic and are most affected by the Pandemic. This organization is needed now more than ever. Please help ensure that this organization continues to get funding for the coming year.

Thank you for doing what you can to continue the support for Access to Care through 2021.

Sincerely,

Audrey Kaufman

To whom it may concern,

I am a patient of the Access To Care program. I am a person with diabetes and other health issues. This is the only program that I qualify for that keeps me healthy. Please do not take the funds for ATC for 2012. The advantage of the program that I have is that my doctor's office is so close to my house. Knowing that I have ATC takes away the stress that I wake up with every day especially with COVID-19. Please continue to give the funds for the program.

Sincerley,

Alma Ramirez

The Kineo Group
2627 West Leland Avenue
Suite 100
Chicago IL 60625

312.402.5652
www.thekineogroup.com



September 16 2020

Dear Commissioner,

I have become aware that Cook County Health may decline to fund Access to Care (ATC) in 2021. I am writing to express both my disappointment and surprise at this potential decision.

Now, more than ever before, the population that ATC serves is at tremendous health risk. Many suffer from serious chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and hypertension. It is this population that has been most affected by the deadly pandemic we are all living through.

Understandably, funds are tight for all Illinois entities. But support for ATC—an organization that has responsibly shepherded its small budget to provide primary care to those who fall into the gap between health insurance and medicaid—must not end. Candidly, cutting funds for this organization at this time in history seems foolhardy.

I am not a public health expert. But as a pro bono communication consultant who has worked with ATC over the last few years, I am aware of the organization's unwavering commitment to its clients, its fiduciary excellence and its impact on the health and well-being of the people it serves.

I implore the Cook County Commissioners to continue to fund Access to Care.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Deborah Schneider".

Deborah Schneider
Principal, The Kineo Group

Kineo

September 23, 2020

Dear Commissioner,

As a high school teacher in a Chicago Public School, I see the negative impact of intense family stresses on my students' ability to learn. Chief among these are economic ones that lead to food insecurity, lack of health and health care, lack of work, etc.

I am writing to ask that you please continue to fund Access to Care. It is needed more than ever. It serves the most vulnerable populations, especially in the Latino community.

Access to Care is one of the few programs in Cook County suburbs and northwest Chicago that provide easy access to a doctor and primary care in people's local communities. It provides health coverage for those who have no other options. It is more essential than ever given the current economic environment, the pandemic and shrinking government programs.

I understand County funding is key to the continuation of Access to Care. Please ensure they are able to continue providing this most essential service to those in need and with no other options for their ongoing health care.

Sincerely, *Andres Hernandez*

Andres Hernandez
4432 N. Maplewood
Chicago, IL 60625

M A M B U © A

September 25, 2020

Dear Commissioner,

I am writing to ask for your support in funding Access to Care (ATC) in 2021. As someone who has worked in the health care industry, I am aware that there are many, many people, including those without employer-provided insurance, undocumented people and refugees, who don't have regular access to healthcare. In a country as rich and privileged as the United States, both citizens and government need to do all it can to remedy this inequity.

Access to Care is a unique program that *is* doing all it can by serving those that are most in need of their services, especially in communities where healthcare service options are few or non-existent. This efficiently managed organization serves those that have no other options for care, those who do not qualify for any other type of help for health insurance or those that cannot afford their deductibles even if they have insurance.

People not as privileged as you and me are depending on ATC.

As I'm sure you know well, during Covid-19 all of the societal inequities have become even more obvious -- and are having even more dire consequences on people of color -- which the numbers infected in Cook County make abundantly clear. Access to Care is also involved in providing public-health education on the pandemic to its members, who are mostly from the Hispanic community, a group that has been among the hardest hit by the coronavirus.

I know you are facing very tough financial decisions as well during these unprecedented times. I trust, however, that you are able to see that Access to Care is one group that can help those most in need and, in the process, literally save lives.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Annette Mambuca

ANNETTE MAMBUCA | *Communications for Business*

5807 NORTH MAPLEWOOD AVENUE | CHICAGO, IL 60659

PHONE 773.334.2240 | FAX 773.334.2245

E-MAIL MAMBUCA@XSITE.NET

9/18/2020

Attn: Kathi Franklin
President and CEO
Access to Care
Suburban Primary Health Care Council
2225 Enterprise Drive, Suite 2507
Westchester, IL 60154

Dear Kathi,

We are so blessed to have a partnership with you in order to refer local residents that need health care access the most. Many local residents truly only have Access to Care as their option for care as they lack funding or financial resources to go anywhere else and be covered for their care.

Access to Care allows for local residents to be able to receive care right within their own communities and to help stabilize many of the health diseases that can put someone at high risk for their life such as diabetes and heart disease.

We are very grateful to continue to work with such a caring organization and support having Access to Care be a part of the next Cook County budget. We know that without this funding many local residents would have to go without care, and that should never have to happen.

Now is the time to support and embrace healthcare for all, especially during this COVID19 pandemic we are facing. We need to continue to re-assure families that they can get the care they need when they need it. This helps reduce their overall stress and anxiety and also prevents any other mental health needs that could come from having to worry about not having healthcare needs met.

We hope that this letter of support has a great outcome for Access to Care in being able to continue to provide great healthcare to many and be a part of the next budget of 2021 for Cook County.

Sincerely,

Sue Warwick, MSW, LSW, Type 73 Certified
Sue Warwick, MSW, LSW, Type 73 Certified
Director, Community Mental Health Services





www.psycynergy.com

September 9, 2020

This is a letter of support for Access To Care in its request for funding to continue to provide critical primary care services to historically disenfranchised populations. This organization has utilized its past community involvement and its current presence in various communities to continually launch programs that will increase the healthcare outcomes of uninsured and underinsured populations in suburban Cook County and northwest Chicagoland. It is our understanding that since 1988, and under the current leadership of Kathi Franklin, Access to Care has worked vigorously to address primary healthcare, (most recently) behavior health and other disparities within our communities. The labor of love that Access has provided to marginalized populations is commendable during the best of times. However, in the midst of a global pandemic, where both health and employment stability for an even larger segment of our population is compromised, their work is even more critical.

Access to Care is a nonprofit organization which serves individuals from all walks of life; and has, intelligently, joined with community partner organizations to accomplish its mission objective. Over the past three years of working closely with the Access to Care team, we have experienced first hand how much they care about patients entrusted to them. Each patient is viewed as an individual with a life and loved ones. They are not just numbers on a spreadsheet. Further, the leadership at Access to Care firmly believes in the evidence-based practice of integrative care. They truly let the scientific research/data inform the system of care. This is an uncommon and yet critical differentiation from the norm.

Obviously, in order to continue this "good work", substantial funding is required. In fact, given the increased need (due to COVID-19 and its aftermath), more funding—not less—is required. We stand with Access to Care and respectfully request that their funding remains, at minimum, at current levels. Our relationship and support of Access to Care is continual and current. We are committed to supporting their future endeavors to help all populations.

Warm regards,
Dr JL Weems
OWNER/CEO





September 29, 2020

Dear Cook County Commissioners:

Board of Directors

Stephanie Schrodt
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Stacey Williams
Vice-President

Andrew Maychruk
Treasurer

Cassandra West
Secretary

Elizabeth Sweeney Backes

Townsend Bailey

Cuyler Brown

Thomas Gary

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Patricia Hannon, MD

David Henkes

Shawn Joseph

Donna Myers

Tom Watson

Stacey Williams

Liz Ziehl

Michele Zurakowski
Executive Director

I write to you today as a proud organizational partner of Access to Care. Beyond Hunger, formerly the Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry, provides hunger-relief programming and services to residents of 13 zip codes across Cook County. Each year we serve over 12,000 unique individuals—40,000 with repeat visits.

With the onset of COVID-19 and rising unemployment rates, more and more people need basics like food, shelter, and medical care. During the first three months of the pandemic, we saw a 40% increase in program utilization and over 250% increase in first time clients.

Those new clients frequently have multiple needs. They need help navigating what for them is often a new system of social safety net services. We provide that navigation assistance, helping link people to critical supports to keep food on their tables and families in their homes. If we meet an individual at Beyond Hunger who is eligible for health care services through Access to Care, we help connect them. In addition to acting as an ATC Intake Site, we partner with Access to Care to make our common communities aware of the each other's services.

We need Access to Care to continue helping our communities in the Western suburbs and throughout the rest of their service areas. Without Access to Care, over 6,000 people will lose their current doctors.

For the health of the region, please fully fund Access to Care in 2021.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Zurakowski", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michele Zurakowski
Executive Director

Beyond Hunger
848 Lake Street
Oak Park, IL 60301

708-386-1324
info@GoBeyondHunger.org
GoBeyondHunger.org

October 16, 2020

Dear Commissioner,

I am writing you because I have experienced personally and within my family the impact of Covid-19 infection and its lingering complications that require on-going medical care even after you are told you have "recovered."

Both my husband and I got Covid-19 in March and my 25-year-old nephew became ill earlier in February. I was lucky to have survived it without any complications (so far) but my husband is still suffering. So much so that it is difficult for him to work.

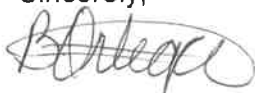
My nephew, though young, has had the most difficulty. His doctors thought he might need a lung transplant when he was being treated at the hospital. He was severely ill and although now home, needs to be on oxygen. And, no one knows what the future holds for any of us.

I hear the County is not going to fund Access to Care in 2021. I am amazed at this decision given what is going on with Covid. People need more ongoing care now because of Covid. And, in my community – people of Latino heritage - the need is really big because of the kinds of work many of us do that exposes us more to infection. And many have no insurance. Especially new immigrants and those without papers.

We need your help. Please fund Access to Care in 2021. Many lives depend on it and you.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Beatriz Ortega", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Beatriz Ortega
6138 S. Archer Road #1
Summit, IL 60501

Dear Commissioner

Please do not take away my benefits for my medical needs. I am a patient of the access to care program for many years now. This is the only program that me and my family qualify for and can afford. I understand that the funds for this program want to be eliminated by 2021. Without ATC I will have to go to the emergency room for all my medical needs and I will not be able to pay. But I will have no other option if I find myself in a situation that I need emergency treatment. I also do not have reliable transportation to go anywhere else. My docotor's office is so convient and easy for me to get there. Besides that taking away my access to care I will find myself dealing with stress just thinking what am I going to do without insurance. I ask that please do not take the funds away for the program so that me and my family can live a stressless life.

Sincerely,

Beatris Castillo and family



October 14, 2020

Dear Cook County Commissioners,

Access to Care has helped vulnerable communities in suburban Cook County and northwest Chicago gain access to health care services for more than 30 years. Now, in the middle of a pandemic, Access to Care services are needed more than ever.

As the Regional Director of the West Cook region of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago, I see the effects COVID-19 has had on our under-resourced populations every day. We have partnered with Access to Care many times and will continue to do so — making our common communities aware of each other's services and opportunities. Ongoing funding is critical for programs like Access to Care as they currently serve nearly 6,000 individuals in suburban Cook County and northwest Chicago. Without ATC, those populations will lose their connections to their doctors and life-sustaining medications.

Please ensure that Access to Care receives funding in 2021 so that it may continue its mission. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Mike Waters



September 18, 2020

Dear Cook County Commissioners,

I have worked in a banking capacity as well as provided personal support since 2004 to a truly exceptional organization, Access To Care. I have both met with and heard testimonials from numerous individuals and families who have been truly grateful for the life changing and sometimes life saving support that Access To Care has provided them. I have known most of the Access To Care leadership team and staff members for these past 16 years and have always been impressed with the dedication and service they have provided to the community.

In these times especially, Access to Care is a much needed and essential component to the health of the community it serves. With record number of people unemployed and consequently substantial increases in the number of people without health insurance, the need for the health services provided by Access To Care is as great as it has ever been. The majority of community members who benefit from these health services provided are those in areas that have been most impacted by Covid-19.

I ask that you please consider reinstating the much appreciated and essential funding that you have provided Access to Care through the years.

Thank you for the consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Kling".

Stephen Kling

Business Relationship Manager

Chase Business Banking



September 21, 2020

Dear Cook County Commissioners:

COVID-19 has greatly affected lower-income individuals of color in the Chicago area. Access to Care serves nearly 6,000 individuals in vulnerable communities across suburban Cook County and the northwest Chicago. Without Access to Care, those individuals will lose their connections to doctors and life-sustaining medications.

Access to Care placed ads for their health care services in Clipper Magazine this year. We worked together to get information about ATC services to over 160,000 residents of suburban Cook County. We are proud to help support ATC's mission to serve and want it to continue.

Access to Care services are needed NOW and in the near future. Please ensure that Access to Care receives funding in 2021 so that they may continue helping these vulnerable populations.

Sincerely,

Stacey LaMantia
Senior Multi Media Consultant
Clipper Magazine/Presidents Club

Sept. 18th, 2020

Dear Cook County Commissioners:

My company, MissDoreenFacePaints has worked with Access to Care for 4 years. My staff and I have had the pleasure of joining Access to Care at community events and health fair as face painters and balloon artists providing entertainment for their wonderful events. While we work with many companies for a variety of family events, we enjoy working with non-profits, like Access to Care, that are driven by honorable missions to serve our communities.

COVID-19 has greatly affected so many populations, especially lower-income individuals of color. Ongoing funding is so important and without it, over 5,000 individuals across suburban Cook County and northwest Chicago could lose established connections with their doctors and access to medications that keep them healthy.

I respectfully request that Access to Care receive funding in 2021 to continue to serve suburban Cook County's most vulnerable populations.

Sincerely,

Doreen Laurent, owner
MissDoreenFacePaints
10030 Merrimac Ave.
Oak Lawn, IL 60453

October 5, 2020

Dear Commissioner,

Our healthcare is in trouble. I know this first-hand as a nurse in the Rush Healthcare System. The uninsured are growing in number as people start to lose their jobs and along with them, their healthcare.

Covid-19 pandemic is increasing mortality rates with its attack on those who suffer with chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, pulmonary conditions and many more. And, even those who do not suffer from chronic disease and are infected are often never fully back to their prior level of health after "recovering." These patients will likely require ongoing care for the various after-effects of the infection.

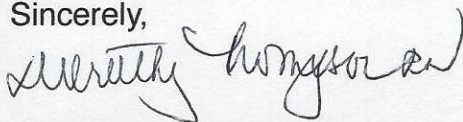
Our fellow citizens in Illinois and Cook County who are economically disadvantaged suffer from lack of access to care in the best of times. They also now are among the most vulnerable in this pandemic. And, the end is not near for Covid-19, especially as we move into winter.

People die because they cannot get care because of financial, political and social barriers. Many are saved by the Access to Care program if they are lucky enough to live in the areas the program serves. It is often their only option for receiving healthcare.

Please continue funding Access to Care in 2021 and beyond. The need for it is more, not less as we move forward in these very extraordinary times.

Thank you for your help and consideration of our patients through supporting Access to Care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dorothy Thompson".

Dorothy Thompson RN

Dizzzott@sbcglobal.net

October 15, 2020

I am writing today to thank you for your support of the Access to Care program and to urge you to continue that support in the 2021 budget. I am Dr. Maurice Lemon, past Chairman of the Board for the Access to Care program. I have served on the ATC Board for over 20 years.

The need for high quality primary health care for residents of Cook County has never been greater, despite the Affordable Care Act and expansion in coverage. The effects of the current COVID 19 Pandemic have had disproportionate effects on lower income residents of Cook County, who are those served by Access to Care.

Health care access continues to be a challenge for many in Cook County. The recent study from the Kaiser Family Foundation found that, even after implementation of the Affordable Care Act, there are still about 500,000 uninsured in Cook County- 300,000 in the City and 200,000 in suburban Cook County. As someone who worked at Cook County and then Stroger Hospital for over 25 years, serving as Hospital Medical Director and in other roles, I know that CCHHS can't meet the demand for care from all those in need. This has been and is still the case in suburban Cook County where few brick and mortar County clinics exist and access to health care services can be extremely difficult.

Now you know that ATC screens every potential client and refers those eligible to County Care or other potential insurers. We only provide care to uninsured residents. As you may know, the way Access to Care works is by contracting with local primary care providers who, for very little remuneration, essentially volunteer their time to serve Access to Care members. Because of their volunteerism, we are able to assign members of Access to Care to a primary care physician in their own community who will see these clients regularly. Meanwhile ATC supports the cost of pharmacy, lab, xray and other services.

The diagnoses of our clients are heavily weighted to chronic diseases, including Diabetes, HTN and others. This puts them into the most vulnerable for COVID 19 infection/complications, as well as other chronic health problems. Recent studies have noted a striking increase in

Pandemic-related mental health problems. We have added counseling and some outpatient behavior health services access for many of our members to complement and enlarge on primary care services.

Access to Care is very cost efficient. Our yearly outside audits have repeatedly found that the vast majority of funds are used in direct support of patient services. Because of that we are able to provide a physician office visits, lab tests, x-rays and prescription drugs and counseling services for about \$600 a year per person. Most importantly, we successfully leverage the impact of Cook County funding. Last year, Access to Care received donated services and discounts amounting to over \$5,000,000. That means that for every dollar Cook County provides for our uninsured patients, we leverage four more dollars in donated health care services.

Some years ago, we received nearly 85% of funding from Cook County. This has changed and we now get less than 50% from Cook County. We have steadily increased the contributions from foundations, townships, private donors. 85% of our clients are below 200% of poverty and the costs of care for diabetes and other conditions for these clients can be crushing without ATC help. 75% of our clients are employed but without access to health insurance. We still rely on Cook County for crucial support and to serve some of the neediest of Cook County residents.

As a primary care physician myself, I know that this care provides the support necessary to manage and control their illnesses. By keeping members healthy and out of the emergency room, they can continue to work, take care of their families and continue to be productive Cook County residents. During the current Pandemic, this has never been more true. Therefore, I urge you to continue your support for ATC.

Thank you.

Maurice R. Lemon, M.D. M.P.H.

Hi my name is Emiliano Romero and I am a patient of the ATC program. I sometimes need to go the emergency room which is not covered by ATC. The access to care has really helped me with my medical needs due to me having a low income and being unemployed and that is why I want to ask to please do not take away the ATC funds without the program I will find myself in debt.

Sincerely, Emiliano Romero



Foxglove Alliance

September 18, 2020

Honorable Dennis Deer
Cook County Board Commissioner – 2nd District
3600 West Ogden Ave
Chicago, IL 60623

Dear Commissioner Deer:

I am writing to you today to advocate for continued funding for one of the Foxglove Alliance Members, Access to Care (ATC). As you know, I follow the Cook County Health & Hospital System and Cook County government operations quite closely and I know that you have some very hard budgetary decisions to make from your roles on both boards. I definitely understand how many organizations and initiatives that have been funded in the past may not see that level of support in the budget you are helping craft. But I think there are compelling reasons to give some consideration to continuing to support ATC.

ATC is a primary care facilitator for the most vulnerable populations in suburban Cook County and northwest Chicago, serving those that are at or below 300% of poverty levels, without insurance, or with deductibles they cannot afford, the undocumented, and the chronically ill. ATC has become even more needed during the current COVID-19 pandemic because it has impacting the population that ATC serves harder than most Cook County residents. For example:

- ***Many more people are now losing their health insurance as they lose their jobs. More than ever, ATC is needed and essential*** to the health of the community in these uncertain times and increasing need for health care safety nets;
- ***ATC is the only health care coverage option for many***, including but not limited to the undocumented and refugee populations;
- ***The Majority of those ATC serves suffer from multiple chronic conditions*** such as hypertension, diabetes, heart disease. ATC saves lives by facilitating ongoing care and monitoring of these individuals. Members have told ATC that their lives were saved because of it. ***(These conditions also make these individuals at most risk for severe outcomes in the current pandemic.);*** and
- ***The Majority of ATC members are from the Latinx and immigrant communities, historically underserved. Often ATC is their only option due to transportation and other barriers.***



Foxglove Alliance

Once again and as always, thank you for your time and any consideration you can give to this request is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely:

Levi B. Moore, Jr.

Levi Moore

Foxglove Alliance Coordinator

CC: Hon. President Toni Preckwinkle

Hon. Frank Aguilar
Hon. Alma Anaya
Hon. Luis Arroyo
Hon. Scott Britton
Hon. John Daley
Hon. Bridget Degnen
Hon. Bridget Gainer
Hon. Brandon Johnson
Hon. Bill Lowry
Hon. Donna Miller
Hon. Stanley Moore
Hon. Kevin Morrison
Hon. Sean Morrison
Hon. Peter Silvestri
Hon. Deborah Sims
Hon. Larry Suffredin

October 5, 2020

Dear Commissioner,

I am a former Cook County public defender. With over 25 years of experience working with economically disadvantaged clients, I have seen the impact of lack of resources on individuals and families.

Without the basic necessities many of us take for granted like food security, personal safety, access to healthcare and the like, many people find themselves desperate and without hope.

I have been aware of the Access to Care program for many years. I have seen how this small but effective organization changes people's lives by providing access to ongoing, personalized, locally available healthcare to those with little to no other options. They save lives.

I understand the County is planning not to fund Access to Care in 2021 and I find this puzzling and disturbing. Given the growing number of uninsured people in the current economic situation and the ongoing pandemic, I cannot understand the logic.

Please reconsider your decision and fund this special, unique and much needed program. The program and those it serves (over 120,000 in the past 30+ years, I believe) need your help and support.

Please continue funding Access to Care in 2021. The need for it is more, not less in these extraordinary times.

Thank you for your help in advance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gerald A. Kirschbaum".

Gerald A. Kirschbaum

gerakir@comcast.net

847 217-2707

10-13-2020

To whom it may concern:

"Please reinstate funding for Access to Care in the 2021 Cook County Budget."

Access to Care provides access to much needed primary health care services including doctor visits, Labs, X-RAYS and Prescription drugs for those with little financial resources

Access to Care is often their only health care option

I urgently request your support. Please continue to fund this efficient, effective and unique program

Do not overlook those who are the most vulnerable because of the tough budget decisions facing Cook County.

Thank you

Gloria Quesada

ARAB AMERICAN ACTION NETWORK (AAAN)

3148 W. 63rd Street
Chicago, IL 60629
www.aaan.org

(773) 436-6060
Fax (773) 436-6460

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Nadine Naber

Linda Paz
Program Coordinator,
Access to Care
Suburban Primary Health Care Council
2225 Enterprise Drive, Suite 2507
Westchester, IL 60154

October 19, 2020

Dear Ms. Paz,

My name is Hatem Abudayyeh, Executive Director of the Arab American Action Network (AAAN), a community-based, nonprofit organization providing social services, youth development, advocacy and organizing, and cultural outreach programming to Arab immigrants and Arab Americans across Chicagoland.

Staff

Hatem Abudayyeh
Executive Director

Maysoon Abugharbieh
Nadia Alyafai
Reema Rustom
Rania Salem
*Community
Organizers*

Aminah Arab
*Youth Services
Program Associate*

Halima Bahri
*Youth Services
Program Coordinator*

Eman Dolan
Mahasen Odeh
Taghreed Yousif
Family Literacy Project

Muna Hammad
*New Americans
Initiative Coordinator*

Muhammad Sankari
Lead Organizer

Fatmah Tabally
Lead Case Manager

The AAAN has partnered with Access to Care (ATC) for many years, helping low income Arab and Muslim families access much needed healthcare. These are immigrants who are not eligible for any other benefits, and without ATC, would not be able to afford doctors, clinics, specialists, and medication.

We strongly support Access to Care, and ask that Cook County continue funding the program. It is an essential one, especially as we all do our best to stay healthy and safe during this COVID-19 pandemic.

Please feel free to call me at 773.301.4108, or email hatem@aaan.org, at any time, with questions or for more information.

Thank you for your important work.

Sincerely,



Hatem Abudayyeh
Executive Director,
AAAN

October, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express deep concern regarding the potential loss of funding for the Access to Care program. I am an Emergency Department Nurse Practitioner and have worked in the ED for over 10 years, the last 5 of which have been spent between both West Suburban Medical Center and Elmhurst Hospital. I have spent my career seeing first-hand how impactful it can be to have a primary care provider. Primary care is a vital component - the central hub of a person's health care. It is not only crucial that patients have someone to follow up with after their ED visit, but it also helps to prevent unnecessary ED visits that clog the hospital system, delay care, and increase costs.

The role of the Access to Care program is more important than ever and fills a gap that is frankly unparalleled. This program is saving lives in our community suburbs. I implore you to continue to advocate for their funding.

Thank you,

Hillary Loehman APRN, FNP/ENP-C, CEN, TNS

HTML Marketing

Maximizing Your Message

3616 SE 18th Court
Ankeny, IA 50021
515-661-4932

September 18, 2020

Dear Cook County Commissioners:

My company, HTML Marketing, started working with Access to Care this year. Together, we created an online application for new members. We launched the online application shortly after citizens were ordered to shelter in place. The online application has enabled many individuals in need of a doctor to find care through ATC services.

While I work with many companies and organizations across the county, I enjoy working with non-profits, like Access to Care, that are driven by a mission to help their communities. Funding for Access to Care is so important --- without it, over 5,000 individuals across suburban Cook County and northwest Chicago could lose access to primary health care.

Please ensure that Access to Care receives funding next year to continue its mission, serving Chicagoland's most at-risk communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Justin Rogers', with a stylized flourish at the end.

-Justin Rogers
Owner

Impact Networking, LLC

6 Territorial Court
Bolingbrook, IL 60440
630.679.9090

Dear Cook County Commissioners:

Impact Networking has worked with Access to Care for two years. We provide printers, supplies and support that enables Access to Care to carry out their day-to-day operations efficiently. Impact supports many different types of companies, but we appreciate our non-profits clients, like Access to Care, that are driven by a mission to serve people in our communities—in this case, 5,000 people!

COVID-19 has greatly affected so many populations, especially lower-income individuals of color. Ongoing funding is critical to Access to Care so that these communities do not completely lose established connections with their doctors.

I respectfully request that Access to Care receive funding in 2021 to continue to serve suburban Cook County and northwest Chicago's most at-risk communities.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Reardon
Impact Networking

09/21/2020

Dear Cook County Board of Commissioners,

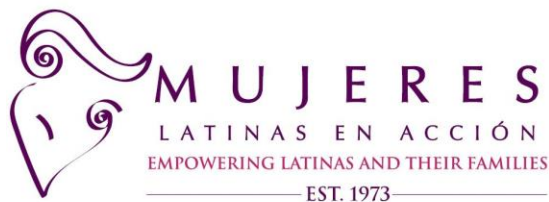
I write this letter to you out of concern for the decision to not include the Suburban Cook County Access to Care Program in the County's fiscal budget for the upcoming year.

I am a resident of the South Suburban Cook County community, in Park Forest, Illinois. For almost 10 years, between 2008 and 2018 I worked at the municipal owned local health department in Park Forest, locally known as *Nurses Plus*. For those years where I served as the community's Director of Public Health, I saw many citizens wander into our clinic looking for help. **I was astonished to see how many people fell between the cracks of having Access to Primary Health Care. Even after Obama Care came about, people would come in usually after a sudden unexpected lay off or budget cut who were in their 40's and 50's with co-morbidities such as Hypertension, Diabetes, Congestive Heart Failure or even Cancer. People came in seeking help because they could not afford medication or supplies. Some came because they could not afford another hospital bill from using the emergency room. Others came, because they had not established residency yet in the United States for 5 years, but were working and had children born here. In some cases the children were covered by Medicaid, but the parents were not. Time and time again, there continued to be a gap in access to primary health care services.** Care which was provided through the "lifesaving" program called "Access to Care".

If I sound passionate about the Access to Care Program, it is because I saw first –hand the impact this community resource had in the lives of our local constituents. For some, it was the difference between night and day. I personally lost my job at the age of 53 and had just divorced about 6 months before my position termed out. All of a sudden, I had no health insurance for myself or through my spouse. My blood pressure was dangerously elevated and I was on 4 different medications to keep it under control. All of a sudden, the insurance to cover these medications was cut off. At first, I just continued to update my resume and start to interview for a new job as soon as possible. With a degree and over 30 years of work experience I did not think it would take long for me to find another job. I thought wrong. I interviewed with one company after another. Weeks turned into months. It seemed that companies did not want to hire me because they thought I would not be there long enough for them to get the return on their investment in training me. I talked to associates, colleagues and friends for leads. The best I found were temporary or contract positions with no benefits. **All of a sudden, I became one of those unfortunate people who has worked all my life, but was facing hard times. It was then, that I really saw the great benefit in the Access to Care program.**

As I think about the people who are now out of work due to COVID-19 abruptly and unplanned, I can only imagine that the need for the Access to Care Program is the *greatest it has ever been*. Our community needs resources now more than ever. Please reconsider supporting this program for the health of our Suburban Cook County communities.

Jenise Ervin RN, MSN
371 Lakewood Blvd.
Park Forest, Illinois, 60466
Email: niecyp@hop@gmail.com



Pilsen HQ
2124 W. 21st Place
Chicago, IL 60608
773.890.7676

Brighton Park
4700 S. California Ave.
Chicago, IL 60632
773.890.8620

North Riverside
7222 W. Cermak Road. 509
North Riverside, IL 60546
708.442.1299

Dear Commissioner:

On behalf of Mujeres Latinas en Acción I, Jocelyn Moreno, come across various perspectives as a Community Health Worker for Mujeres Latinas en Acción. Mujeres Latinas en Acción is a non-agency serving Latinas in the Chicagoland area for nearly 50 years. Mujeres is a bilingual/bicultural agency that empowers Latinas by providing services which reflect their values and culture and being an advocate on the issues that make a difference in their lives. We have recently expanded our services to the Southwest suburbs and this has exposed me to so many different issues our community faces but it also allowed us to partner up with organizations that are important for the community. One of them being Access to Care. We have seen how vital their work and resources are for the uninsured community member is and because of that, I believe Cook County should continue funding Access to Care.

The Access to Care program supports an invisible and underrepresented population that already gets dismissed far too often. The resources for these individuals are also low to none and as long as there are families and individuals without any health care coverage, Cook County should continue funding Access to Care. Hopefully my perspective as a professional working with vulnerable populations has demonstrated the value Access to Care provides as a community resource.

Sincerely,

Jocelyn Moreno
Mujeres Latinas en Acción

10-12-20

Dear Commissioner

Please do not take my ATC away from me. This is the only medical program for which I qualify for and could afford to pay. I understand that the funds for this program want to be eliminated for 2021. Without access to care I will have to go to the emergency room for all my medical needs which I cannot afford. Besides that I do not have transportation available to get to Stroger hospital. The advantage that I have with the access to care program is that my doctor is close to my house and I can be there easily. It will also help me relief some of the stress that I live with every day. Please do not take away the funds for the program I really depend of ATC.

Sincerely, Juan Castillo



October 2, 2020

RE: 2021 Continued Support for Access to Care (ATC)

Dear Cook County Commissioners,

The City of Des Plaines became aware that funding for Access to Care is not currently in the 2021 Cook County Budget. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and recent increase in active cases within our area, we question if this is really the right time to further limit access to primary healthcare for low income and underserved populations.

As you know, Access to Care programming provides primary healthcare to individuals living in the City of Des Plaines, suburban Cook County and northwest Chicago. They serve:

- Residents at or below 300% of poverty levels.
- Residents employed but are either uninsured, underinsured or have unaffordable deductibles.
- Residents that are undocumented and/or chronically ill.
- Residents affected by the pandemic with loss of employment and/or reduced hours, making them ineligible for health coverage through their employer.

The City of Des Plaines supports Access to Care by providing a registration site for the program. The City financially supports their efforts to provide health care to those residing in the corporate Des Plaines area and has done so for more than 5 years.

The ongoing benefits of routine health care and the current need for those with chronic conditions is even more critical during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please reconsider financially supporting Access to Care Program in your upcoming budget decisions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathy Puetz'.

Kathy Puetz, M.S.W
Community Social Worker
City of Des Plaines

The ATC program is very important to me because of my medical and finance situation. The access to care program is very economical for me. At this time I can not afford to pay much for medical expenses. Due to me not being employed. I ask you to not take away the funds from the program because I depend on ATC for my health issues

Sincerely,

Lucia Saucedo De Garcia

My name is Martina Godinez I am a patient with ATC. I am worried because they want to cut access to care funds and the truth is that I do not know what I would do if the ATC program is taken away. I am unemployed and I count on the help that I receive with access to care.

Sincerely,
Martina Godinez

Marilyn Canning
3800 N. Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, IL, 60613

September 27, 2020

Dear Commissioner,

I am asking for your support in continuing to fund Access to Care (ATC) which serves economically challenged clients that do not qualify for other types of assistance for health insurance or those that cannot afford their deductibles even if they have insurance. ATC serves those that have no other options for care. It has provided a vital service for over a hundred thousand people who desperately needed financial assistance to access the health care they need.

And with COVID-19 creating havoc on so many fronts, more people are losing their jobs and health insurance. During this pandemic health care is even more important, especially for those with chronic conditions. The numbers infected in Cook County are sobering. Access to Care also provides education on the pandemic to its members, who are mostly from the Hispanic community, a group most hard hit by it. Access to Care is needed more than ever!

I realize that the County is confronted with tough financial decisions. However, I do hope you are able to see that Access to Care helps those most in need with limited financial resources. It fulfills a much needed role in helping clients with their healthcare needs. In addition, timely access to healthcare, particularly during the pandemic, can prevent the need for more expensive care. Access to Care has saved lives and, in many instances, saved costs.

Please continue funding for this vital organization. Thank you in advance for doing what you can to support Access to Care funding for the next year.

Thank you for your consideration. Stay well. Stay safe.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Canning

DEAR COMMISSIONER,

PLEASE DO NOT TAKE THE ACCESS TO CARE AWAY FROM ME. THIS IS THE ONLY MEDICAL PROGRAM FOR WHICH I QUALIFY FOR AND CAN PAY. I UNDERSTAND THAT FUNDS FOR THIS PROGRAM WANT TO BE ELIMINATED FOR 2021.

WITHOUT ACCESS TO CARE I WILL HAVE TO GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM FOR ALL MY MEDICAL NEEDS. I KNOW THIS IS NOT THE CORRECT THING BUT I WILL HAVE NO OTHER OPTION. I DO NOT HAVE TRANSPORTATION TO TRAVEL TO THE CENTER OF STROGER HOSPITAL. THE ADVANTAGE OF ATC IS TO HAVE MY DOCTOR CLOSE TO MY HOME SO I CAN BASILY GET TO MY DOCTOR'S CONSULTATION. ALL ATC SERVICES ARE CLOSE TO WHERE I LIVE. IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR ME TO GET TO THE CENTER WHERE ATC IS NOT ACCEPTED TO RECEIVE THE NECESSARY MEDICAL ATTENTION. KNOWING THAT I HAVE ATC REMOVES MY STRESS THAT I LIVE WITH EVERYDAY, ESPECIALLY WITH COVID-19. PLEASE DO NOT WITHDRAW MY FUNDS FOR ATC FOR 2021.

SINCERELY, MANUEL CANO

HARVEY SCHOOL DISTRICT 152
RILEY EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER
16001 Lincoln
Harvey, IL 60426
(708) 210-3960 Fax: (708) 210-2218

Dear Commissioner,

My name is Michelle Brown, I am the Parent Educator for Riley Early Childhood Center within Harvey School District 152. My job is to provide resources and any other services the families are in need of. Our job is to help low income families through healthcare, social and emotional care, education, and housing. I am writing in regards to the excellence service that my parents have received from the Access to Care Program. Many of our families were in need of health insurance and once I contacted Access to Care they were able to help so many of our families. This company is well known and needed throughout Cook County. Cook County should continue funding Access to Care because of the resources it provides to our uninsured community.

I was preparing for a community health fair, so that parents could come to one location to receive services and all I had to do was call Access to Care to come out and they did. They provided so many of my families with information and they also signed up families that same day and scheduled appointments. The parents were saying how easy the process was to get signed up and how graceful they were to finally be able to see a doctor.

I really hope that Cook County continues to fund this program because without this program my families would not have the health insurance that they need and deserve. I hope that with my perspective as a community advocate for parents that I demonstrated the value of Access to Care as one of my main community resources for my parents.

Respectfully,

Mrs. Michelle Brown

Parent Educator

Riley Early Childhood Center
Harvey School District 152
(708) 368-5711

September 26, 2020

Dear Cook County Commissioner:

I have been a volunteer mentor through Heartland Alliance's Refugee and Immigrant Community Services for three years. Many of the people we serve do not qualify for any government assistance, which directly impacts the healthcare they receive--or don't.

Access to Care provides the only primary healthcare option for many of these vulnerable members of our communities. The organization's unique model of care provides an essential service during this especially critical time. Now more than ever, many of our fellow residents depend on it for their very lives.

I understand the County is considering not funding this program in 2021 and that its survival is threatened as a result. As a resident of Cook County, I urge you to support full funding for Access to Care in the next fiscal year.

Thank you for voting for equitable access to healthcare for *all* of us who live here.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maya Lea". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'M' and a long, sweeping underline.

Maya Lea

1059 W. Ardmore
Chicago, IL 60660



Michelle Elster
3924 W. Estes Ave.
Lincolnwood, IL 60712
847.650.1631

October 6, 2020

Dear Commissioner,

As a small business owner, I am aware of the tough choices we are faced with when considering health care coverage for our employees. As the cost of providing such coverage becomes more prohibitive, many of us cannot cover this essential benefit. As a result, I have been exposed to the need for services such as the Access to Care program. It is unique and serves those that are most in need of their services in areas where such options are few or non-existent.

I understand that Cook County is considering not funding them in 2021. I am writing to ask for your support in funding Access to Care in 2021. This is an essential service especially during the current environment.

I know you are facing tough financial decisions as well during this time. But I hope you are able to see that Access to Care is one group that must continue to help those most in need. I know they literally save lives every day.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

President
Rabin Research Company

September 20, 2020

Dear Cook County Commissioner,

I am a school counselor in a Chicago Public School, working in an underserved area. I personally have seen the impact of economic stress on families and the students' ability to learn and function successfully at school. I also know the toll that COVID19 has disproportionately had on black and brown individuals and communities in our city, region, and country as a whole.

As you know, this is such a hard time economically for so many. Partly because of the pandemic, many more people are losing their health insurance along with their jobs. And, during a pandemic health care is even more important, especially for those with chronic conditions and from minority communities, who are most at risk.

I am writing to ask for your support in funding Access to Care in 2021. This is a unique and effective program serving areas in Cook County that are most in need of their services for over 30 years. They serve populations that have no other options for care, such as the undocumented and those who do not qualify for any other assistance to get health care coverage.

This is not the time to abandon Access to Care and those it serves, the most vulnerable among us.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nilufar Rezai', with a stylized, cursive script.

Ms. Nilufar Rezai

Professional School Counselor

Chicago Public Schools

October 15, 2020

Dear Commissioner,

On behalf of Community Memorial Foundation, I write to urge you to fund the *Access to Care* program in 2021. During this extraordinary year of the COVID-19 pandemic, *Access to Care* has become even more essential, rendering the need for health care coverage more acute, as many continue to lose their health insurance coverage along with their jobs.

As you know, this pandemic is not only a health care crisis but an economic and social one as well. The communities hit hardest continue to be those most vulnerable due to historic disparities among the economically disadvantaged and the routinely underserved populations - the African-American/Black and the Latinx communities. *Access to Care* has served these communities for over 30 years, including those deemed ineligible for any government programs - immigrants and refugees of indeterminate status.

Our process of vetting organizations is rigorous. Community Memorial Foundation has funded the *Access to Care* program since our inception because its mission aligns closely with two of CMF's priorities: 1) ensuring adequate access to timely, affordable, high-quality health care services, and 2) increasing health equity by reducing the health, social and economic barriers to optimal well-being and quality of life. We know *Access to Care* of the Suburban Primary Health Care Council is a lean, effective organization that connects uninsured and underinsured residents in our region to quality medical homes. However, our grants to the *Access to Care* program cannot make up for any loss of funding from the County.

Access to Care is vital to at-risk and underserved populations in routine times. In these anything-but-routine times the program is a literal lifeline. We urge you to continue to partner with us to fund the program so that our most disenfranchised residents continue to have access to affordable health care services.

Should you have need of any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nanette Silva, MPH

[she/her/ella]

Program Director

Community Memorial Foundation

15 Spinning Wheel Road

Suite 326

Hinsdale, IL | 60521

630.654.4729

www.cmfdn.org





DOING
THE MOST
GOOD™

The Salvation Army

Founded in 1865 by William Booth

**Norridge Citadel
Corps Community Center**
8354 W. Foster Ave.
Norridge, IL 60706-3032
Tel: (708) 456-6220
Fax: (708) 456-9214

October 1, 2020

Dear Commissioner:

As Community Ministry Director of The Salvation Army, Norridge Citadel, I am writing to support Access to Care, which is a non-profit primary health care program that's been in existence for over 30 years serving the uninsured and underinsured in Suburban Cook County (and a small pocket of Northwest Chicago) by connecting them to an affordable care and local physicians. The Salvation Army serves families and individuals in need on a daily basis and we are proud to partner with Access to Care to provide wrap around care and resources. Because many people are facing financial difficulties due to COVID-19, more people than ever are left without health care and we are asking that Cook County continue funding the Access to Care Program. Cook County needs to continue funding Access to Care because of the medically uninsured that depend on it.

Recently, I heard from a guest to our social services, whose mother did not have health care coverage. So, whenever his mom, him and his sister were ill, they would visit the ER. As a result, their medical expenses became a part of Cook County's debt. As an Access to Care member, she and Cook County avoid incurring that debt whenever her or her family feel sick.

Cook County should fund Access to Care for as long as there are individuals and families without health care coverage. Access to Care is a valuable community resource that provides support for an invisible and underrepresented population.

Respectfully,

Pamela Church-Pryor
Community Ministries Director

BRIAN PEDDLE
General

F. BRADFORD BAILEY
Commissioner
Territorial Commander

CHARLES H. SMITH
Lt. Colonel
Divisional Commander

MICHAEL & KRISTINA SJOGREN
Captains
Corps Officers / Pastors

Robert Barkley Payne, Jr.

801 S. Financial Place
Apartment 3101
Chicago, Illinois 60605

September 24, 2020

Dear Cook County Board of Commissioners,

I am the Executive Director of the American Medical Association Foundation, however, I am writing this letter as a concerned Cook County resident, and a member of the Access to Care (ATC) Board of Directors.

Please reconsider the decision to exclude the Suburban Cook County Access To Care Program in next year's fiscal budget. I strongly urge you to do so because lives of our most vulnerable populations are at stake, especially during a global pandemic!

Please carefully consider these points as you further develop your budget:

- ATC is a primary care agent for those living in suburban Cook County and northwest Chicago, who are at or below 300% of poverty levels. Without insurance, or deductibles they cannot afford, the undocumented, and the chronically ill depend on ATC to gain access to healthcare.
- During COVID-19, ATC has experienced increase need among its patients who are the most vulnerable in this pandemic. In addition, those who have lost their jobs have lost their health insurance. ATC is there for them to provide access to healthcare. They needed ATC before, but now even more during this global health crisis.
- ATC is saving lives and improving the health of those who suffer from major chronic diseases such as hypertension and diabetes. Again, those with these conditions are most susceptible to COVID-19.
- ATC is the only health care coverage option for many, including but not limited to the undocumented and refugee populations.
- The majority of the ATC member patients are from the Latinx and immigrant communities. Historically underserved, ATC is often their only access to healthcare due to transportation and other barriers.

In any given year, I know it is difficult to manage budget demands versus budget limitations and constraints, however, given the pandemic and the impact it is having on our most vulnerable neighbors, **this is not the year to remove ATC from the County budget.** I hope you will all agree.

I sincerely thank you for your careful consideration and for all that you do to make Cook County a safe and healthy one.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Barkley Payne, Jr.', followed by a horizontal line.

R. Barkley Payne

MINUTEMAN PRESS

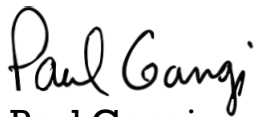
Dear Cook County Commissioners:

Minuteman Press in Westchester, IL has been working with Access to Care for many years. We help Access to Care print important information and communications for their 5,000 members. While we work with many different types of companies, we enjoy working with non-profits, like Access to Care, that are driven by missions to serve our communities.

COVID-19 has greatly affected so many populations, especially lower-income individuals of color. Ongoing funding is critical to Access to Care so that these communities do not lose connections with their doctors.

I respectfully request that Access to Care receive funding in 2021 to continue to serve suburban Cook County's most vulnerable populations.

Sincerely,



Paul Gangi

Minuteman Press

eventive

September 24, 2020

Dear Commissioner,

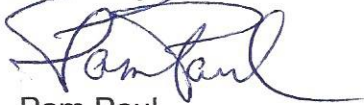
I am writing you as a resident of Cook County from northwest Chicago, to ask that you continue to support Access to Care in the 2021 budget and beyond.

I recognize the tough choices the County is facing. I have worked in Springfield and served on non-profit boards. Still, this is a program worthy of continued support, especially during the most uncertain times we are in and likely next year and beyond.

This program is the only one of its kind and for many people in need, their only option for having health care. Let's not abandon them at this most difficult environment; the pandemic and the massive loss of jobs/health coverage.

Please fund Access to Care serving my community as well as suburban Cook County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pam Paul", with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Pam Paul
President

Received from an Access to Care member/patient 10/2020

Hi my name is Robert Irving I
really appreciate the care I'm getting here
I really appreciate you guys and the program
could you keep the program going please it
really helps me and they are great.

Robert Irving



RocketScienceBranding.com
7291 Garden Grove Blvd Suite C
Garden Grove, CA 92841
562 . 451 . 6561

September 21, 2020

Cook County Government
Attn: Commissioners
118 N. Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60602

Dear Cook County Commissioners:

My company, Rocket Science Branding, partnered with Access to Care this year to develop promotional items used for their community outreach. While we work with many different types of companies throughout the country, nonprofits are driven by honorable missions to serve. When I see our shopping bags on Access to Care's social media page and that shopping bag is full of groceries for a family in need at a food pantry event, it makes all of us at RSB extremely proud. We provide discounts to nonprofit organizations and want to be able to keep supporting them and the essential work they do in the community.

I understand that Access to Care's funding is in jeopardy for 2021. I know the pandemic has caused havoc in many big cities (it has impacted RSB's business as well!), but lower-income individuals of color are the most severely affected by the pandemic. Losing Access to Care services would be another painful upset to these communities.

As a woman who grew up relying upon community programs like the one Access to Care provides for almost a decade, as an entrepreneurial woman of color, and as a National Minority Supplier Diversity Council certified Minority Business Enterprise, a certified Disadvantaged Business, and a certified Small Business, I respectfully request that Access to Care receive funding in 2021 to continue to serve suburban Cook County's most vulnerable populations.

Best regards,

Andrea Pereira
Founder & Managing Member
310.686.4085
andreap@rocketsciencebranding.com

October 5, 2020

Honorable Toni Preckwinkle
President Cook County Board of Commissioners
118 N. Clark
Room 537
Chicago, IL 60602

Dear President Preckwinkle:

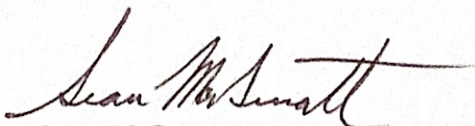
As you prepare your FY2021 budget, I am writing to respectfully ask for your support to fully fund the Access to Care program (ATC). ATC is administered by the Suburban Primary Healthcare Council and is a vital source of primary care for many low-income residents in our community.

For over thirty years, ATC has provided healthcare to the medically indigent in Suburban Cook County in a cost effective and efficient manner. The COVID-19 pandemic has tragically resulted in a significant increase in the number of uninsured individuals in our community. Full funding in the FY2021 county budget of ATC will help address this growing crisis.

I understand the difficult budget situation the county faces and recognize the added fiscal strain the pandemic has created. As you engage in the challenging task of reviewing county services for funding, I hope that you will recognize the important role ATC plays in promoting health throughout our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Sean McDermott", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sean McDermott
Mayor City of Countryside



The
Stevens
Group

188 INDUSTRIAL DRIVE, SUITE 428
ELMHURST, ILLINOIS 60126

WWW.STEVENSGROUPWEB.COM

PHONE: 331-209-2100
FAX: 331-209-2120

October 5, 2020

Dear Cook County Commissioners:

My name is John Park, and I became aware of Access to Care's mission through my work with The Stevens Group. Access to Care has partnered with the Stevens Groups to reach out to residents of the Northwest Suburbs--promoting the needed health care services they offer.

Lower-income individuals of color in the Chicago area are feeling the negative effects of COVID-19. Now, more than ever, programs like Access to Care are needed as unemployment rates are rising and the numbers of individuals without health insurance are growing—especially in these lower-income populations.

Funding in 2021 is critical for Access to Care so that the nearly 6,000 individuals they serve in these communities do not lose their connections to health care and medications. I respectfully request that Access to Care receive funding in 2021 so that they may continue helping these vulnerable populations. Thank you for your time and have a blessed day.

Sincerely,

John Park

The Stevens Group

Dear Commissioner:

COVID-19 has had a devastating effect on our country. The financial burdens caused by this catastrophe are immeasurable. Because of this I feel the need to ask you to consider keeping Access to Care in the budget. The payback this organization brings to the County far exceeds the dollars spent in the budget.

Access to Care provides access to LOCAL primary health care services to low-income Cook County residents who live in the suburbs or northwest Chicago. Members of Access to Care receive a primary medical home and may see their Access to Care physician as many times in a year as they need to for a \$5 co-pay per visit. They may get their diagnostic X-rays and lab tests done in their own community, also for a \$5 co-pay. And they are able to get their prescriptions filled at any local Walgreens for a \$15 co-pay for generic medications and \$30 for brand-name medications.

As a pharmacist, I have seen the consequences for people unable to afford medication. I feel strongly about people being able to manage their conditions with medication. Have you ever been unable to afford to see a doctor or get your prescription filled?

- To have high blood pressure and not be able to afford your medication could lead to a stroke!
- To have high cholesterol and not be able to afford your medication could lead to a heart attack!
- To have diabetes and not be able to afford your medication could lead to amputation, blindness or multiple complications like other organ failures.
- To have depression and not be able to afford your medication could ultimately lead to suicide!

All of these conditions, untreated, can lead to death. All of these conditions can present added expense to the County. One way or another there is unavoidable cost.

Managing chronic illness with affordable medical care is not just a matter of quality of life for the patient. It has a greater societal impact. When people are ill and cannot afford to see a doctor or to get their medication it leads to a loss in productivity. They call in sick to work, which in many cases means no pay. They may lose their jobs or be unable to work because their illness causes an inability to perform tasks. All of this results in further cost to society both from public aid expenditures and through difficult family situations. I appreciate that ATC provides access to these services and access to affordable medications before disease becomes devastating to the patients and their families. The loss in productivity and the hardship it places on the family as a whole perpetuates further and future societal problems. This is ever more apparent during this pandemic.

Access to Care has always been a cost-effective way to make sure that low income residents of suburban Cook County are able to manage their chronic illness and remain active and productive and out of the emergency room.

I sincerely thank you for your support of the Access to Care program in previous years and urge you to continue that support in the 2021 budget year.

Tony Bono, R.Ph.
tsbono@gmail.com



MANAGING THE MOSAIC™

September 29, 2020

Dear Commissioner,

I am writing to ask for your support in funding Access to Care in 2021. As someone who has worked with the organization on several projects over the years, I have seen the commitment and dedication of its leadership team as well as the employees in providing services to those in need. Access to Care is a unique program serving those that are most in need of their services in areas where such service options are few or non-existent. People are depending on them.

ATC serves those that have no other options for care, those who do not qualify for any other type of help for health insurance or those that cannot afford their deductibles even if they have insurance.

With the pandemic creating havoc on so many fronts, many more people are losing their health insurance along with their jobs. And, during a pandemic health care is even more important, especially for those with chronic conditions.

I know you are facing very tough financial decisions as well during this time. I do hope you are able to see that Access to Care is one group that can help those most in need, they literally save lives.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Trisha Svehla

President

Managing the Mosaic

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Corazón Community Services

Dear Commissioner,

I am Vanessa Melgoza and I serve as the Director of Health Programs at Corazón Community Services, a social services agency in Cicero.

Corazón Community Services' mission is to improve the quality of life for children, youth and families through holistic social services offered in a culturally sensitive environment. Every month, we provide direct services to over 600 Individuals and more than 2,000 Community Members are impacted by our monthly community education & events.

Our health-related programs utilize regular data collection and unique methods of education and information dissemination to improve health outcomes and increase health literacy as well as knowledge in Cicero, Berwyn, and surrounding communities. These programs engage youth and parents as both learners and messengers, guiding them to be advocates for the health of their peers. Our three Core health components involve: 1) Teen Pregnancy prevention; 2) HIV Testing and Counseling; and 3) our Health Ambassadors. We also offer programs on Violence Prevention and Leadership.

Corazón Community Services has had a long partnership with Access to Care. We worked and referred clients regularly. We are always excited that we will be able to refer people to a place where they are treated with respect. I also look forward to continuing working with Access to Care on different Cicero collaboratives, and on programs to better our community.

I also want to highlight the work that Access to Care is doing to support and ensure the stop the spread of Covid-19 pandemic. Most recently, I was able to speak at the Mask-Up press conference with Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle and I am relieved that the department is ensuring that this message is being transmitted in Spanish and in a culturally appropriate and inclusive manner, which resonates with the youth, adolescents and young individuals whom we serve.

On behalf of Corazón Community Services, I encourage you as commissioner to keep expanding programs were appropriate but also make your decisions based on data and on the impact that programs have on communities. I do not envy you having to make hard choices in financially difficult time, but please remember that the communities that you serve are usually the ones with no choice and they are dependent on your health system for their overall welfare.

Thank you for taking care of my community. I look forward to working with your staff at Access to Care on improving programs in my community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vanessa melgoza". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Vanessa Melgoza
Director of Health Programs
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