

# 19. Health Care Access (New York City)

**For the Teacher:** This lesson plan has been adapted for beginners from the Literacy Assistance Center’s lesson, “HHC Options Letter to Immigrants.”

## **Objectives** Learners will:

- Understand that all immigrants, regardless of status and ability to pay, can receive care in New York City at Health & Hospitals Corporation (HHC) facilities.
- Understand the HHC confidentiality policy for illegal immigrants.
- Be able to give the address of the HHC health facility near their home.
- Understand the vocabulary “confidential,” “undocumented,” “immigration status.”
- Improve reading comprehension skills by learning how to extract the most important and relevant information.

**Key Vocabulary** Undocumented  
Immigration Status  
Confidential  
Immigrant

**Materials Needed** Board or chart paper  
Markers  
Map of Queens (*optional*)  
Subway or bus maps (*optional*)  
Copies of HHC/MOIA letter in native languages (*optional*)  
Computer with Internet access, if available  
Handouts: 19a (HHC facilities in Queens), 19b (Ask Your Classmates), 19c (HHC/MOIA “An Open Letter to Immigrant New Yorkers...”), 19d (worksheet, “An Open Letter to Immigrant New Yorkers”)

## **Activity 1 Introduction**

1. Begin a discussion by asking the learners which hospital they go to or which hospital is near their home.
2. Give learners the list (19a) of all the HHC health centers in Queens, and ask them to point to the facilities in their zip code.
3. Hand out worksheet 19b, Ask Your Classmates. Read the questions together. Ask the learners to write the information about themselves. Then, ask them to ask their classmate: “Is there an HHC facility near your home? What’s the address?”
4. (*If Time Permits*) Choose the hospital that is closest to the Library. The students each look at the subway or bus map and determine which subway or bus will take them to that hospital. The learners and teacher write directions on how to get to the hospital from the Library.

5. Write these statements on the board, or hand out a copy to each student. Discuss as a class or in small groups.
  - Carla is sick. She doesn't have a green card. She is not a U.S. citizen. She goes to the hospital. Will the hospital help her? (*Yes, the hospital will help anyone.*)
  - Dmitry is in a car accident. He goes to the hospital. He tells the hospital receptionist, "I don't have any immigration documents." Can the receptionist call the police? (*No, the hospital workers will not talk to the police about immigration status.*)
  - Li is sick. She goes to the clinic. She tells the receptionist, "I don't have any documents. I can't get Medicare. I don't have much money to pay." How can she pay? (*If she doesn't have money, public hospitals in New York have a program to help her.*)

## Activity 2 Understanding the HHC Letter

1. Hand out the HHC/MOIA letter (19c), "An Open Letter to Immigrant New Yorkers..." [Note: **Highlighting** or shading must be visible on letters. If it isn't, you will need to have learners highlight or underline the key sentences before you continue.]  
 Ask: "What is this?" (*A letter*) Ask: "Who is the letter from?" (*President of NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation; Commissioner of Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs*) Ask: "Who is the letter to?" (*Immigrant New Yorkers*).  
 Ask: "What do you think the letter is about?" Encourage learners to guess. Write their ideas on the board.
2. Review key vocabulary that will assist in understanding the first paragraph of the HHC/MOIA letter:
  - Afraid
  - Undocumented
  - Immigrant
3. Read the introduction together:
 

*Do not be afraid to go to the doctor, the clinic, the hospital or the emergency room. The government has not passed any new law about immigrants. Undocumented immigrants can get medical care in New York with no fear.*

Discuss with the students.
4. Write the words "Confidential" and "Immigration Status" on the board. Review their meanings. Give an example:
 

Fred lives in NYC. He is an illegal **immigrant**. He is **undocumented**. He is sick and needs to see a doctor. He goes to Lincoln Hospital. The workers at the hospital do not tell anyone that he is illegal. They keep that information **confidential**. They give Fred the care that he needs.

Ask: "What information should be confidential?"

5. Write the phrase on the board:

**We will keep your immigration status confidential.**

Based on the new vocabulary they just learned, ask the learners to say what this sentence means in their own words.

6. Depending on the class level, either read the highlighted sentences to the class, or ask them to read them silently. Discuss the meaning of each key sentence.

### **Activity 3** **Practice**

1. Hand out worksheet 19d, “Look at the letter.” Ask learners to work alone or with partners to answer the questions on the front of the worksheet.
2. With a partner or as a class, complete the second side of worksheet 19d by writing three important points they learned from reading this letter. If done as a partner activity, discuss as a class.

### **Homework**

Give each learner a copy of the HHC/MOIA letter in English and/or their native language. Ask them to talk to three other people about what they learned in class, and be prepared to share their responses in the next class. [Note: This information should be written on the back of worksheet 19d.]

*Optional:* Ask the learners to write their responses. Ask: “Who did you talk to? What did they say?”

### **Technology**

- Go to the HHC website and find the list of health facilities. Do a treasure hunt with the website where learners need to locate specific information and answer questions. For example, you can go to specific clinic sites and find hours/days of operation and services provided.
- Ask learners to figure out subway directions to an HHC health facility using the Internet. Learners can go to the website, [www.HopStop.com](http://www.HopStop.com), and fill in the necessary information to get directions to an HHC facility.

<b>HHC Health Centers in Queens</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
<b>Elmhurst Hospital Center</b>	79-01 Broadway Elmhurst, NY 11373	(718) 334-4000
<b>Queens Hospital Center</b>	82-68 164th Street Jamaica, NY 11432	(718) 883-3000
<b>Astoria Child Health Clinic</b>	12-26 31st Ave. Long Island City, NY 11106	(closed)
<b>Corona Child Health Clinic</b>	104-04 Corona Avenue Corona, NY 11368	(718) 334-6100
<b>Women's Medical Center</b>	59-17 Junction Blvd. Corona, NY 11368	(718) 334-6300
<b>Junction Boulevard Child Health Clinic</b>	34-33 Junction Blvd. Jackson Heights, NY 11372	(718) 334-6150
<b>Charles R. Drew Primary Care Center</b>	166-10 Archer Ave. Jamaica, NY 11433	(718) 883-5500
<b>Friendship Geriatric Clinic</b>	145-06 Farmers Blvd. Jamaica, NY 11434	(718) 657-6648
<b>Parsons Medical Center</b>	90-37 Parsons Blvd. Jamaica, NY 11432	(718) 334-6400
<b>South Queens Community Health Center</b>	114-02 Guy R. Brewer Blvd. Jamaica, NY 11434	(718) 883-5626
<b>Ridgewood Medical Center</b>	769 Onderdonk Ave. Ridgewood, NY 11385	(718) 334-6190
<b>Springfield Medical Center</b>	134-64 Springfield Blvd. Springfield Gardens, NY 11413	(718) 883-6800
<b>Sunnyside Medical Center</b>	43-12 43rd Street Sunnyside, NY 11104	(718) 334-6230
<b>Woodside Center</b>	50-53 Newtown Rd. Woodside, NY 11103	(718) 334-6140

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Is there an HHC clinic near your house?  
Circle your answer.

***YES**, there is.*

***NO**, there isn't.*

What's the address?

*The address is* \_\_\_\_\_.

Now ask your classmate:

Classmate's name	Is there an HHC clinic near your house?	What's the address?



## AN OPEN LETTER TO IMMIGRANT NEW YORKERS FROM HHC AND THE MAYOR'S OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS

Do not be afraid to go to the doctor, the clinic, the hospital or the emergency room. The government has not passed any new law about immigrants. **Undocumented immigrants can get medical care in New York with no fear.**

HHC runs the public hospitals in New York City. We respect you and want to help you. **People who work in a public hospital will not tell the Immigration Service, police or any other agency your immigration status. We will not tell anyone.** Our public hospitals and health centers have a long and proud history of caring for everyone. That includes people who are not legal immigrants and people who do not have money to pay for care. Our commitment is strong. It has not changed.

We promise all undocumented immigrants:

**HHC WILL HONOR YOUR RIGHT TO PRIVACY. WE PROMISE TO KEEP CONFIDENTIAL ALL INFORMATION REGARDING YOUR IMMIGRATION STATUS.**

**You have a right to quality health care.** Do not let fear stop you from getting the health services you or your children need. Our public hospitals, health centers and clinics are located in neighborhoods all over New York City. **Our doctors, nurses and other health care workers care about you. They speak many languages.** Many of them are immigrants or children of immigrants. They all want to serve you with respect. They will all protect your privacy.

**Most children and pregnant women can get health insurance.** You can get it even if you are not a legal immigrant. HHC staff can help you get the insurance you need. **If you do not have insurance and cannot pay a lot of money for health care, HHC will help you anyway.** What you pay will be based on how much money you have and how many people are in your family. Workers at the public hospital or clinic have to ask you for some information to find out how much you should pay. They will ask you to prove how much money you earn. You will need papers to show your home address and some proof of identity and your date of birth. We will keep all of this information a secret. It will be absolutely confidential.

**Our policy is clear.** No HHC employee can give your patient information to ANYONE else. All of our employees know that if they break this promise they can lose their job. We understand that this is the only way that we can keep your trust. We know that we need your trust to give you and your family quality health services.

**You can call 311 for a list of all the HHC hospitals and health centers** or to send a message to HHC President Alan Aviles or the Mayor's Commissioner of Immigrant Affairs, Guillermo Linares.

Alan D. Aviles, President  
New York City Health and Hospital Corporation

Guillermo Linares, Commissioner  
Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs

## AN OPEN LETTER TO IMMIGRANT NEW YORKERS

Look at the letter...

*Who is the letter from?*

*Who is the letter to?*

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Directions: Read only the shaded sentences in the letter. Find the answers to these questions. Then circle your answers in the letter.

1. Will the hospital workers tell the police about your immigration information?

*Circle this information. Write #1 next to it.*

2. A man does not have health insurance. He doesn't have money. Will HHC help him?

*Circle this information. Write #2 next to it.*

3. You want to find an HHC hospital. What telephone number can you call?

*Circle this information. Write #3 next to it.*

4. A woman is pregnant. She is not a legal immigrant. Can she get health insurance?

*Circle this information. Write #4 next to it.*

5. Can the doctors and nurses speak only English?

*Circle the information in the letter. Put #5 next to it.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## What did you learn today?

*Talk to your teacher and classmates. Write three sentences here.*

a.

b.

c.

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## Homework

Talk to 3 people about this information. You can tell the information in English or your language. Be ready to share this with your classmates.