

**We are the only major industrialized nation that doesn't provide health insurance for all residents.**

Soaring healthcare costs undoubtedly affect those with health benefits under collective bargaining agreements. In fact, employers' attempts to cut back existing health benefits are the leading source of conflict in labor negotiations today. What's worse, if you lose your job, you lose your health insurance too – just when you many need it the most!



**Elsewhere in the world, labor took the lead in championing universal health insurance.**

A universal health insurance system would provide coverage for all U.S. residents. This would replace private insurance premiums and out-of-pocket co-pays and deductibles with pay roll taxes and additional funding from those with very high incomes. Our country can save \$300 billion annually through a single payer health care system.

**Unions in the U.S. – starting right here with DC 37, AFSCME – need to do the same.**

**PLEDGE FOR HEALTHCARE EDUCATION ACTIVIST TEAM**

Our communities deserve to have access to affordable health care regardless of our economic status, race, class, gender or age. We face a tremendous pressure on health care costs that cannot continue without an action plan that addresses the need for universal health care and adequate funding for our City public hospitals. There are over 47 million Americans uninsured and over 2 million in New York City alone. Many of these uninsured individuals are children, the elderly and disabled who our public hospital system services to the tune of half a million patients. We care about this important issue as workers on the frontline and dedicated community residents of New York City. I am committed to fighting for health care for all!



**I PLEDGE**

To my sisters and brothers in my union, my community, my family and my colleagues to do my part through the Healthcare Education Activist Team (HEAT):

- Educate our members about the importance of adequate funding for public hospitals in New York City's Health and Hospitals Corporation.
- To mobilize union members in their workplaces and communities around public health issues, including preventative health care.
- Organize union members to support and lobby for universal health care.

As we go on in this important fight, the Healthcare Education Activist Team may plan some of the following actions in which I'm willing to participate (check all that apply):

- Attend a series of training sessions in 2007
- Sign letters, petitions or postcards and get other signatures from co-workers, community residents and others on fighting for health care funding for all
- Help distribute flyers near work site or in the community to inform the public about the healthcare fight for all
- Participate in a hearing on healthcare issues

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Local # \_\_\_\_\_

For more cards or information, call your local union, division or union representative. Please return this pledge card to your local, rep or division.



Join the  
Healthcare  
Education  
Activist Team

### 1. What is the Healthcare Education Activist Team?

HEAT is a collaborative initiative of the Health and Hospitals Corporation/Municipal Labor Sub-Committee (HHC/MLC) to move forward through grassroots activism in our fight for better healthcare in our communities.

### 2. Why is your local union selecting you to be a lead activist?

Your local union selected you to be one of the 125 lead activists who will be at the forefront of advocacy for three areas of need: adequate primary care programs, adequate funding on all levels of government in response to various health issues, and universal health care in the United States.



### 3. What is at stake with our healthcare system?

The question of health coverage has been the primary issue in every major contract our union has bargained over the past several years. For too long, our members across the nation have traded wage increases in order to maintain their health benefits. But soaring health costs are making it impossible to hang on to even this imperfect compromise. Our current health care system currently wastes \$500 billion annually in substandard

and inappropriate care and only 55 percent of us receive health care that meets the best practice standard for a given condition. The number of uninsured is expected to top 50 million this year, a full 10 million more than when George W. Bush was elected president. We cannot afford to wait any longer – we must act together now to help achieve real health reform in America.

### 4. What can we do to protect our jobs, HHC, and the communities it serves?

To make sure that our concerns are heard at the state and federal level, we will lead the effort for job protection and public health through a writing campaign of letters, petitions, and postcards, as well as hearings and mass rallies. We can also educate the public to support universal healthcare through an information campaign of flyers, pamphlets, and forums in our communities.

### 5. What is the commitment involved in being a part of HEAT?

Being a lead activist, your commitment will be flexible but critical. You will receive training on our focal healthcare issues and, in turn, serve as the point person to educate, outreach, and



mobilize members in your local union to also be activists and collectively advocate for your jobs, HHC, and your communities.

Throughout the year, there will be various activities for which you can help organize your co-workers and neighbors.



### 6. Who is my contact person for HEAT?

You should contact your local union's HEAT Coordinator, who is the designated liaison to the HHC-MLC HEAT structure.

## LABOR'S STAKE IN HEALTHCARE REFORM WHY WE NEED IMPROVED AND EXPANDED "MEDICARE FOR ALL"

### Our nation's healthcare is in crisis.

We spend more money per person on health care than any other nation, yet our country lags behind in all leading health indicators, including life expectancy and infant mortality.

### Over 46 million people are uninsured, and eight in ten come from working families.

Many uninsured work for firms that do not offer insurance, and those who are offered insurance often find their share of the premiums unaffordable.