



Reaching the Maximum Level of Self-Sufficiency

IREA Combats Fraud, Gets Results

HRA's Investigation, Revenue and Enforcement Administration (IREA) is responsible for defending the Medicaid program and taxpayers against fraud, waste and abuse in New York City. Through various investigative resources IREA has achieved results leading to a potential savings of more than \$100 million for FY 2008, as well as other outcomes including criminal prosecution and civil litigation.

IREA's efforts to control waste in the Medicaid program focus on three areas: provider audits, client fraud detection and recoupment from Medicaid clients who receive lawsuit settlements or other windfalls.

"IREA's multifaceted approach to preventing and recovering misspent funds is key to controlling the costs of public health care," Commissioner Doar said.

In early 2007, the city entered into a partnership with NYS enabling IREA to conduct field audits of high-risk providers, including pharmacies, physician groups and Medicaid transportation companies. In less than one year, the newly formed Office of Provider Fraud and Abuse Investigation initiated 59 audits and submitted 25 to the State Medicaid Inspector General's Office for potential recoveries of more than \$30 million. Seven of these audits have been approved by the State and now await response from the providers.

IREA's Medicaid Client Fraud Investigation Division, also launched in 2007, has to date identified a total of more than \$5.7 million in Medicaid benefits that were expended for clients who were ineligible for the program or who fraudulently bought or sold prescription drugs. In addition to monies identified and recovered, the division has closed over 531 cases for ineligibility totaling approximately \$3 million in cost avoidance, and has referred 40 cases for prosecution.

Finally, in 2007, HRA also recovered money from Medicaid recipients who received windfall payments through lawsuit settlements and the sale of property, totaling \$76.8 million.

Teens Learn to RAPP About Domestic Abuse

RAPP is a school-based program and one of the most extensive domestic violence prevention programs in New York City. The program has been in operation since 1999, but over the years it has evolved with various student issues.

For example, some students who are experiencing or witnessing domestic violence at home might be acting out by drinking or using illegal substances, said Tracey Thorne, director of program and policy analysis for the Office of Domestic Violence and Emergency Intervention Services. She added that these kinds of issues generally surface during discussions with other students.

During a three-class in-school curriculum, social workers (MSW) at 61 middle and high schools teach students about different types of abuse, like psychological, economic, and sexual abuse. They also learn how to do violence prevention. Thorne said social workers try to create an understanding among gender, cultures and religion. "It's not just tolerance, but it's that idea of tolerance and accepting differences," she said.

Peer education is an important component of RAPP. For seven weeks during the summer, the RAPP coordinator, who is also the MSW in charge of the program, from each high school chooses up to 10 students to participate in the Peer Leadership Program. During the summer of 2008, about 200 students participated in the summer program.

The information given in RAPP is often new to students, Thorne said. "They don't realize the behavior of their friend's boyfriend, their boyfriend or their girlfriend or whatever is on the verge of being abusive," she said. "And they kind of need help understanding that if they don't feel comfortable with anything happening in the relationship it's OK to say no."

HRA Program Updates

OCHIA Launches Pilot School-Based Health Centers

HRA and the Office of Citywide Health Insurance Access (OCHIA) have entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Children's Aid Society, New York Presbyterian Hospital and Montefiore Medical Center to launch a data matching pilot. The match results will enable these providers to improve their reimbursement levels for services with a clear identification of those enrollees receiving Medicaid. In return, OCHIA will have the ability to identify enrollees who are uninsured and work with these providers to target health insurance outreach and enrollment assistance.

HRA is Hosting a Citywide Job Fair

Commissioner Doar will speak with employers about HRA's different initiatives and efforts to connect working families to work supports. This job fair to be held at the Jacob K. Javits Center on Oct. 21 promises to be a wonderful event.

HEAP Benefits Increased



New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance has increased the maximum Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) grant to \$800 per season to help low-income families, seniors and the disabled heat their homes this winter in the face of high energy costs. The income level for HEAP eligibility has also been raised.

HRA Perspective Monthly Bulletin

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HRA & NYC Employers Step Up Workforce Development

Event Calendar

NYC DADS Halloween Party

Tuesday, Oct. 21, 5:30 to 7:30 PM, Angel Orensanz Foundation at 172 Norfolk Street, (east of Houston St.).



NYC Dads and their kids are invited to this pre-Halloween party with free costumes, Halloween gifts and more. RSVP: 212-331-6200.

Blood Drives

Help maintain NYC's blood supply. Make your donation at the following locations:

Friday, Oct. 24, 2008, HRA Headquarters, 180 Water Street, 12th Floor, New York, NY from 10:00 AM to 3:30 PM. To make an appointment, call Kettly Ménard at (718) 331-3374.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Offered by the NYC Commission on Women's Issues and the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Wednesday, Oct. 15, 2008; Breast Cancer Prevention Workshop, 125 Worth St., Second floor auditorium, 11 AM to 12 PM; 12 to 1 PM.

Friday, Oct. 17, 2008; HRA Breast Cancer Prevention Workshop, Brooklyn Borough Hall Community Room, 209 Joralemon St., 12 to 1 PM; 1 to 2 PM.

Thursday, Oct. 23, 2008; Breast Cancer Prevention Workshop, Bronx County Courthouse Veterans Memorial Hall, 851 Grand Concourse, 1 to 2 PM.

Live United

Commissioner Doar, along with more than 40 HRA employees, walked across the Brooklyn Bridge Sept. 20 for LIVE United, a movement for improving lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities.

On Oct. 1, HRA's Employment Services hosted a luncheon at 180 Water Street headquarters for 75 current and prospective employer partners.



The theme, "New Yorkers Work, Your Business Grows," set the tone for presentations that connected the financial incentives and services that have been developed to assist our employer partners and set forth a vision of immediate goals that businesses' partnership with HRA can achieve.

From left to right: Mark Brodsky, Dir. Grant Diversion; Edith Cooper, OTDA Jobs Program Coordinator; Michelle Benjamin, CEO; Benjamin Enterprises, Ray Singleton, Asst. Dep. Commissioner.

Commissioner Doar welcomed the attendees, stressing HRA's commitment to the employers who work with us. "Everything we do depends on you providing jobs," he said. "We will do everything we can to help you stay invested in your employees and in New York City."

Ray Singleton, assistant deputy commissioner of FIA's Employment Services (ES), provided an overview of HRA's strategies for employers and job seekers. Mark Brodsky, FIA's director of grant diversions, along with other specialists, elaborated on how these employment resources function and impact business profitability.

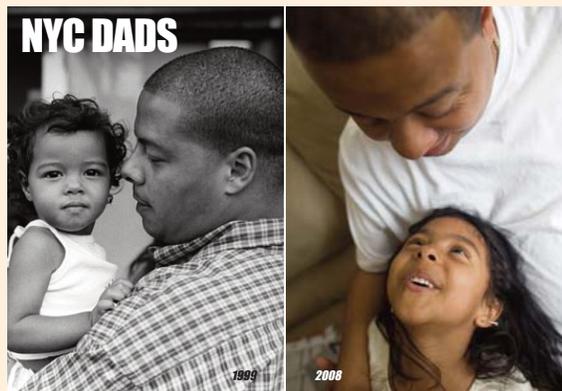
Singleton described the process by which HRA is developing a workforce that can grow in the labor market. "When we have close communication with an employer, we are able to prepare participants with the work ethic and skills that the employer requires," he said, "and we encourage the employer to work with us on developing career pipelines that enable entry level employees to advance to higher level positions in a company or job sector." Singleton said HRA proposes to create a database reporting system that will save employers time and enable HRA to respond quickly.

Employment Services plans to organize meetings with NYC employers on an ongoing basis and is preparing for HRA's citywide job fair to be held at the Jacob K. Javits Center on Oct. 21.

NYC DADS Print Campaign to Launch

NYC DADS, the HRA-led citywide campaign focusing on the important role fathers play in their children's lives, will launch its first print campaign this fall. Featuring real fathers and their children, the campaign will be seen on bus shelters throughout the five boroughs in October and subways in November.

The campaign entitled, "NYC DADS: 10 Ways to Be a Great Dad," features the photography of New York photographer Stephen Shames.



Shames's photographs from his 2005 "DADS" show will be shown as an ongoing exhibit on the 12th Floor of 180 Water Street, from October 15 to December 31, 2008. HRA employees are encouraged to view these select photos that highlight fathers engaged with their children.

NYC DADS hosts events to celebrate low-income dads who participate in local community-based fatherhood programs, while also seeking to link disconnected fathers to the parenting support services available to them.