

**Partnership for a Healthy Durham
Access to Care Committee**

January 8th, 2026 - 9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m. Virtual

Minutes

Facilitators: Edeia Lynch & Brad Caison

Access to Care: This committee’s activities include advocating changes that will affect health care coverage for residents across all ages and developing community and agency-based strategies to make measurable improvements in access to care for the uninsured and underinsured residents of Durham.

Attendees: Bria Miller, Edeia Lynch, Brad Caison, Karin Symanski, Hollis Smith , Sierra Elrahal, Pam Purifoy Angel Romero, Eliabeth Bill, Charita McCollers, Elim Lee, Scott Esko Brummel, Kimberly Monroe

Time	Project/Topic/Goal	Major Discussion Points	Recommendations & Action Steps
9:00 - 9:05	Icebreaker – What’s your favorite takeaway from 2025?	Resiliency, tending to ourselves, strength, proactive resting, hope, find joy.	
9:05 - 9:10	Last Meeting Recap, Note Review and Co-chair update		
9:10 - 9:15	ACA Update – Hollis & Sierra	<p>Update – not a lot of new news. New proposal for a three year extension where subsidies would be the same but not sure if this will pass. As of Jan 1st the enhance subsidies have become much more limited than the past 5 years. It is not too late for them to extend them again but we do not know what this would look like. People have already started making payments.</p> <p>Question - Any push to have employers provide insurance benefits more since the will of leadership is not in support of the ACA? –</p> <p>Answer - Some employers might be making that decision, but what is happening is that the marketplace rule for subsidy is that you can not have an offer through employment that is reasonable/affordable. If you received the subsidy and you were not eligible you will have to pay this back.</p> <p>If a family has an offer of health insurance the whole family could not get a subsidy but now it is just the employee and then the rest of the family</p>	<p>Charita McCollers has many questions about work requirements and SNAP benefits.</p> <p>Contact information – Sierra Elrahal, sierrae@legalaidnc.org, 919-226-5914 (direct line)</p> <p>How do we educate the community – voting, help register people to vote and educate people about the process of voting so they know how to participate. Where are their districts, where do they vote, when is early voting and voting date.</p>

		<p>can access a subsidy but the employee is not eligible.</p> <p>Marketplace functioning – if they are eligible, Medicaid Marketplace has continued to reach out and report of some auto enrolled to the next plan and pushing them forward.</p> <p>Start dates for changes are set for Fall which is after the election. We will not feel those changes until after the election.</p> <p>How do we educate the community – voting, help register people to vote and educate people about the process of voting so they know how to participate. Where are their districts, where do they vote, when is early voting and voting date.</p> <p>Question - Address verification for benefits. Are we working on this, especially for the unhoused and transient population?</p> <p>Answer - Lincoln CHC and other Durham ED's are discussing how to educate the community with all of the quick changes occurring. Our main concern is people falling through the cracks, and it is a real concern with people moving and unhoused. Helping people to get the right level of care and keep colds out of the ED but at their PCP for treatment. How can we help people get the right access to care?</p> <p>Educating the elected officials is what we do, but we need to also educate the people that we are serving to help them navigate the system.</p>	<p>How can we help people get the right access to care?</p>
<p>9:15 - 9:35</p>	<p>Listening Session Facilitator Round Robin</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss between listening sessions facilitators takeaways from overall experience - What do we want to do with this information once synthesized? <p>Talked to 8 people with the goal of capturing this moment in time and what access to care looks like in our community.</p> <p>Brads key takeaways – Provider reported the importance of plain language that are skills training. Things such as wound care.</p>	<p>FWIW Dr.Joan Clifford leads Duke's community-based language initiative, she helps connect students to service opportunities.</p> <p>The Spanish language students are well connected but French language students could use more opportunities to plug into the community.</p>

		<p>Also making sure things are printed for patients to have access to teach basic care skills.</p> <p>Community Leader reported that refugee population still needs messages of hope and resiliency in our communities. The need to keep fighting and moving forward.</p> <p>Angel's feedback – there is a very large gap between ethnicities with resources and how to access. Spanish speaking community resources seem to be robust in knowledge but another community was not as connected nor familiar with terms we use such as safety net. Provider side experiences were very different and diverse experiences. Haitian community is not very well connected.</p> <p>Karin's feedback - My Chart access is helpful and available in other languages and also making sure there are other tools for people to use a phone and in person. Not all technical savvy. Task to place a phone number in a phone so they are recognized when they call the client.</p> <p>Bria – no everyone is comfortable with digital platforms, spam. Gap for those that are homebound that they are helping a love one but do not know that they can get paid and that would be helpful. Overall people are tired – caring for a loved one and also fighting with the system for the care needed.</p> <p>Question about listening session– did we have anyone mention that we had several services and now they are gone.</p> <p>Answer – Yes, refugees lost certain access to care and also medication boxes there were several places that provided those and now it is only one location.</p> <p>Partnership will be doing some analysis to dig into the feedback.</p>	<p>Happy to help connect or Joan is super approachable and can be reached at jcliffor@duke.edu</p> <p>Next steps to synthesize feedback from the listening sessions – Brad suggested.</p>
<p>9:35 – 9:55</p>	<p>Planning Ahead – Spring 2026</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Circling back to fall interest items - Walk with a Doc, Safety Net Provider Support - Necessary steps to plan 	<p>Feb 5th we will dedicate that meeting to the planning</p>

9:55 – 10:00	Announcements & Adjourn	Kimberly announcement – Duke Cancer institute will be hosting annual Health Equity Summit in February. Speaker will be sharing access to care and clinical trial experience. Free event. The Durham Benefits Access Coalition (led by former Mayor Schewel) is having a working group meeting Monday at 2: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84742211302?pwd=COQfZXFkLU8ccYnM1coYHg3vm4lw.1&jst=3	
Next meeting: Thursday, February 5th, 2026, at 9:00 am via Zoom.			