

About ICS and the Health Access Program

Independence Care System (ICS) is a well-established, highly regarded, not-for-profit managed long-term care organization that serves New York City residents with physical disabilities and chronic health conditions. In 2000 we opened our doors as New York's only Medicaid Managed Long Term Care plan specifically designed for people with physical disabilities. Our mission is to support people with physical disabilities and chronic health conditions to live in their own homes and participate fully in their communities. This is accomplished through a model of disability competent care and coordination of the full range of long term care services including home care, health care, social services, and medical care. Through our work we have developed a deep understanding of the needs that are unique to people with physical disabilities, as well as extensive expertise in identifying and addressing glaring gaps in care.

The ICS Health Access Program began making breast cancer screening available to ICS members in 2008 through a partnership with a single New York City health care facility. Today members are able to receive breast health and gynecological services in five facilities and the addition of primary care services for both men and women is planned for 2017.

In 2013, based on our advocacy efforts, the New York State Department of Health wrote to hospitals and health care facilities throughout New York State, advising them of their legal obligation to comply with all federal, state and local accessibility laws. Concurrently, in response to a report ICS coauthored with New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, the New York City Council held an oversight hearing and allocated a small amount of funding to make several women's health areas of New York City Health and Hospitals (HHC) facilities that ICS works with more physically accessible.

Through a joint grant, ICS has facilitated in-person disability sensitivity and awareness training in HHC facilities for 280 women's healthcare and radiology professionals, and created a video for HHC to use as an annual training for its employees.

Our objective, given the physical environment that exists today, is to enable and support the staff of all kinds of medical practices to make their facilities safe, welcoming and usable for anyone with a physical disability.

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