



— STATE COMPTROLLER —
SEAN SCANLON

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 3, 2023

COMPTROLLER SEAN SCANLON KICKS OFF HEALTH EQUITY WEEK, ANNOUNCES FORMATION OF HEALTHCARE WORKING GROUP

(HARTFORD, CT) – Comptroller Sean Scanlon today joined health advocates and policymakers at Charter Oak Family Health Center to kick off Health Equity Week. This marks the first year of official recognition of [Health Equity Week](#), which runs the first week of April and was recently codified in state statute.

Comptroller Scanlon also announced that he is forming the Comptroller’s Healthcare Cabinet, a collaborative working group comprised of healthcare professionals and advocates who will inform the future legislative and policy recommendations related to key healthcare issues such as access and affordability.

“Healthcare is a human right, but the kind and quality of care far too many people in our state receive is still based on who they are and what zip code they live in,” **said Comptroller Sean Scanlon**. “That’s wrong and must change. As Comptroller and administrator of the state’s largest health plan, I won’t stop pushing for change until every Connecticut resident has access to the healthcare they deserve.”

“Health Equity Week signifies a commitment to rectify the components of the healthcare system that contribute to the inequities in health outcomes. Year after year, the same chronic diseases affect the same communities which are often defined by race, ethnicity and/or socioeconomic status,” **said Dr. Linda Barry, Interim Director of the UConn Health Disparities Institute**. “The UConn Health Disparities Institute looks forward to working with partners in the community, as well as state and local leaders, to make health equity the reality for all of Connecticut.”

“Achieving health equity requires courage and ingenuity. We must be willing to acknowledge that our system needs repair, and we must be willing to make radical commitments of resources necessary to invest in the rebuilding of our healthcare, education, workforce, and criminal justice systems. We need more than lip service. We need action!” **said Nichelle A. Mullins, President and Chief Executive Officer of Charter Oak Health Center, Inc.**

“Every Connecticut resident deserves an equal opportunity to lead a healthy life,” said **Pareesa Charmchi Goodwin, Executive Director of the Commission on Racial Equity in Public Health.**

“Health Equity Week is an important time of year where we face these issues head on, where we name the problem and seek solutions. The work does not end after this week and cannot end until health equity is a reality.”

“For over 400 years, policies set forth in this country center on who will have what and on whose back. Health Equity Week is a time to listen to the voices of people left behind and work to do what they want. Health Equity is no less than saving lives,” said **Caprice Taylor Mendez, President of Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut.**

“Health Equity Week is an opportunity to focus attention on how much work we have to do to expand access to healthcare and to address the underlying causes of health disparities in our communities, and it’s also a time to spread the word about the resources that are available to families right now,” said **Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin.** “This week, health equity organizations are hosting info-sessions about how to sign up for HUSKY health and how to take advantage of primary care, including at community-based health centers like Charter Oak Health Center. I want to thank Comptroller Scanlon, our General Assembly, and most of all, the nonprofits, advocates, and healthcare workers who work every day to build healthier communities.”

“In Connecticut and throughout our country, access to healthcare is impacted by racism, our zip codes, and our inability to directly confront these realities with a plan for action. The Public Health Committee remains committed to prioritizing equity and access to affordable healthcare,” said **Representative Cristin McCarthy Vahey (D-Bridgeport, Fairfield).** “I want to thank Comptroller Scanlon for highlighting Health Equity Week, and for the inspiring community leaders who remind us that the color of our skin and the neighborhood we live in should not impact access to affordable, high-quality care for all.”

“We can no longer allow the zip code to determine the life span of our citizens. We must unite to give opportunity to everyone to live a full and healthy life,” said **Senator Saud Anwar (D-East Hartford, Ellington, East Windsor, and South Windsor).**

You can view a [full recording of the event](#) here.

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