



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

Oxiris Barbot, MD

Commissioner

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Sarah Shih, MPH
Assistant Commissioner
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Dear Admissions Committee,

This letter serves as a recommendation for Ms. Tammy C. Thomas to the Doctor of Public (DrPH) Health program at your institution. I am an Assistant Commissioner and have worked indirectly with Ms. Thomas through a multi-bureau initiative at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Ms. Thomas is the Director of Strategic Payer Initiatives. She and her colleagues work across multiple teams to improve access to quality and culturally appropriate primary care for New Yorkers, particularly those who are at risk for poor health outcomes. Ms. Thomas is part of the larger team of the Office of Health Care Access and Policy which is housed within the Bureau of Equitable Health Systems (EHS). EHS is tasked with reviewing and commenting on health insurance coverage and policies; with a focus on maximizing health insurance coverage and access to affordable, high quality, and coordinated primary care, with an emphasis on health equity. She and the team promote health insurance coverage of key benefit items for those with chronic diseases across both public and private payers where the ultimate goal is to create systems that lead to optimal patient health.

Ms. Thomas has worked collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders regarding health insurance programs and policies concerning chronic disease prevention and management. She has led and supported several initiatives to increase insurance coverage of key benefits, services, medications and treatments for all NYC residents. Ms. Thomas is a valued member of our team and very well regarded in her work. She is our subject matter expert on health insurance coverage. Staff and leaders within our bureau, as well as throughout the agency solicit her input and advice. In this work, she has demonstrated a strong commitment to advancing public health priorities and would like to grow into senior leadership positions to advance programs and strategies for population health and to help shape public health policy and practice.

Ms. Thomas has expressed a strong interest in advancing her career as a public health practitioner and professional. The doctoral program will enhance her innate skills and talent to translate evidence base for broader implementation and application to advance health for vulnerable populations. These are populations she is deeply invested in and committed to serving throughout her career. The program will also help refine her ability to use concepts and methods from social and behavioral sciences to design and implement community health interventions and assess their impact.

I highly recommend Ms. Thomas and know she will be dedicated and successful in your program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Shih".

Sarah Shih, MPH