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**HHC and LegalHealth to Offer Patients from Haiti Free Legal Assistance  
to File for Temporary Protected Status**

First Free Legal Clinic to Open at Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn; additional legal clinics  
will open at HHC Hospitals in Manhattan, Queens and the Bronx

The New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) today opened a special legal clinic at Kings County Hospital Center run by LegalHealth, a division of the New York Legal Assistance Group, to offer free legal assistance to Haitian patients and families seeking Temporary Protected Status (TPS). Legal professionals and volunteers will be available at the walk-in clinic every Friday from 9:30 am -1:00 pm to assist patients and their families who may qualify for this special status.

“For patients from Haiti who are already facing medical and mental health needs, the added stress of their uncertain immigration status can be overwhelming,” said HHC President Alan D. Aviles. “Our collaboration with LegalHealth enables us to treat both medical and non-medical ailments – the whole patient.”

LegalHealth has partnered with HHC for nearly seven years to provide legal services to patients that involve a range of civil legal matters, from resolving housing problems that affect health conditions, to helping patients with benefits and advance planning such as wills, health care proxies and powers of attorney.

“LegalHealth complements health care with legal care,” said Randye Retkin, Director of LegalHealth. “By being onsite where patients receive essential medical services we are making it as easy as possible for this community to access legal help. We’ll be recruiting volunteers from private law firms to help staff the legal clinics. There will be at least three attorneys onsite at each clinic for the six month period that applications can be filed. Haitian nationals who think they might be eligible should come to the clinic for this free service.”

The special immigration LegalHealth clinic at Kings County Hospital is located in the first floor adult walk-in clinic in the “E” building at 541 Clarkson Avenue between East 38 and East 39 Streets. The clinic will be open Fridays, from 9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. until July 20<sup>th</sup>. LegalHealth and HHC will open additional clinics later next month at Bellevue Hospital in Manhattan,

Queens Hospital Center and Elmhurst Hospital Center in Queens, and Jacobi Hospital Center in the Bronx. Interpreters and translation services will be available to limited-English speakers.

The TPS designation for Haitians was created by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in response to the January 12, 2010 earthquake. For those who qualify, it will provide temporary status through July 22, 2011 and can include work authorization. The application requires a fee, which varies depending on the applicant's circumstances. Some applicants may be eligible to receive a waiver for the fees. LegalHealth and its partnering law firms will help clients understand all of the requirements for the program and whether they qualify for a fee waiver, and will assist with the preparation of forms and gathering of documentation. They will also help clients understand if any other immigration options are available. Applications for TPS must be filed before July 20, 2010.

“We have a humanitarian responsibility to provide human and material resources that can ease the burden for Haitians. However, at HHC, this responsibility is also a very personal one. Kings County Hospital is in the heart of New York City's Haitian Diaspora, and we serve a very large Haitian population. We have organized support groups for staff and community to cope with their grief and loss,” said Antonio Martin, Kings County Hospital Executive Director. “Now we can assist even further by helping members of this community with the legal help they need to secure TPS status and continue to live and work here with peace of mind.”

### **About LegalHealth**

Legal Health, a division of the New York Legal Assistance Group, provides on site free legal services at 16 hospitals and health clinics in NY and teaches health care professionals about the legal issues affecting their patients. A full service agency, NYLAG provides consultation, representation, and advocacy. Last year, NYLAG handled 23,901 cases, serving more 46,000 individuals, and helped additional thousands through successful impact litigation and community legal education. For more information on NYLAG, visit [www.nylag.org](http://www.nylag.org).

### **About HHC**

The New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) is a \$6.3 billion integrated healthcare delivery system and the largest municipal healthcare organization in the country. HHC serves 1.3 million New Yorkers every year and nearly 450,000 are uninsured. HHC provides medical, mental health and substance abuse services through its 11 acute care hospitals, four skilled nursing facilities, six large diagnostic and treatment centers and more than 80 community based clinics. HHC Health and Home Care also provides health services at home for New Yorkers.