

# The Sun

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*New Coalition Will Study Universal Health Care*  
*BY Staff Reporter of the Sun*

As state policymakers consider ideas for offering universal health insurance to New Yorkers, six research organizations are forming a consortium to study current health care coverage and to make recommendations on emerging plans.

**The consortium being launched today includes the New York State Health Foundation, Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, the Manhattan Institute, the United Hospital Fund, the Rockefeller Institute of Government, and Cornell University's Department of Policy Analysis and Management. There are 2.2 million uninsured New Yorkers.**

With \$1.8 million in funding from NYSHealth, the group is expected to assess proposals based on information from health care experts, public opinion data, and cost projection research.

"This is about options analysis," the president and CEO of NYSHealth, James Knickman, said. In

recent weeks, several proposals have surfaced. Last week, the chairman of the Assembly's Health Committee, Richard Gottfried, outlined a \$59 billion health care plan that would be funded by a tax increase.

Rep. Anthony Weiner has offered a plan to cover 450,000 middle-class New York City residents.

Meanwhile, Governor Spitzer has awarded a contract to the Urban Institute to help lawmakers develop a roadmap for providing universal health insurance.

"The work of the consultants very much complements the work of the consortium," a senior health policy analyst at the United Hospital Fund, Peter Newell, said.

Mr. Knickman said the consortium was "working closely" with the state Department of Health and the governor's office. "We'll bring to the table objective, systematic, rigorous analysis," he said.