



## **CUNY Health for Academic Success & Engagement (CHASE)**

### The Rationale

CUNY Health for Academic Success & Engagement (CHASE) is a new university initiative that aims to promote a “culture of caring” at CUNY, thereby helping CUNY students to overcome common health and social problems that interfere with academic success and college completion. Surveys of CUNY undergraduates have shown that almost half face one or more mental health, sexual or reproductive health, health care access, or food security problems. These conditions can contribute to increased absences, missed assignments, less focus on schoolwork, increased health care expenses, and higher rates of delayed graduation or drop out. By assisting students to prevent or manage these health issues before they disrupt academic success, CUNY can increase its retention and graduation rates and bring the academic, social, economic, and health benefits that a college degree confers to more New Yorkers.

### The Model

CHASE promotes for key strategies:

- Strengthening the coordination and integration of services at the system and campus levels, including making strategic investments in increased staffing and training in CUNY’s mental health counseling, wellness and food security programs to meet national standards for student-to-staff ratios
- Training a corps of faculty and staff who can provide students with information, support and referrals to campus and community health and social services, working to reduce the stigma of help-seeking by normalizing sometimes taboo health-related issues
- Training a corp of students who can provide their peers with information, support and referrals to campus and community health and social services, perhaps through new experiential learning or workforce development programs
- Establishing formal partnerships with key New York City health care and social service agencies that already serve CUNY students to improve access to care, monitoring, and coordination

### Next Steps

CUNY has a track record of creating comprehensive programs that address the complex and diverse needs of its students, and CHASE builds on this record. Over the next two years, CUNY will pursue a two-track strategy to implement a CHASE demonstration project: 1) field test and integrate key strategies on several campuses and evaluate the results; 2) seek public and private resources needed to implement and scale up CHASE university-wide and to formally evaluate it.

For more information about CHASE, contact Patti Lamberson at [Patricia.Lamberson@sph.cuny.edu](mailto:Patricia.Lamberson@sph.cuny.edu).