



Search for the Executive Director  
Health Access  
Sacramento, CA

[Health Access](#), comprised of Health Access Foundation, a 501(c)3, and Health Access California, a 501(c)4, a consumer advocacy coalition advocating for more accessible, equitable, affordable, and quality healthcare for all Californians, seeks a bold and strategic leader, builder, advocate, and visionary to serve as its next Executive Director.

Founded in 1987, Health Access was created toward the goal of quality, affordable, equitable health care for all by building a broad coalition of member organizations representing California's diverse communities. Today, Health Access is one of the preeminent consumer advocacy coalitions in the country, a statewide leader and recognized voice in California representing health care consumers and promoting health policies toward securing and expanding coverage, protecting patients, holding the industry accountable for quality, equity, and lower costs, and encouraging a healthier state, through successful campaigns like #Health4All, #Care4AllCA, and others. By building a successful and diverse coalition of dozens of member organizations across California, Health Access has advanced policies through direct lobbying and advocacy, research, organizing, and public education, working for broad and bold solutions while also ensuring that the unique needs and experiences of their diverse constituents are reflected and responded to. In that spirit, as a host of the California LGBTQ Health and Human Services Network, Health Access has also supported advocacy and coalition-building toward advancing LGBTQ health.

Health Access seeks an Executive Director to build upon this legacy, committed to advocating for the needs of consumers, poised to expand the coalition to reflect the needs of diverse communities, and driven by a deep passion for the organization's mission. During a pivotal moment for the future of healthcare, the Executive Director will guide the organization by providing visionary leadership, as well as by enacting a strategic plan that will promote the success of the organization, its members, and California consumers. The next Executive Director will have the opportunity to continue the success of Health Access as a state model in advancing accessibility and affordability for all Californians, not limited to but especially the most vulnerable populations.

To be successful, the Executive Director will be expected to address the following key opportunities and challenges, listed below and outlined on pages 4-6 of this document:

- Champion a vision for Health Access as the leading consumer advocacy coalition in California;
- Achieve strategic, tangible, and measurable policy wins that advance health access for all;
- Cultivate a broad and inclusive coalition that reflects the diverse needs of consumers;
- Collaborate closely and effectively with both Boards of Directors;
- Facilitate strong internal operations and ensure the ongoing financial vitality of the organization.

A list of the desired qualifications and characteristics for the next Executive Director is outlined in this document, which was prepared by the search committee with the assistance of Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm. All confidential applications, inquiries, and nominations should be directed to the parties listed at the conclusion of this document.

## **ABOUT HEALTH ACCESS CALIFORNIA**

Since its inception, Health Access has focused on patient protections, including against inflated and unfair medical bills, and breaking down barriers to care, including expanding public programs, enhancing employer-based benefits, and moving toward a more universal, affordable, equitable, and consumer-empowering health system. Health Access works to win comprehensive health reforms at the local, state, and federal levels, including efforts to implement and improve the Affordable Care Act. With the goal of removing exclusions and extending access and affordability to all Californians, Health Access also advances ways to improve Medi-Cal, Covered California, and the safety net.

Health Access is comprised of two distinct organizations governed by separate boards of directors:

- [Health Access California](#) operates as a 501(c)4 organization that engages in direct lobbying and advocacy with the support of member organizations that comprise the coalition. Leaders of the Health Access California Board represent a wide and diverse set of organizations that reflect the broad community and needs of consumers throughout California, and decide on the policies of the organization, including on bills, budget items, and ballot measures.
- [Health Access Foundation](#) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that engages in coalition and community organizing, policy analysis and advocacy, strategic communications, public education, and applied research. The goal of the Foundation is to increase the voice and power of consumers on health policy issues and to improve the lives of patients and the public, especially those in historically marginalized communities, through grant funding from foundations and donations from individuals. The Foundation Board serves as the governing Board for the organization.

As a leading voice for healthcare consumers and a counterpoint to the health industry, Health Access empowers individuals and organizations to advocate for state and federal actions that put patients first, stopping insurers and providers from denying care or overcharging, and endorsing candidates who support these goals. Focusing on cost, quality, equity, and access, Health Access:

- Develops and advances policies prioritizing patient care while reducing discrimination and disparities;
- Advances state budget investments in public health, including protecting, strengthening, and improving key public coverage programs and ensuring their funding;
- Supports health, tax, and budget policies that help build a more robust social contract overall.

Through their reform and coverage work, Health Access has advanced comprehensive reforms and the vision of quality, affordable, and universal care for all Californians. Health Access has also held the industry accountable for addressing the rising cost of care by supporting reforms that slow the rate of growth in overall healthcare costs. Additionally, with the passing of legislation, Health Access ensures that laws are properly implemented, working with state departments and leading efforts around consumer protections.

Health Access recognizes the unique needs of California's diverse communities and supports a multi-pronged approach to reducing health disparities. As a consumer advocacy coalition, Health Access works with a broad and diverse coalition representing communities of color, immigrants, people with disabilities, children, seniors, people of faith, labor, the LGBTQ+ community, and working families. Co-equal to the policy goals is enhancing Californians' and member and allied organizations' ability to engage effectively in advocacy and leverage collective power, using a strategic combination of industry oversight, administrative advocacy around various state agencies, legislative advocacy, and public engagement, which will, in turn, support consumers in their care and coverage. A crucial role of Health Access is to help be a bridge between different kinds of organizations—between Sacramento-savvy policy analysts and grassroots leaders, between labor unions and nonprofit community groups, between groups with different constituencies but complementary health policy goals.

## **CURRENT CONTEXT**

In recent years, as an example of its breadth of work, Health Access has advanced health care policies to implement and improve the Affordable Care Act, to protect patients from surprise medical bills, to invest in and improve Medi-Cal and defend this and other public health programs from cuts, to win additional affordability assistance in Covered California, to seek stronger standards for quality and equity in health plan contracts, and to contain health costs and prevent inflated prices for prescription drugs and hospital stays. Current examples include our efforts to address the impacts of medical debt, and to ensure accurate provider directories.

Health Access manages the [#Care4ALLCA](#) campaign to achieve universal, affordable, and equitable coverage with actionable steps that do not need federal approval. New efforts focused on expanding coverage and affordability, containing costs and prices, and improving accountability to ensure access, quality, and equity. The Care4ALL California coalition consists of over 70 consumer, community, labor, progressive, and healthcare organizations, which define and work together on a common slate of bills and proposals that advance toward an improved health system. Over 30 such measures have been passed in the last five years, sponsored by over two dozen organizations.

Other campaigns are focused on specific goals and proposals, such as the California Cost Containment campaign, which has supported bills in recent years to advance more oversight over health mergers and health care consolidation, a major driver of increasing health costs. An overlapping effort, backed by a coalition of consumer, labor, and purchaser groups, supported the creation of a new Office of Health Care Affordability, and its implementation of a 3% cost growth target for the health system.

In previous years, Health Access has helped convene or co-convene campaigns to fight budget cuts to health and human services, or to defend the Affordable Care Act from federal repeal and pass state legislation to protect it. An example of such collaboration is the #Health4All campaign, co-chaired by the California Immigrant Policy Center and advanced by more than 150 coalition organizations, which has won the removal of exclusions to Medi-Cal based on immigration status. This year, the campaign is continuing to seek the removal of barriers in other health care coverage programs like Covered California.

Since 2012, Health Access has also hosted the [California LGBTQ Health and Human Services Network](#) to make certain the Affordable Care Act's implementation is inclusive of the LGBTQ community. The statewide coalition is comprised of non-profit LGBTQ-serving organizations, community centers, researchers, and advocates working to advance state-level policies and resources that will advance LGBTQ health. This network has expanded the organization's policy work with recent projects, including [#Out4MentalHealth](#) and [#WeBreathe](#) on tobacco control.

In 2024, Health Access became a union employer through continued solidarity with the labor movement. Health Access voluntarily recognized its first staff union, Health Advocates United - UAW local 2013, aligning with other organizations in the policy advocacy and legislative community. This has continued to build on the long-standing commitment to employee well-being and recent efforts to provide staff more support, security, and flexibility.

As Executive Director of Health Access California, Anthony Wright led the organization toward achieving numerous victories for consumers, including expanding coverage to millions, protecting patients from industry abuses, containing health costs, advancing health equity and value, and reforming the California health system for the benefit of consumers and the state as a whole. After 22 years of leadership, Anthony will be moving on to Families USA, the national, non-partisan voice for health care consumers.

## **ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

The Executive Director reports to the Health Access California and Health Access Foundation Boards and is responsible for advancing the mission of Health Access in terms of culture, coalition building, advocacy, and impact. Working closely with the Health Access leadership team, the Executive Director will inspire innovation and ensure that the organization is well-equipped to advance its mission while developing and growing its coalition.

The Executive Director will be an external-facing leader and will guide statewide efforts to expand health care access and hold the health industry accountable. This will require the successful leadership and management of the organization, and sustaining the lobbying, policy advocacy, communications, organizing, and programmatic work and to protect and empower consumers and to achieve health equity and justice.

The Executive Director oversees annual budget expenditures of approximately \$3.5 million and a team of over 20, with an executive leadership team that includes a Deputy Director, Chief Operating Officer, and Directors of Policy Advocacy, Organizing, Communications, and the CA LGBTQ HHS Network.

## **KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

### **Champion a vision for Health Access as the leading consumer advocacy coalition in California**

The Executive Director will join Health Access at a pivotal moment, playing a prominent role in shaping the organization's future in fighting for quality, affordable, and equitable healthcare. The Executive Director will work closely with the leadership team, staff, board, and coalition members to develop both a broad vision and specific goals and action plans, while encouraging new collaborations to facilitate and execute on key priorities and objectives. The Executive Director will be in charge of communicating priorities broadly with a high level of transparency around how resources are allocated and when priorities shift. This will require embracing a strong culture of collaboration and diversity, equity, and inclusion, both internally and externally, to ensure that all voices are heard and valued, while keeping true to the mission when decisions are made. Health Access is highly committed to ensuring that the needs of consumers are prioritized in everything they do, and that the implementation of the strategic plan will provide ample opportunity to inspire new ideas around innovative and inclusive action that advances a healthcare system that benefits all Californians.

### **Achieve strategic, tangible, and measurable policy wins that advance equitable health access for all**

Over the years, Health Access has been successful by developing the political capital needed to advance policies toward the vision of a universal, affordable, and equitable health care system in the state of California. The Executive Director will need to understand California's political landscape and be strategic in working with the governor, their administration, and the state legislature to both advance and oppose policies. The Executive Director will support the Director of Policy and Advocacy and the policy team in strengthening research, advocacy, and partnerships with diverse constituents, and will work with the Directors of Organizing and Communication to support and promote campaigns like #Care4AllCA or specific goals, like around the Office of Health Care Affordability, through outreach efforts and by regular and effective engagement with the media. The Executive Director will be tasked with retaining and growing the organization and the community's political power, as well as with advancing the commitment toward health access, justice, equity and inclusion, for all Californians, and particularly for Black and Brown, low-income, LGBTQ communities, and those disadvantaged in other ways, such as immigration or

insurance status. This will require the Executive Director to bring a fresh perspective and creative solutions to the structural problems facing patients in the American health care system, and to provide added-value perspective and solutions.

### **Cultivate a broad and inclusive coalition that reflects the diverse needs of consumers**

The members of the Health Access coalition represent a broad and diverse group of organizations that center the voices and unique needs impacting various communities across the state. The Executive Director will play a pivotal role in convening the coalition, understanding each organization's individual and specific needs in order to help drive policy and advocacy, and maintaining the diversity that exists within the communities they represent. To do this successfully, the Executive Director will demonstrate a keen ability to balance competing interests and priorities and to find common ground among members while broadening and strengthening the coalition in order to cultivate regional partners across California. To solidify Health Access as a premier consumer advocacy organization, the Executive Director will successfully manage the coalition toward shared agreements that advance advocacy and leverage collective power.

### **Collaborate closely and effectively with both Boards of Directors**

Health Access has two strong, committed, and connected Boards of Directors: Health Access California and Health Access Foundation. The Executive Director will work closely with both, taking advantage of the unique structure of a multi-entity nonprofit organization to achieve strategic policy wins. The boards will look to the Executive Director to guide and manage both arms of the organization, advising on governance issues as appropriate and keeping them informed with regular updates and reports. Ultimately, the Executive Director will effectively leverage the experiences and diverse perspectives comprising both boards to inform policy, strategy, and decision-making.

### **Facilitate strong internal operations and ensure the ongoing financial vitality of the organization**

The Executive Director will support the internal functions of the organization by providing leadership, support, and direction to the organization's dedicated and mission-oriented internal team. The Executive Director will be transparent, relational, and trusting with their staff, providing them with opportunities for professional development and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. The Executive Director will maintain positive relations with the staff, negotiate in good faith with the staff union, and work collaboratively as a union employer to identify steps to bolster and improve the workplace. Additionally, the Executive Director will support the Deputy Director and Chief Operations Officer in sustaining the organization's budget while simultaneously growing the resource base through fundraising efforts. Given the current political climate and possible future threats to Health Access and its work, the Executive Director will assess internal operations and finances for sustainability, making sure they support the organization's mission and advance the work of Health Access not only today but in the years to come.

## QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate will have many, if not all, of the following qualifications, characteristics, and experiences:

- Experience leading a team and managing people, with consideration for experience in a collective bargaining environment;
- Experience in a nonprofit, foundation, labor union, or government entity, ideally as executive director or in another executive-level leadership role;
- Experience working with and/or leading a nonprofit Board of Directors, including knowledge of governance best practices;
- Proven skill at organizing and/or managing coalitions of different personalities, institutional needs, and constituencies, toward shared goals;
- Exceptional strategic planning skills with the ability to articulate a vision and organizational priorities and goals;
- Proven experience in financial management and budget oversight;
- Working knowledge of government operations, legislative processes, and lobbying strategies, particularly in California but also at the federal level;
- Demonstrated political savvy, ideally in terms of navigating government officials and policymakers, administrative bureaucracy and processes, coalition members and allies, members of the press/media, and external industry stakeholders;
- Knowledge of health care policy and health access issues, driven by an understanding of consumer needs and industry accountability, particularly for underrepresented and/or marginalized communities;
- A history of successful fundraising; the ability to successfully generate new revenue streams, particularly through grants and philanthropy;
- A demonstrated commitment to and experience advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- Strong public presence, with outstanding verbal and written communication skills and persuasive abilities;
- Demonstrated passion for the mission of Health Access California;
- Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution; Master's degree in Public Policy, Public Health, Public Administration, or advanced degree in related field (preferred).

## COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

Though the final salary will depend on the successful candidate's qualifications and experience, the estimated salary range for the position is \$185,000-\$205,000. Health Access offers excellent benefits, including medical, vision, dental, retirement, and other coverage.

Health Access has three offices across California, including Sacramento, Oakland, and Los Angeles. The Executive Director is expected to spend a significant amount of time in Sacramento, both in meetings and engaging partners, and with staff. While relocation is not a requirement, the preference is that the Executive Director resides in or within driving distance from Sacramento.

#### **APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS**

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. For best consideration, please apply by September 6, 2024. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website for the search: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/health-access-california/executive-director>. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

Cati Mitchell-Crossley, Carley Davenport, Luciano Zuniga, and Thea Kosmack  
Isaacson, Miller  
1000 Sansome Street, Suite 300  
San Francisco, CA 94111

*Promoting diversity is integral to the mission of Health Access. Health Access seeks applicants for all positions without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, veteran status, or physical or mental disability. Health Access embraces equality of opportunity and treatment for all employees in all employment matters.*