



MSSNY President Dr. Paul Pipia, MD, Statement on the Executive Budget Proposal

"The Executive Budget is a mixed bag for patient care access. It importantly sets forth several positive provisions to better ensure patients have access to needed care, including expanded health insurance coverage and coverage for telehealth services.

"However, we are very concerned by other proposals that would slash longstanding programs and result in reducing patient access to community-based physician care. This includes the proposed repeal of the Committee for Physicians' Health program, a tremendously important program begun over 40 years ago that provides needed treatment services for physicians thought to be suffering from burnout and/or addiction. Ironically, authority for this program was just extended for five years by the Governor and Legislature in last year's State Budget. Another serious concern are the cuts to the long-standing Excess Medical Malpractice Insurance program, a program started in the mid-1980s that has helped keep physicians in practice in our communities by offsetting the staggering costs of purchasing medical liability insurance coverage in New York State.

"We also have significant concerns with the adverse impact to patient care through proposals to remove important physician collaboration and/or supervision over care delivery by non-physicians. Not only is physician oversight essential for care quality, but it is also what patients want. A recent national [survey](#) reported that 95% of patients believe it is important that a physician be involved with their diagnosis and treatment decisions.

"We look forward to further discussions with the Governor and Legislature on preserving patient access to community-based physician care so that our patients have access to the quality healthcare they need and deserve."

(AUSTER)

Physicians Urged to Come to Albany on March 12th to Fight Back against Unfair Cuts!

With the Executive Budget this week seeking to impose huge new costs on physicians, cut funding for important programs and expand scope of practice for non-physicians, it is imperative that physicians plan to come to Albany on Tuesday, March 12th, 2024, for MSSNY's annual Physician Advocacy Day. It is an opportunity for physicians to talk directly to their Senators and Assemblymembers about how the Governor's Budget is going to harm patient access to community-based physician care.

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To view the flyer, click here: [Physician Advocacy Day Flyer](#).

To register, click here: [Physician Advocacy Registration](#).

MSSNY's lobby day will be held in person! It will take place at the Empire State Plaza (The Egg) in Albany from 7:45-11:00am. Physicians and their allies will hear from legislative leaders in the morning, including New York State Health Commissioner Dr. James McDonald. In the afternoon, they will meet with their respective legislators in meetings organized by county medical societies.

In addition to State Budget issues, we will be advocating for policies that address public health threats, reduce medical liability costs, remove barriers to patients accessing needed care, and reduce prior authorization and claim payment hassles.

Please plan to join hundreds of colleagues from around the state in Albany on March 12th!
(HOSPODAR)

Governor Advances Executive Budget – A Mixed Bag for Healthcare Access

This week Governor Hochul advanced her proposed \$233 Billion for the 2024-25 Fiscal Year. There are a number of positive proposals for enhancing care access, but unfortunately a large number of proposals which would adversely impact patient access to community-based physician care.

MSSNY Supports:

- \$74 million for enhanced payments in Patient Centered Medical Home program.
- \$315 million to provide Enhanced subsidies for purchase of commercial health insurance coverage in NYS Exchange (up to 350% of FPL).
- Continuing telehealth insurance coverage payment parity for an additional year (though MSSNY is seeking to extend this requirement permanently).
- Increased Medicaid rates for care to those with intellectual, physical or mental disabilities.
- \$55 million to establish 200 new inpatient psychiatric beds.
- Reducing Interest Rate on court judgments from 9% to prevailing market rate.
- Permitting Medical Assistants to provide immunizations.
- Additional loan repayment programs for psychiatrists and primary care physicians who make a 4-year commitment to devote a substantial portion of their practice to treating patients insured by Medicaid.

MSSNY Opposes:

- Repealing authorization for the MSSNY's Committee for Physicians Health (CPH) program. CPH has for over 40 years provided needed treatment services for physicians facing behavioral health or addiction issues. Last year, the State Legislature and the Governor agreed to continue this essential program for an additional 5 years. CPH is not funded out of the General Fund but through a \$30 set-aside through the physicians' biennial registration fee. Please send a letter to your legislators here to oppose these cuts: [URGENT: Help Restore Funding for CPH Program \(p2a.co\)](#)
- Imposing thousands of dollars in new costs on the 15,000 physicians enrolled in the Excess Medical Malpractice Insurance program, by requiring physicians to pay 50% of the coverage cost - a nearly \$40 million hit to community-based physicians across the state who already pay among the highest medical liability insurance costs in the nation. Please send a letter

to your legislators here to oppose this unfair cost imposition: [Reject Physician Cost-Share for Excess Medical Malpractice Insurance Program \(p2a.co\)](#)

- Permitting Physicians Assistants (PAs) to practice without any physician supervision or collaboration after 8,000 clinical hours if they practice in primary care or are employed by a hospital. Please send a letter to your legislators urgent them to protect physician-led team care [Preserve Physician-led, Team-based Healthcare \(p2a.co\)](#)
- Permitting dentists to provide certain COVID, flu and HPV vaccinations, and authorizes them to perform screening tests for HIV, Hepatitis and Diabetes.
- Authorizing pharmacists dispensing PrEP on a non-patient specific prescription basis
- Extend authority of Nurse Practitioners to practice without physician collaboration for another two years.
- Increased prior authorization hassles for Medicaid prescriptions by repealing “prescriber prevails” protections.

MSSNY is continuing to review the thousands of pages of Executive Budget documents and will follow up with additional information about relevant Budget proposals.

(DIVISION OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS)

Congress Fails to Stop 3.4% Medicare Cut as Part of Temporary Federal Funding Bill – Please Let Your Members of Congress Know of the Patient Impact

With Congressional leaders playing politics with seniors’ access to care and failing to include funding to stop a 3.37% Medicare cut as part of the latest resolution to fund the federal government, AMA President Dr. Jesse Ehrenfield issued the following statement:

“We are disappointed that Congress chose not to stop serious Medicare cuts for physician services in the temporary CR. Failure to reverse these cuts will create access issues for patients and small, independent physician practices, especially those in rural and underserved areas. Physicians are the only providers who have a payment cut this year and now face a nearly 10 percent reduction in Medicare payments over the past four years. Yet, we recognize that Congress’ work is far from done and urge lawmakers to reverse these cuts at the soonest opportunity.”

Physicians are urged to send a message to their Senators and Representatives here expressing their concerns and urging Congress to immediately fix these cuts. [Take Action | Fix Medicare Now](#)
(AUSTER)

CMS Finalizes Prior Authorization Rules for Medicare Advantage Plans

This week the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) finalized a new rule that sets some standards for prior authorizations used in Medicare and Medicaid managed care plans. The rules will require these plans to respond to prior authorization requests within 7 days, and 72 hours for urgent requests, provide specific reasons for denials and provide public information about approved and denied prior authorization requests. [CMS Finalizes Rule| HHS.gov](#)

These rules are similar to what New York already requires of New York-regulated health plans, which require a decision on prior authorization requests within 3 business days of a pre-authorization request and provide a clinical rationale when an adverse determination is issued. The New York DFS issues a report every year that details the utilization review requests denied and use of the external appeal mechanism to appeal these decisions. [NYSDFS: 2023 New York State Consumer Guide to Health Insurers](#)

MSSNY is also pushing legislation together with several other patient advocacy groups [S3400/A7268 \(mssny.org\)](https://www.mssny.org/S3400/A7268) in support of legislation that would reduce timeframes for prior authorization decisions, and prohibiting repeat prior authorization requests by health plans.

(AUSTER)

Registration Now Open Medical Matters CME Webinar

Psychosocial Elements of Infectious Outbreaks: A History

Wednesday January 24, 2024 @ 7:30am

Infectious outbreaks, especially those on a pandemic scale, impact nearly every aspect of human existence. Learn more about the psychosocial impact historically experienced because of infectious outbreaks by registering for the next Medical Matters webinar, ***Psychosocial Elements of Infectious Outbreaks: A History*** scheduled for **January 24th at 7:30am**. Craig Katz, MD, vice-chair of MSSNY's Committee on Emergency Preparedness and Disaster/Terrorism Response will serve as faculty for this webinar. [Register now](#)

Educational objectives are:

- Outline common human reactions to infectious outbreaks.
- Recognize factors that influence how people react.
- Identify how to apply these historical lessons to your own medical practice.

Additional information or assistance with registration may be obtained by contacting Melissa Hoffman at mhoffman@mssny.org

The Medical Society of the State of New York is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

The Medical Society of the State of New York designates this live activity for a maximum of 1.0 AMA PRA Category 1 credits™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

(HOFFMAN)

Women Physicians Leadership Academy March Registration Now Open!

Join MSSNY and MESF for the March 2024 Women Physicians Leadership Academy, a series of virtual leadership webinars for physicians, residents, and med students. This academy will be held over a series of Saturdays in March (March 2, 9, 16) from 7:45-11:15 am. The Fall sessions (October 21, 28, November 4) are now available on the [MSSNY CME website](#). Topics for the March series will include the importance of networking, enhancing physician wellness and belonging, and designing your medical career. Participants can earn a maximum of 18 continuing medical education credits for the completion of the entire series. March registration links are below:

[March 2, 2024: The Importance of Networking](#)

[March 9, 2024: Enhancing Physician Wellness and Belonging](#)

[March 16, 2024: Designing Your Medical Career](#)

(RENTO)