



Physicians Must Come to Albany on March 12th to Fight Back against Untenable Cuts!

It is imperative that physicians plan to be in Albany on Tuesday, March 12th, 2024, for MSSNY's annual Physician Advocacy Day. Please register here: [Physician Advocacy Registration](#)

There are numerous adverse measures contained in the Executive Budget that physicians must let their Senators and Assemblymembers know they oppose. These include: imposing tens of thousands of new dollars in new costs on physicians for obtaining Excess Medical Malpractice coverage, repealing authorization for the MSSNY's Committee for Physicians Health (CPH) program; removing supervision requirements for care provided by Physician Assistants; and prohibiting physicians from bringing Medicaid Managed Care claim disputes to Independent Dispute Resolution.

Do not miss this important opportunity for physicians to talk directly to Senators and Assemblymembers about how the Governor's Budget is going to harm patient access to community-based physician care by pushing through the above cuts. Let your legislators know your concerns that the essential services you provide are being taken for granted, and that physicians cannot absorb these cuts!

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

MSSNY's lobby day 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 and Committee chairs key health policy committees. 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.

Your future of practicing medicine is at stake - Please plan to join hundreds of colleagues from around the state in Albany on March 12th!

(HOSPODAR)

MSSNY President-elect Dr. Jerome Cohen Urges Legislature to Reject Proposals That Cut Patient Access to Community-Based Physician Care

This week MSSNY President-elect Dr. Jerome Cohen delivered testimony at a joint Senate-Assembly hearing examining the Health portion of the FY 2024-25 Executive Budget. [Joint Legislative Budget Hearing 2024 \(youtube.com\)](#).

Dr. Cohen's testimony highlighted several positive items in the Executive Budget to expand access to care, including: investments in the Patient-centered Medical Home program, further medical student loan repayment programs, telehealth payment parity; and expanded health insurance subsidies.

However, his verbal and submitted testimony raised strong objections to other proposals that are counterproductive to maintaining patient access to community-based physician care, including:

- Repealing authorization for the MSSNY's Committee for Physicians Health (CPH) program. CPH has for over 40 years provided needed treatment services for thousands of 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. For many downstate physicians, this cost will be in tens of thousands of dollars!! 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 \(p2a.co\)](#)
- Repealing the ability of physicians to bring claim disputes with Medicaid Managed Care plans to the Independent Dispute resolution (IDR) process. This change, which would overturn a recent action by DFS to permit the right to appeal these claims through IDR, will lead to steep health insurer payment cuts, and discourage many physician specialties from providing essential on-call emergency department care. Please send a letter to your letters opposing these changes [Retain Right to Use Independent Dispute Resolution Process \(p2a.co\)](#)
- Permitting dentists 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.
- Increased prior authorization hassles for Medicaid prescriptions by repealing "prescriber prevails" protections.

MSSNY has been working with specialty societies to send joint communications to the entire Legislature raising our collective concerns with these proposals, and the adverse impact on patient access to community-based physician care.

(DIVISION OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS)

Latest Medicaid “Unwind” Data Shows 78% of New Yorkers Renewed Coverage in December 2023

Approximately 78% of New Yorkers who were part of the latest group to undergo screening for the state’s Medicaid program, Child Health Plus and Essential Plan, renewed their coverage in December 2023, according to the New York State Department of Health (DOH). This brings the total number of New Yorkers who have renewed coverage since June to nearly three million.

The data is largely consistent with numbers previously recorded with Child Health Plus enrollees continuing to have the highest renewal rates, at 90% for December. By comparison, 79% of Medicaid and 70% of Essential Plan participants renewed.

The New York State Health department will continue reevaluating New Yorkers’ public insurance eligibility until all individuals enrolled in these insurance programs go through the process and MSSNY will monitor, and update members as new information becomes available.

For more information, click here: [Data and Reports \(ny.gov\)](#)

(CARY)

Registration Now Open for Medical Matters CME Webinar

The Many Faces of COVID

Wednesday February 21, 2024 @ 7:30am

As we enter the fourth year of living (and dying and suffering) with COVID, the only certainty is its unpredictable nature. Learn more about ***The Many Faces of COVID*** by registering for the next Medical Matters webinar on **February 21st at 7:30am**. William Valenti, MD, Chair of MSSNY’s Infectious Diseases Committee and member of MSSNY’s Committee on Emergency Preparedness and Disaster/Terrorism Response will serve as faculty for this webinar. [Register now](#)

Educational objectives are:

- Describe typical COVID symptoms and variant effects on progression and presentation.
- Define vaccine fatigue and the impact it has had on upticks in COVID spread.
- Identify methods to employ when diagnosing, treating and preventing the spread of COVID.

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)

Update on MSSNY Veterans Matters CME Programming

The Medical Society of the State of New York is planning a series of Continuing Medical Education (CME) programs throughout New York State focusing on veterans’ mental health this upcoming spring. These CME programs can be presented in a live setting and are on Burn Pits: Psychological and Physical Impact on Veterans, COVID-19 and its Impact on Veterans, Military Sexual Trauma

Volume 34, No. 4, January 26, 2024

(MST), The Special Mental Health Needs of Women Veterans, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), PTSD, Suicide in Veterans, Substance Use Disorders in Veterans, and Military Culture. The programs provide evidence-based diagnosis and treatment options as well as an exploration of what primary care providers need to know about military culture.

A publication by the RAND corp. found that less than half of private healthcare providers in New York State are familiar percent with military culture or screen for conditions common among veterans. Fewer than 3% meet the total criteria for readiness to meet the healthcare needs of veterans. These programs will assist your physicians in learning how to screen for serious conditions.

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. Please contact Nicholas Hospodar at nhospodar@mssny.org or by phone at 518-465-8085 if you are interested in hosting one of these programs this upcoming autumn.

(HOSPODAR)

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](#)

Any questions about the Women Physicians Leadership Academy, please reach out to Pat Clancy, MSSNY Sr. Vice President/Managing Director at pclancy@mssny.org or Emily Rento, MSSNY's Public Health Associate at erento@mssny.org

(RENTO)