

**TESTIMONY OF ADVANTAGE CARE PHYSICIANS
(ACPNY)**

SUBMITTED JANUARY 23, 2024

JOINT LEGISLATIVE BUDGET HEARING: HEALTH

NEW YORK STATE SENATE COMMITTEES:

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES:

STANDING COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND
MEANS

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Chairperson Krueger, Chairperson Weinstein, Chairperson Rivera, Chairperson Paulin, and esteemed Ranking Members, AdvantageCare Physicians (ACPNY) greatly appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony for today's important hearing on Governor Hochul's State Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget proposal.

ACPNY has built its community roots by treating patients in New York communities for more than 60 years. ACPNY is one of the largest independent primary care and specialty physician practices in Downstate New York and delivers care to approximately 500,000 patients annually. With more than 30 medical offices located throughout all five New York City boroughs and Long Island, ACPNY is part of the State's solution to advance health equity by increasing the availability and growth of community-based primary and specialty care across underserved neighborhoods.

The majority of ACPNY patients are from minority ethnic groups (47.5% Black, 18.8% Hispanic or Latino, 8.9% Asian, 0.9% American Indian or Native Alaskan, 18% White, and 24.3% Other/Unknown). Approximately half of ACPNY patients have Medicaid or Medicare, more than a third are covered by union health plans, and the majority of ACPNY patients are attributed to a value-based payment (VBP) contract. Many ACPNY patients are the sickest and most vulnerable residents in their community due to chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, obesity, or asthma or other high-risk chronic disease.

ACPNY strongly applauds Governor Hochul's and the Legislature's continued commitment to creating a stronger and more equitable healthcare system. The state's 1115 demonstration amendment and State Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget proposal reflect this commitment with the inclusion of important provisions to invest in high quality health care that address pressing health needs facing New Yorkers and improve access to primary care. Our testimony calls upon the Executive and Legislature in the enacted budget to ensure independent physician practices are recognized for our work as part of the State's health equity solution. With sufficient resources, ACPNY and other similar independent physician practices can continue to deliver high quality and patient-centered care that allows individuals to manage their complex illnesses in effective ways outside of hospital systems.

Budget Recommendations

While we appreciate Governor Hochul's vision to create a stronger healthcare system and the commitment to investing in primary care in evidence in the new 1115 waiver, physician practices like ACPNY are insufficiently funded to address underserved communities' unique needs. In the past we have advocated for ways independent physician groups could receive dedicated funding through the Healthcare Facility Transformation Program and Vital Access Provider Assurance Program (VAPAP).

Now, with the approval of the 1115 waiver, the State has an additional opportunity to strengthen our ability to care for Medicaid enrollees and New Yorkers most in need of high-quality, community-based health care services. We strongly support the Medicaid provider rate increases for primary care, behavioral health, and obstetrics care as outlined in the 1115 waiver. This investment will help ensure practices like ACPNY, which serve a large number of Medicaid enrollees, can maintain the access to high-quality care our patients depend upon.

The following are two additional specific recommendations to ensure these investments reach organizations like ours that are providing primary, specialty, and behavioral health services in our communities.

- 1. Secure Enhanced Medicaid Payments to High-Performing Physician Practices Under State Directed Payment (SDP) Authority.** We strongly support the state's intention outlined in its 1115 waiver to pursue enhanced payments to Medicaid providers designated as primary care medical homes (PCMH). We are suggesting that the state prioritize enhanced PCMH payments for practices which operate in underserved areas, serve at least 20% Medicaid enrollees, and work collaboratively with local safety net hospitals. ACPNY has maintained the highest level of NYS PCMH accreditation, which is critical to providing high-quality primary care to underserved communities and reducing health disparities by meeting each community's medical, behavioral, and social care needs. ACPNY has transformed primary care population health capabilities to achieve - across all locations - the highest level of NYS Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) recognition by incorporating comprehensive health assessments, prioritizing preventive care needs such as vaccines and screenings, and

adopting care management, post-hospital discharge, and pharmacy protocols to manage high-risk chronic conditions.

Directing this new funding to independent practices with a demonstrated commitment to serving traditionally underserved populations will allow for all parts of the healthcare ecosystem to be incentivized and supported in efforts to improve care for Medicaid beneficiaries.

- 2. Expand New Health Care Safety Net Transformation Funding to Physician Practices Serving Medicaid Beneficiaries.** ACPNY has greatly appreciated the State Legislature’s support in ensuring physician practices operating in underserved areas are supported through Health Care Transformation Funding. Governor Hochul is proposing additional Transformation Funding for Safety Net hospitals and their partners in her SFY ’24-’25 Budget proposal. Providing opportunities for primary care practices serving in underserved areas to also apply for the funding will ensure ACPNY and others can continue to make investments that will support the State’s goals to right the wrongs of historical inequities in the health care system.

With additional support, we can continue to narrow the gaps and improve access to primary and specialty care for patients in underserved areas outside hospital systems, while continuing to partner with other entities across the State to improve outcomes for all New Yorkers.

Conclusion

ACPNY is honored to be submitting testimony for today’s hearing. With our commitment to underserved communities and dedication to increasing access to high quality, patient centered care outside hospital settings and the legislature’s support for these recommendations, we can build on our successes and improve health outcomes for the most vulnerable in New York State. We look forward to continuing to work with Governor Hochul, Chairperson Krueger, Chairperson Weinstein, Chairperson Rivera, Chairperson Paulin, and all members of the New York State Legislature to ensure the residents of our great state get the health care they need and deserve.

About ACPNY

ACPNY has leading providers of high-value specialty care to offer patients community-based access to advanced specialty procedures close to their homes outside hospital settings, including endoscopy suites for colonoscopies, cardiac procedures (echocardiograms, nuclear tests, and device monitoring), and gynecology, ophthalmology, and podiatry surgical procedures. ACPNY medical offices are commonly co-located with community-based hospital or other clinical partners to offer expanded access to lab services, radiology services, cancer care and surgical services in a neighborhood-based setting.

ACPNY's wide range of services reflects the needs of the diverse patient populations we serve. ACPNY offers many patients the only access to high-quality and affordable neighborhood-based primary and specialty care to manage their complex illnesses within the community, including in 10 locations in designated Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs) and 16 locations in Primary Care Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs).

Appendix – ACPNY Medical Office Locations

MANHATTAN

Flatiron District
21 East 22nd St.

Harlem
215 West 125th St.

Lincoln Square
154 West 71st St.

Midtown
590 Fifth Ave.

Upper East Side
215 East 95th St.

Washington Heights
4335 Broadway

BROOKLYN

Bay Ridge
740 64th St.

Bedford
233 Nostrand Ave.

Brooklyn Heights
195 Montague St.

Crown Heights
546 Eastern Parkway

Downtown
447 Atlantic Ave.

East New York
101 Pennsylvania Ave.

Flatbush
1000 Church Ave.

Kings Highway
3245 Nostrand Ave.

QUEENS

Astoria
31-75 23rd St.

Cambria Heights
206-20 Linden Blvd.

Elmhurst
88-31 55th Ave.

Flushing Annex
41-61 Kissena Blvd.

Flushing North
140-15 Sanford Ave.

Forest Hills
96-10 Metropolitan Ave.

Jackson Heights
40-31 82nd Str.

Jamaica Estates
180-05 Hillside Ave.

Richmond Hill
125-06 101st Ave.

Rochdale Village
169-59 137th Ave.

LONG ISLAND

Babylon
300 Bay Shore Rd.

Bethpage
1055 Stewart Ave.

Lake Success
1991 Marcus Ave.

Ronkonkoma
640 Hawkins Ave.

Uniondale
70 Charles Lindbergh Blvd.

Valley Stream
260 West Sunrise Hwy.

STATEN ISLAND

Annadale
4771 Hylan Blvd.

Clove Road
1050 Clove Rd.

BRONX

**AdvantageCare Bronx
East 149th Street**
326 E 149th St. #8

**AdvantageCare Bronx
Southern Boulevard**
932 Southern Blvd.

**AdvantageCare Bronx
Westchester Avenue**
2044 Westchester Ave.

