

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

SUBMITTED FEBRUARY 4, 2022

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 Gottfried, Chairperson Weinstein, Chairperson Rivera, Chairperson Krueger, esteemed Ranking Members, AdvantageCare Physicians (ACPNY) greatly appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony for this important hearing on Governor Hochul’s State Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget proposal. ACPNY is a primary and specialty care practice, serving half a million patients in underserved communities across the New York area. With locations in all five boroughs, many in communities hardest hit by COVID-19, our care model addresses longstanding health disparities by treating the sickest and most vulnerable residents, many of whom have chronic conditions such as diabetes, asthma, hypertension, obesity or other high-risk chronic disease.

ACPNY strongly applauds Governor Hochul’s commitment to supporting the health care workers who have given so much of themselves to keep New Yorkers safe during the pandemic. The State Fiscal Year 2022-23 Budget reflects this commitment, with the inclusion of important provisions to support healthcare workers through bonuses and wage increases and capital funding to transform healthcare facilities and innovative ways of providing care. As the governor said, many of our colleagues are “bone tired” and her proposals will go a long way to increasing morale by showing appreciation for their tireless work. Below we provide suggestions for ensuring more of these health care heroes whose work has been so instrumental to maintaining the wellbeing of underserved communities receive recognition for their efforts.

ACPNY has built its community roots by treating patients in New York communities for more than 60 years. We are one of the largest physician practices in the state, with 42 medical offices conveniently located throughout all five New York boroughs and Long Island, including three affiliate BronxDocs medical offices, which provide care to underserved areas of the Bronx.

ACPNY offers the full range of medical services from primary care – early intervention, preventive services and chronic care management – to specialty services, including Gastroenterology, Cardiology, Endocrinology, Ophthalmology, Hematology and Oncology, Women’s Health, Podiatry, Psychiatry and Behavioral Health, and advanced specialty, lab and radiology procedures that are usually provided in a hospital setting. This focus allows us to deliver “holistic care” focusing on the whole person’s behavioral and health care needs. We are also leaders in developing value-based care arrangements with health plans and public programs and have participated in the Medicare Accountable Care Organization (ACO) program, ranking as the among the highest performing ACOs in New York and the nation according to a recent government evaluation.

ACPNY's Commitment to Underserved Communities

ACPNY takes our responsibilities to the communities we serve seriously, including in underserved areas. Our ability to provide comprehensive care allows patients to manage their complex illnesses within the community, where often there is a lack of other services available. For example, we opened an office in the medical desert of East New York, Brooklyn in 2019 that now serves 30,000 patients each year. Thirteen of our offices are in designated Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs) and 17 are in Primary Care Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs). Our clinicians are both culturally and linguistically aligned to the diverse neighborhoods and individuals they serve.

ACPNY's wide range of services reflects the needs of the diverse patient populations we serve. Almost half of ACPNY patients have government-sponsored insurance, and the majority are from minority ethnic groups (43.1% Black, 22.3% White, 10.4% Hispanic or Latino, 6.7% Asian, 0.7% American Indian or Native Alaskan and 16.9% Other/Unknown). We employ over 1,700 providers, nurses, medical assistants, and support staff, over half of which are union members. One-third of the patients we serve are covered by union health plans and provide the essential services that have allowed New York to keep running throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our Unique Contributions During the Pandemic

Physician practices like ours have played a crucial role during the pandemic. Our offices remained open, even during March – April 2020 when our area was bearing the brunt of the pandemic, quickly implementing virtual visits and maintaining in person access for urgent primary and specialty care and helping nearby community hospitals deal with the surge of hospitalizations.

In May 2020, ACPNY announced partnerships with New York City and State to administer COVID-19 tests in our area, many of which were hot spots in low-income, minority communities lacking these services. We have heard from emergency room physicians that they would often refer individuals to these testing sites, allowing them to provide beds to those with more severe symptoms.

ACPNY became one of the first physician practices to partner with the city and state to administer COVID-19 vaccines in January 2021. We have since administered 60,000 doses of the vaccine, many to frontline workers and others in underserved communities.

Proposed Approach

As noted above, ACPNY greatly appreciates Governor Hochul's vision and commitment to health care workers. However, because we are a physician practice, the legislative language as currently drafted would not affect our colleagues whose work in underserved communities has meant so much during the pandemic. We have two specific recommendations for your consideration:

- 1. Permit Physician Practice Employees to Receive Provider Bonuses:** The Governor's budget includes new funds to support health care workers with annual incomes below \$100,000. We respectfully suggest these funds be made available to workers at physician practices who have made such great contributions during the past two years.
- 2. Support Physician Practices Making a Difference in Underserved Communities:** We strongly support the proposed investments in the health care infrastructure also included through new funding by establishing a statewide health care transformation program, which includes \$750 million to health care providers. We are suggesting that \$250 million of these funds be designated to physician practices to support their efforts to address health care equity by making primary and specialty care services more available to underserved communities.

We believe that our employees, who have done so much to maintain access to health care and address health disparities during the pandemic should be rewarded for their tireless work. With additional support, we can also continue to narrow the gaps and improve access to care for patients in underserved areas, through the creation of new and renovated facilities to allow more patients to receive high-quality primary and specialty care within their communities.

Conclusion

ACPNY is honored to be submitting testimony for today's hearing. We look forward to continuing to work with Governor Hochul, Chairperson Gottfried, Chairperson Weinstein, Chairperson Rivera, Chairperson Krueger, and all members of the New York State General Assembly and Senate to ensure the residents of our great state get the health care they need and deserve.

**Appendix:
Additional Information about ACPNY**

IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD



*ACPNY medical center located in Medically Underserved Area (MUA) and/or Primary Care Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA)

| LOCATION | SERVICES |
|--|---|
| MANHATTAN | |
| Duane Street* 52 Duane St. | Adult Primary Care. Telemedicine: Nutrition & Behavioral Health |
| Flatiron District 21 East 22nd St. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, OB/GYN, Nutrition, Optometry, Ophthalmology, Podiatry, Behavioral Health, Radiology, Lab Services |
| Harlem* 215 West 125th St. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Cardiology, Nutrition, OB/GYN, Optometry, Podiatry, Behavioral Health, Lab Services |
| Lincoln Square 154 West 71st St. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Lab Services |

| | |
|--|---|
| Lower East Side 570 Grand St. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, GYN, Nutrition |
| Midtown 590 Fifth Ave. | Adult Primary Care, Cardiology, GYN, Behavioral Health, Rheumatology, Lab Service |
| Upper East Side 215 East 95th St. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Cardiology, Gastroenterology, Hematology/Oncology, OB/GYN, Hematology/Oncology, Optometry, Podiatry, Rheumatology, Behavioral Health, Radiology and Lab Services |
| Washington Heights* 4337 Broadway | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, GYN, Ophthalmology, Optometry, Podiatry, Lab Services |
| Water Street 55 Water Street | Adult Primary Care, Behavioral Health, Nutrition, Acupuncture <i>(Office temporarily closed)</i> |
| BROOKLYN | |
| Bay Ridge* 740 64th St. | Adult Primary Care, Optometry, OB/GYN, Podiatry, Lab Services |
| Bedford* 233 Nostrand Ave. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Audiology, Gastroenterology <i>(not available at this time)</i> , OB/GYN, Ophthalmology, Podiatry, Rheumatology, Behavioral Health, Radiology and Lab Services |
| Brooklyn Heights 195 Montague St. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Nutrition, OB/GYN, Podiatry, Radiology and Lab Services |
| Crown Heights* 546 Eastern Parkway | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, OB/GYN, Optometry, Podiatry, Radiology and Lab Services |
| Downtown 447 Atlantic Ave. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Cardiology, Endocrinology, Gastroenterology, Hematology/Oncology, OB/GYN, Ophthalmology, Optometry, Podiatry, Radiology and Lab Services |
| East New York* 101 Pennsylvania Ave. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Cardiology, Gastroenterology, Hematology/Oncology, OB/GYN, Optometry, Ophthalmology, Podiatry, Rheumatology, Behavioral Health, Nutrition, Advanced Dermatology, Radiology and Lab Services |
| Flatbush* 1000 Church Ave. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, GYN, Ophthalmology, Optometry, Podiatry, Behavioral Health, Radiology and Lab Services |
| Kings Highway* 3245 Nostrand Ave. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Audiology, Cardiology, Endocrinology, OB/GYN, Ophthalmology, Optometry, Podiatry, Nutrition, Radiology and Lab Services |
| QUEENS | |
| Astoria* 31-75 23rd St. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Optometry, OB/GYN, Cardiology, Gastroenterology, Lab Services |
| Cambria Heights* 206-20 Linden Blvd. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, OB/GYN, Optometry, Ophthalmology, Podiatry, and Lab Services |
| Elmhurst* 86-15 Queens Blvd. | Adult Primary Care, OB/GYN, Podiatry, Radiology and Lab Services |
| Elmhurst Specialty* 88-06 55th Ave. | Pediatrics, Optometry, Ophthalmology |

| | |
|--|--|
| Flushing North* 140-15 Sanford Ave. | Adult Primary Care, Endocrinology, Gastroenterology, OB/GYN, Optometry, Podiatry, Radiology and Lab Services |
| Flushing Annex* 41-61 Kissena Blvd. | Gastroenterology |
| Forest Hills 96-10 Metropolitan Ave. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Cardiology, Endocrinology, Gastroenterology, Hematology/Oncology, OB/GYN, Optometry, Podiatry, Behavioral Health, Nutrition, Radiology, and Lab Services |
| Jamaica Estates* 180-05 Hillside Ave. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Cardiology, Endocrinology, OB/GYN, Optometry, Ophthalmology, Podiatry, Rheumatology, Wound Care, Behavioral Health, Radiology and Lab Services |
| Jackson Heights* 40-31 82nd St. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Endocrinology, OB/GYN, GYN Surgery, Optometry, Podiatry, and Lab Services |
| Richmond Hill* 125-06 101st Ave. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Ophthalmology, Podiatry, OB/GYN, Gastroenterology, Radiology and Lab Services |
| Rochdale Village* 169-59 137th Ave. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, OB/GYN, Ophthalmology, Behavioral Health, Radiology and Lab Services |
| Rochdale Village Specialty* 169-59 137th Ave | Podiatry |
| Rockaway* 29-15 Far Rockaway Blvd. | Adult Primary Care, Lab Services. Referrals as needed. |

BRONX

| | |
|--|---|
| BronxDocs* 326 E 149th St. #8 (St. Barnabus) | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Cardiology, Family Medicine, Gastroenterology, OB/GYN, Ophthalmology, Orthopedic Surgery, Physical Therapy, Podiatry, Pain Medicine |
| BronxDocs* 932 Southern Boulevard | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Cardiology, Family Medicine, OB/GYN, Ophthalmology, Physical Therapy, Podiatry, Pain Medicine |
| Parkchester 2044 Westchester Avenue | Family Medicine, OB/GYN, Pediatrics, Physical Therapy |

STATEN ISLAND

| | |
|--|--|
| Annadale 4771 Hylan Blvd. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Cardiology, Dermatology, Endocrinology, Gastroenterology, OB/GYN, Ophthalmology, Optometry, Podiatry, Pulmonology, Radiology and Lab Services |
| Clove Road 1050 Clove Road | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Cardiology, Dermatology, Endocrinology, Gastroenterology, Hematology/Oncology, OB/GYN, Ophthalmology, Optometry, Podiatry, Pulmonology, Behavioral Health, Nutrition, Radiology and Lab Services |
| Richmond Avenue at the Mall 2654 Richmond Ave. | Adult Primary Care, Family Medicine, Behavioral Health, Pulmonology, Aesthetic Services, and Lab Services |

LONG ISLAND

| | |
|---|---|
| Babylon 300 Bay Shore Rd. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Cardiology, Endocrinology, Gastroenterology, OB/GYN, Nutrition, Optometry, Podiatry, Dermatology, Behavioral Health, Radiology and Lab Services |
| Bethpage 1055 Stewart Ave | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Cardiology, Endocrinology, Gastroenterology with Endoscopy Suite, Hematology-Oncology with Infusion Suite, Podiatry, Endocrinology, Cardiology, OB/GYN, GYN Surgery, Ophthalmology, Optometry, Rheumatology, Nutrition, Behavioral Health, Radiology and Lab Services |
| Lake Success/New Hyde Park 1991 Marcus Ave. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Cardiology, Gastroenterology, OB/GYN, Ophthalmology, Optometry, Podiatry, and Radiology Services |
| Ronkonkoma 640 Hawkins Ave. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Cardiology, OB/GYN, Optometry, Behavioral Health, Gastroenterology, Radiology, and Lab Services |
| Uniondale 70 Charles Lindbergh Blvd | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Cardiology, Endocrinology, Gastroenterology, OB/GYN, Optometry, Advanced Dermatology, Radiology, and Lab Services |
| Valley Stream 260 West Sunrise Hwy. | Adult Primary Care, Pediatrics, Cardiology, Endocrinology, Gastroenterology, Hematology/Oncology, OB/GYN, Optometry, Podiatry, Rheumatology, Behavioral Health, Radiology and Lab Services |