



**Written Testimony of  
Cayuga Community Health Network**

New York State Joint Legislative Public Hearing on  
2015-16 Executive Health Budget  
10 a.m. Monday, Feb. 2, 2015

Chairs: Senator Kemp Hannon  
Assemblyman Richard Gottfried

Submitted by: Program Coordinator Jessica Soule

The Cayuga Community Health Network has been a significant stakeholder in public health and preventive medicine in the region since 1997. The non-profit agency serves Cayuga County by improving access to quality healthcare, improving the efficiency of health services, and promoting healthy lifestyles and behavioral choices.

We ask that the proposed funding be restored for the Rural Health Network Development and Rural Health Care Access Development programs, and that these programs be separated from the Health Workforce Development in the proposed budget. This will allow the Network to better prepare for the future.

Cayuga Community Health Network leads the way in prevention programs as connected to ever-prevalent chronic diseases. We conduct free Chronic Disease Self-Management courses, especially targeting the county's seniors, which make up 17% of the population. The Network has four trained facilitators for the evidence-based program, and each course that has been offered has received excellent feedback from participants.

The Network's Diabetes Prevention Program is the only diabetes program in Cayuga County. We offer monthly support groups for diabetics and their caregivers, facilitated by a diabetes educator. We also provide diabetes prevention and education workshops along with cooking classes. The diabetes program is especially important as the county moves toward embracing the DSRIP; Cayuga's diabetes hospitalization rates are higher than the state's rate (excluding New York City), and the rates of diabetes-related short-term complications hospitalization rate for both children and adults exceed the state's rates (excluding NYC).

The smoking rate has dropped in Cayuga County from 24% of residents smoking every day in 2004 to 11.6% of residents reporting smoking every day. Conversely, the non-smoking rate has increased since the start of the Tobacco-Free Program, from 75.2% in 2004 to 83.4% in 2013. Although we've lost the state funding for tobacco-only programming due to state-level restructuring earlier this year, we continue to support tobacco-free housing and behaviors through our Healthy Habits and Healthy Neighborhoods Program.

Heading into the 2015-2016 year, we will add another staff member to lead the local effort for the Population Health Improvement Plan. Knowing that the state supports our efforts to continue to improve healthcare infrastructure and access to healthcare for all residents will assist the Network as it plans community-wide initiatives to decrease inequities in the community and improve access to primary care.

We respectfully ask that funding be restored for the Rural Health Network Development and Rural health Care Access Development programs.

Thank you,  
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