

ENHANCING PUBLIC HEALTH

Prevention of Chronic Diseases

The Medical Society of the State of New York believes that primary prevention of diseases is important to the health and well-being of all New Yorkers. Heart disease is still the leading cause of death for all Americans; and stroke ranks as the third leading cause of death. High blood pressure, elevated cholesterol, lack of physical activity, poor nutrition and tobacco use are the primary risk factors for CVD and Stroke. Cancer is the second leading cause of death in New York State. Screening and early detection are the best strategies in fighting cancer. The Medical Society will continue to support programs for preventions and management of chronic disease that includes tobacco prevention and cessation, obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and asthma. The Medical Society is a strong proponent of a healthy lifestyle and has developed policies in support of good nutritional choices for all New Yorkers. MSSNY supports legislation to limit the promotion of tobacco products in the State by all tobacco companies; to prohibit the sale of tobacco, e-cigarettes and nicotine dispensing devices and products to anyone less than 21 years of age; to increase penalties for the sale of tobacco, e-cigarettes and nicotine dispensing devices to persons less than 21 years of age and supports legislation that would ban smoking in pediatric setting. The Medical Society supports an increase in the New York State Tobacco Control Program and will support efforts to increase funding for New York's obesity prevention program. The Medical Society also supports a temporary ban on marketing of high stimulant/caffeine drinks to children/adolescents under age 18 until such time as the scientific evidence regarding the possible adverse medical affects can be determined. The Medical Society also supports increased funding through the New York State budget process for the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disability to ensure that young people with disabilities are quickly identified and receive needed assistance. The Medical Society will watch closely the development of New York State regulations pertaining to marijuana for medical use.

Immunizations and Infectious Diseases

Numerous cost analyses have shown that it is cheaper to prevent a disease than to treat it. Vaccines are responsible for the control of many diseases; however, New York State is experiencing an outbreak of measles and pertussis due to many individuals choosing not to be immunized or not immunizing their children. MSSNY will place an emphasis on programs that will improve adult immunization rates and will continue to advocate for use of the adult and child schedule for immunizations as developed by the Advisory Council on Immunization Practices, including requiring meningococcal immunizations in 6th grade and a booster for students in 11th grade. The Medical Society will continue to oppose any further religious, medical or philosophical exemptions to New York State immunization law. The Medical Society also supports the administration of Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine to females and males as means of preventing the transmission of HPV, cervical cancer and HPV associated disease to individuals. MSSNY will continue to advocate for early screening and testing for STDs. Early detection of the HIV and HCV infection means that infected patients will have the opportunity to live years longer when treatment is initiated prior to the development of symptoms. MSSNY will develop in 2014-15 educational programs on HIV and HCV that will discuss diagnosis and treatment and the various changes in the state law.

Public Health Preparedness, Environmental and Global Health

The recent world outbreak of Ebola and the rapid spread of enterovirus-D68 (EV-D68) clearly demonstrate the need to ensure that physicians and New York State residents are prepared for a public health emergency. Additionally, the state has seen large increases in hurricanes and flooding disasters that have caused severe disruptions in people's lives and indeed, health. MSSNY remains committed to preparing the public and physicians for the next public health emergency and is committed to educating physicians about these threats. The Medical Society of the State of New York in 2013 revised its policy on hydraulic fracturing that includes supporting a moratorium on natural gas extraction until valid

information is available to evaluate the process for its potential effects on human health and the environment; and that MSSNY support the planning and implementation of a health impact assessment to be conducted by a New York State School of Public Health; advocate for the establishment of an industry-funded, independently-arbitrated state trust fund for people that may be harmed as a result of hydraulic fracturing; MSSNY oppose any non-disclosure provisions related to the practice of hydraulic fracturing that interfere with any aspect of the patient-doctor relationship and/or the ready collection of epidemiological data for future health impact studies. The Medical Society will also supports measures that will provide for more walkable and bike-able communities.

Women and Reproductive Health

Preserving the ability for women to have access to reproductive and sexual health care services is a key public health component that MSSNY has long supported. Efforts will continue to help reduce the rate of unintended pregnancy and maternal mortality in New York State. Ensuring that women have access to reproductive and sexual health care services can help to reduce unintended pregnancy, and help to promote knowledge about screening and services available. Preconception and prenatal care are essential in reducing birth defects and low birth rates. MSSNY will continue to work with the Department of Health and other organizations to reduce the incidents of maternal deaths. The Medical Society will continue to support sexual health education amongst adolescents. The Medical Society of the State of New York will oppose any legislation that criminalizes the exercise of clinical judgment in the delivery of medical care. The Medical Society supports efforts to expand access to emergency contraception, including making emergency contraception pills more readily available.