



CAPITAL UPDATE

News of legislative, regulatory, and other matters of interest to New York's physicians

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MSSNY Urges that State Budget Not Be Balanced on the Backs of New York's Dedicated Physicians

Last week the Governor released her \$260 Billion Executive Budget proposal for the 2026-27 fiscal year. Many proposals are similar to past years, but in some cases, there are additional nuances that make them even more problematic. While there are some positive initiatives such as prior authorization reform and ensuring fair telehealth payment, the combined weight of the huge new cost impositions and steep drops in insurer payment will – if enacted – make it close to impossible for New York's relatively few remaining community-based medical practices to remain afloat, exacerbating patient access to care challenges. New York already regularly ranks as one of the worst states in the country to be a physician, and these changes will chase more physicians away.

The significant adverse impact of these Budget proposals on patient access to skilled physician care is a critical reason why physicians need to PLAN TO BE IN ALBANY ON MARCH 10 to ask for fairness at MSSNY's Annual [Physician Advocacy Day](#).

Adverse Proposals

- Imposing \$40 million in new costs to the 16,000 physicians who receive Excess Medical Malpractice Insurance coverage by requiring them to pay 50% of the coverage cost. This will hit many of these physicians with thousands of dollars in additional new costs at a time they can least absorb it. Send a letter in opposition here: [Urge Legislature to Reject Physician Cost-Share for Excess Program](#).
- Threatening available on-call specialty care availability in Emergency Departments across New York State by upending New York's innovative IDR payment resolution process for non-participating provider claims, altering the criteria to make it one-sided towards health insurer interests and eliminate ability to appeal out of network Medicaid Managed Care disputes to IDR. Send a letter in opposition here: [Protect Physicians' Right to Access a Fair IDR Process](#).
- Permitting many PAs to practice without any defined physician supervision after 8,000 hours practice, despite a law enacted last year giving PAs significantly more care responsibilities. Send a letter in opposition here: [Preserve Physician-led, Team-based Healthcare](#)

- Eliminate the historical vetting role of the county medical society in recommending physicians to participate in the Workers' Compensation program. The problem with Workers Compensation is not the application process, but its low payments relative to the enormous hassles of claim submissions and non-payment months and years after providing complex care to injured workers. Send a letter in opposition here: [Workers Compensation](#)
- Expand the reporting requirements for completed material healthcare acquisitions, including those completed dating back to 2023.
- Passing from SED to DOH oversight of physician private practice incorporation, as well as giving the Commissioner unilateral authority to impose continuing medical education requirements.
- Giving auto insurers a much longer timeframe to challenge No-Fault medical claims.

Positive Provisions

- Proposing a series of prior authorization reforms, including prohibiting health plans from requiring Prior Authorization for the treatment of chronic conditions more than once per year, and requiring greater transparency of Prior Auth denials.
- Permitting Medical Assistants to administer immunizations.
- Extending telehealth health insurance payment parity for 2 more years.
- Linking immunization coverage standards to those recommended by AAP, AAFP, ACP or ACOG.
- Reducing Interest rates on court judgments from 9% to a market rate.
- Increased investment in the Early Intervention program.
- CPH funded at historical level of \$990,000.
- Doctors Across New York medical student loan relief program funded at historical level of \$15.86M.

MSSNY's Governmental Affairs staff is continuing to pore through the thousands of pages of Budget bills for additional items of interest and/or additional nuances to these proposals.

(DIVISION OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS)

Governor Announces New Student Loan Repayment Program for Health Care Workers Including Primary Care Physicians and Psychiatrists

Governor Hochul [announced](#) this week the launch of a \$48.3 million student loan repayment initiative, the Health Care Access Loan Repayment (HEALR) program, to expand access to care for Medicaid beneficiaries and uninsured individuals in New York state. The HEALR program will provide significant financial incentives to certain health care professionals who agree to care for vulnerable communities to help address critical workforce shortages and expand access to vital health services in underserved communities. The program is funded through New York's 1115 waiver program.

Health care providers who are awarded loan repayment through the HEALR program must make a four-year, full-time commitment to maintaining a personal practice panel or working at an organization that serves at least 30 percent NYS Medicaid members and/or uninsured individuals. Organizations that are contracted with a state-designated Social Care Network and provide health-related social needs screening, referrals and/or services also qualify. There is a maximum loan repayment award of \$300,000 per psychiatrist, and \$100,000 per primary care physician.

To learn more about this important new initiative including how to apply: [Governor Hochul Launches Student Loan Repayment Program](#)
(CARY)

Join Us for MSSNY's Physician Advocacy Day on March 10, 2026

Following the release of the Executive Budget last week, serious concerns remain about several proposals that would make it more difficult for physicians to deliver care to their patients. As budget discussions continue to advance, your presence is critically needed in Albany on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, for MSSNY's annual Physician Advocacy Day.

Please Register today! [Physician Advocacy Registration](#)

The timing for this event is critical because it is around the same time that both the Assembly and Senate are finalizing their respective one-House Budgets setting the stage for negotiations with the Governor.

This year's event will take place in person in Meeting Room 6 in the Empire State Plaza, Albany, from 7:45 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. During the morning session, physicians, residents, and medical students will hear from legislative leaders as well as the Commissioner of Health in which they will have the opportunity to ask them critical questions about their policy priorities. In the afternoon, participants will meet with their legislators in sessions organized by county medical societies.

The Medical Society of the State of New York will be actively advocating on a range of critical issues that directly impact patient care and the practice of medicine. Key priorities include advancing Prior Authorization Reform to reduce administrative delays and ensure timely access to care; protecting physicians' right to a fair and independent Dispute Resolution (IDR) process; opposing proposals that would shift excess medical malpractice insurance costs onto physicians; preserving the important community review role of county medical societies in the Workers' Compensation application process; and preserving physician-led, team-based healthcare to ensure patients receive high-quality, coordinated care guided by medical expertise.

Your participation in Albany is essential to safeguarding patient access to care and the practice of medicine in New York.

(HOSPODAR)

Registration Now Open for CME Series on Pain Management, Palliative Care & Addiction as Required by New York State Statute
February 11th & 25th and, March 11th

These webinars are being offered **FREE OF CHARGE ONLY to MSSNY members.**

The Medical Society of the State of New York announces an updated series of three one-hour CME webinars on Pain Management, Palliative Care, & Addiction. Since 2017, New York State statute requires all prescribers holding a DEA license to complete **THREE** hours of coursework every three years.

The Medical Society of the State of New York has worked with the New York State Office of Addictions Services and Supports (OASAS) in the development of this program series, ensuring that it covers all eight of the required topics.

Following the webinars, the courses will be offered on-line at the MSSNY CME website, <https://cme.mssny.org>, remaining free to MSSNY members. For all non-MSSNY members, there will be a \$50.00 charge per course.

Please click on titles to enroll in each webinar:

Wednesday February 11, 2026 @ 7:30-8:30a.m.

Understanding the Current Legal Landscape in New York State for Prescribing Controlled Substances

Faculty: Greg Meyer, Esq., Deputy Counsel for NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS), and Pamela Mund, MD, Chief of Addiction Medicine, State Opioid Treatment Authority (OASAS)

Educational Objectives:

- Discuss pain management guidelines.
- Summarize New York State and federal requirements for prescribing controlled substances.
- Explore use of non-pharmacological pain management options.

Wednesday February 25, 2026 @ 7:30-8:30a.m.

When to Consider Opioid Therapy for Chronic Non-Cancer & Palliative Care

Faculty: Charles Argoff, MD

Educational Objectives:

- Discuss evidence based best practice recommendations for opioid therapy for chronic pain, patient risk assessments, and documentation.
- Describe palliative medical care and end-of-life care.

Wednesday March 11 @ 7:30-8:30a.m.

Patients with Opioid Use Disorders: Identification, Treatment, and Management of Co-occurring Pain

Faculty: Pamela Mund, MD, Chief of Addiction Medicine, State Opioid Treatment Authority (OASAS) & Jeffrey Selzer, MD

Educational Objectives:

- Describe the Potential for Addiction, Patient Screening, Diagnosis and Subsequent Treatment or Referral
- Recommend Tools to Assist in the Identification of High-Risk Patients for Whom Opioids are Indicated and Prescribed
- Describe Strategies for Treating Pain in Patients with Substance Use Disorders

These three webinars include the state required elements: New York State and federal requirements for prescribing controlled substances; Pain management; Appropriate prescribing; Managing acute pain; Palliative medicine; Prevention, screening, and signs of addiction; Responses to abuse and addiction; and End-of-life care.

Following successful completion of the three hour of coursework, prescribers must attest to the NYS Department of Health that they have taken the course:
https://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/narcotic/mandatory_prescriber_education/docs/neat_instructions_prescriber.pdf

Additional information or assistance with registration may be obtained by contacting Melissa Hoffman at mhoffman@mssny.org or 518-465-8085.

(HOFFMAN)

Registration Now Open Winter 2026 Women Physicians Leadership Academy

Registration is now open for the Winter 2026 Women Physicians Leadership Academy. Sign up now for the next three sessions in this engaging, illuminating, and empowering series. Upcoming sessions will take a comprehensive look into *Designing Your Medical Career*, *Enhancing Physician Wellness & Wellbeing* and *The Importance of Networking*. Register now to gain invaluable insight from top professionals in each of these fields. Elisa Choi, MD, MACP, FIDSA, FAMWA a dual Board-Certified Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases physician in full-time clinical practice in primary care, HIV medicine, and ID consultation and a Harvard Medical School faculty member is our facilitator for each of these sessions.

The Winter 2026 WPLA schedule is below with registration links:

- [**February 7th 9:45AM-1:15PM – Designing Your Medical Career**](#)
- [**March 1st 9:45AM-1:15PM – Enhancing Physician Wellness & Wellbeing**](#)
- [**March 7th 9:45AM-1:15PM – The Importance of Networking**](#)

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 each live activity for a maximum of 3.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

(HOFFMAN)