



Physicians - Please Join Us for MSSNY's Albany Physician Advocacy Day on March 10

With State Budget Negotiations underway in Albany, now is the time for physicians to make their voices heard. The Executive Budget contains several proposals that threaten to make it even harder for patients to access timely needed skilled physician care.

With both the Senate and Assembly likely to finalize their respective "one-House" Budget proposals in the next few weeks, setting the state for 3-way negotiations with the Governor, legislators need to hear from their constituent physicians about impact of these Budget proposals on patient care in their communities. That is why it is important to be in Albany March 10.

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

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 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 appeal insurer underpayments to a fair and independent Dispute Resolution (IDR) process; opposing proposals that would shift excess medical malpractice insurance costs onto physicians; preserving the role of county medical societies in vetting physicians to participate in the Workers' Compensation program; 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)

Physicians Continue to Urge Legislature to Reject Budget Proposals that Will Harm Patient Access to Needed Care!!

Physicians must continue to [contact](#) their Senators and Assemblymembers to urge that they reject a number of problematic proposals in the 2026-27 Executive Budget that will adversely impact patient access to community-based physician care. It is anticipated that both the Assembly and Senate will be advancing their respective one-Houses Budget proposals the week of March 9.

MSSNY President Dr. David Jakubowicz delivered [testimony](#) at a joint Senate-Assembly hearing on February 10 highlighting some positive Budget initiatives such as prior authorization reform and continuing fair telehealth payment, but also warning the State Legislature about the patient access to care consequences arising from the potential huge new cost imposition and steep drops in insurer payment that would be caused by various unfair Budget proposals singling out our state's dedicated physicians. These include:

- **Reject Excess Cuts.** Urge your legislation to OPPOSE ([Reject Physician Cost-Share](#)) the proposed new \$40 million in 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 when they can least absorb it.
- **Don't Let Insurers Put Their Thumb on the Scale in IDR.** Urge your legislators to OPPOSE ([Protect Fair IDR Process](#)) a proposal that threatens 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. Essentially, this would enable the health insurer to "put its thumb on the scale" in what is supposed an INDEPENDENT dispute resolution process.
- **Preserve Physician-Led Team Care.** Urge your legislators to OPPOSE ([Preserve Physician-led Care](#)) 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.
- **Preserve County Medical Society Peer Review.** Urge your legislators to OPPOSE ([Workers Compensation](#)) eliminating 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.

There are some positive Provisions in the Executive Budget, including:

- 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. [Support Prior Authorization Reform](#)
- Permitting Medical Assistants to administer immunizations.
- Extending telehealth health insurance payment parity for 2 more years.
- Linking immunization coverage standards to recommendations of AAP, AAFP, ACP or ACOG.
- Reducing Interest rates on court judgments from 9% to a market rate, helping to lower medical liability insurance premiums.
- Increased investment in the Early Intervention program.

- Funding the Committee for Physicians Health (CPH) at its historical level of \$990,000.
- Funding the Doctors Across New York medical student loan relief program at its historical level of \$15.86M.

(DIVISION OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS)

MSSNY Physician Leaders Meet with New York Congressional Delegation on Capitol Hill

MSSNY physician leaders and staff conducted in-person meetings with several members of the New York Congressional Delegation on Tuesday, February 24 and Wednesday, February 25, 2026, to discuss a range of pressing federal issues, that impact physicians and patient access. Among the issues discussed:

- **Establishing Fair Medicare Payment.** MSSNY leaders stressed to New York Congressional Delegation members the importance of stable and adequate Medicare physician payments and offered several policy solutions including requiring an inflationary update for Medicare payments which have dropped 33% since 2001, reforming flawed budget neutrality rules instead of spending billions on short-term patches that create financial instability in the Medicare program, and restructuring the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) by ending “tournament” penalty/bonus model and ensure timely data feedback.
- **Reducing Pervasive Prior Authorization Hassles.** Prior Authorization, the practice of insurance companies reviewing and often denying coverage of medical services and prescription medications prior to treatment, is a major frustration for physicians and a leading cause of physician burnout, that also creates barriers to care for patients. To help address this, MSSNY asked their members of the House of Representatives and Senators to support H.R.3514/S.1816, which will reduce administrative burdens placed on providers by requiring Medicare Advantage plans to report to CMS the extent of their use of prior authorization, and several other key policy changes to ensure patient access. The bill passed the House of Representatives in the 117th Congress but failed to move in the Senate.
- **Preserving Access to Health Insurance Coverage.** As recent changes to federal Medicaid funding as passed in H.R.1 last July begin to take effect, New York is bracing for the impact it will have on its Essential Plan and the state’s request to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to revert to the New York Basic Health Program. MSSNY physician leaders asked their congressional representatives to support the state’s request along with state flexibility and technical assistance for smooth transitions and to reduce provider liability, and to monitor patient and provider impact especially in rural and safety-net settings.

MSSNY physician leaders that participated in Hill visits were also in Washington as part of the American Medical Association’s (AMA) annual National Advocacy Conference (NAC) and included MSSNY President Dr. David Jakubowicz, MSSNY Vice-President Dr. James Satterfield, MSSNY Treasurer Dr. Greg Pinto, Dr. Victor Arrurana, Dr. Michael Brisman, Dr. Donna D’Alessandro, Dr. James Docherty, Dr. Nicholas Dushaj, Dr. Anna Heffron, Dr. Jessica Krant, Dr. Shivani Mehta, Dr. Stanley Nkemjika, Dr. Sunitha Polepalle, Dr. Rachel Schaefer and Dr. Sophia Spadafore. Joining them was MSSNY’s Executive Vice-President, Dr. Tom Lee, and Zina Cary, MSSNY’s Vice President of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs.

Here is the [full Action Kit](#) for the AMA’s NAC 2026 conference.

MSSNY will continue to monitor and advocate on members’ behalf on these issues and provide updates as available.

(CARY)

In Early March, MSSNY has More CME Upcoming

Register now for three new outstanding CME webinars scheduled for early March. Sign-up NOW for the third of three REQUIRED *Pain Management, Palliative Care & Addiction* courses and two more Winter 2026 *Women Physicians Leadership Academy* (WPLA) sessions. Dates, times, and registration information for each of these courses are below.

CME Series on Pain Management, Palliative Care & Addiction as Required by New York State Statute

Final Webinar on March 11th @ 7:30a.m.

These live webinars are being offered FREE OF CHARGE ONLY to MSSNY members. Once they have been recorded, they will be offered at the MSSNY CME website for \$50.00 per course for non-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. The first course took place on February 11th and will be available on the MSSNY CME website soon.

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 for.

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.

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Winter 2026 Women Physicians Leadership Academy

There are two more Winter 2026 WPLA sessions coming in March: *Enhancing Physician Wellness & Wellbeing* and *The Importance of Networking*.

The Winter 2026 WPLA schedule is below with registration links:

Sunday March 1st @ 9:45AM-1:15PM

- [Enhancing Physician Wellness & Wellbeing](#)

Saturday March 7th @ 9:45AM-1:15PM

- [The Importance of Networking](#)

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