

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

SUBMITTED FEBRUARY 28, 2023

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 Krueger, Chairperson Weinstein, Chairperson Rivera, Chairperson Paulin, and esteemed Ranking Members, AdvantageCare Physicians (ACPNY) greatly appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony for today’s important hearing on Governor Hochul’s State Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget proposal.

ACPNY is one of the largest independent primary care and specialty physician practices in Downstate New York and delivers care to approximately 500,000 patients annually. With more than 30 medical offices located throughout all five New York City boroughs and Long Island, ACPNY is part of the State’s solution to advance health equity by increasing the availability and growth of community-based primary and specialty care across underserved neighborhoods.

ACPNY strongly applauds Governor Hochul’s continued commitment to creating a stronger healthcare system by building off last year’s \$20 billion investment. The State Fiscal Year 2023-24 Budget reflects this commitment, with the inclusion of important provisions to invest in high quality health care, address pressing health needs facing New Yorkers, and helping facilities across the state prepare for future public health emergencies. As the Governor said, “this Executive Budget is one that will reach today’s New Yorkers as well as our future generations, making New York a stronger and safer state for years to come.” Below we provide suggestions for ensuring independent physician practices are recognized for our work as part of the State’s health equity solution by delivering high quality and patient-centered care that allows individuals to manage their complex illnesses in effective ways outside of hospital systems.

ACPNY’s Commitment to Increase Access of High Quality and Patient-Centered Care Outside Hospital Settings

ACPNY has built its community roots by treating patients in New York communities for more than 60 years.

ACPNY has transformed primary care population health capabilities to achieve across all locations the highest level of NYS Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) recognition by incorporating comprehensive health assessments, prioritizing preventive care needs such as vaccines and screenings, and adopting care management, post-hospital discharge, and pharmacy protocols to manage high-risk chronic conditions.

ACPNY has leading providers of high-value specialty care to offer patients community-based access to advanced specialty procedures close to their homes

outside hospital settings, including endoscopy suites for colonoscopies, cardiac procedures (echocardiograms, nuclear tests, and device monitoring), and gynecology, ophthalmology, and podiatry surgical procedures. ACPNY medical offices are commonly co-located with community-based hospital or other clinical partners to offer expanded access to lab services, radiology services, cancer care and surgical services in a neighborhood-based setting.

ACPNY remained open for care throughout New York State's COVID-19 response, with more than 20 ACPNY locations dedicated, repurposed over time, or deployed into communities to deliver tests and vaccines to eligible essential workers, elderly and other high-risk patients, and other community members.

ACPNY's Commitment to Underserved Communities

ACPNY takes our responsibilities to the communities we serve seriously, including in underserved areas. ACPNY offers many patients the only access to high-quality and affordable neighborhood-based primary and specialty care to manage their complex illnesses within the community, including in 11 locations in designated Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs) and 17 locations in Primary Care Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs).

ACPNY's wide range of services reflects the needs of the diverse patient populations we serve. The majority of ACPNY patients are from minority ethnic groups (43.1% Black, 10.4% Hispanic or Latino, 6.7% Asian, 0.7% American Indian or Native Alaskan, 22.3% White, and 16.9% Other/Unknown).

Approximately half of ACPNY patients have Medicaid or Medicare, more than a third are covered by union health plans, and the majority of ACPNY patients are attributed to a value-based payment (VBP) contract (ex-ACPNY is responsible for 128,000 VBP Medicaid patients). Many ACPNY patients are the sickest and most vulnerable residents in their community due to chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, obesity, or asthma or other high-risk chronic disease.

Proposed Approach

As noted above, ACPNY greatly appreciates Governor Hochul's vision and commitment to create a stronger healthcare system. However, ACPNY has been financially hit by meeting the most pressing health needs facing our underserved communities in recent years and currently receives no funding from the federal, state or city government or hospitals except direct payment for services to maintain

or expand practice operations as an independent physician group. The Governor's proposal would change that by creating opportunities in the Healthcare Facility Transformation Program for physician practices to strengthen our ability to care for Medicaid enrollees and New Yorkers most in need of high-quality, community-based health care services. Below, we describe three specific recommendations to ensure this funding reaches organizations like ours that are providing primary, specialty, and behavioral health services in our communities.

- 1. Specifically Allocate Statewide Healthcare Facility Transformation Program Funding to Independent Physician Practices Serving At Least 20% Medicaid Enrollees.** We strongly support the statewide \$1 billion in capital investment in health care infrastructure funding through a new round of the Statewide Healthcare Facility Transformation Program. We are suggesting that you consider specifying that \$100 million of the \$500 million dedicated funds for capital projects, and \$100 million of the \$500 million dedicated funds for technological enhancement to independent physician practices serving at least 20% Medicaid enrollees. With additional capital project funding, ACPNY would be able to better prevent hospital admissions, for example, updating and expanding diagnostic testing equipment and access outside hospital settings for arrhythmias, valvular disorders, coronary artery disease including acute coronary syndromes, heart failure and peripheral vascular disease. These diagnostic tests, include electrocardiograms, Holter monitors, event monitors, stress echocardiograms, exercise stress testing, and nuclear stress testing. Similarly, with additional technology funding, ACPNY would be able to update infrastructure or software necessary to give patients easy access to advanced specialty procedures for preventative care, such as colonoscopies for colon cancer, and exchange meaningful information on chronic conditions, hospital admissions, and medication adherence monitoring to strengthen engagement with patients and their families across care within ACPNY and outside with hospital facilities and community partners.
- 2. Expand Vital Access Provider Assurance Program (VAPAP) to Include Independent Physician Practices Who Serve At Least 20% Medicaid Enrollees.** We support the proposed expansion of VAPAP to include entities such as those that formed as a Performing Provider System (PPS) under DSRIP. However, physician practices are also offering critical services to underserved populations. We are suggesting that you expand eligibility to

all entities serving at least 20% Medicaid enrollees to ensure operating funding made available through this program will support financial sustainability of health care providers who deliver critical primary and specialty care services outside hospital systems.

- 3. Recognize the Critical Role of Independent Physician Practice as part of the Department of Health Review of Material Transactions.** We understand the need for review and oversight of investor-backed health care practices that put profits over patient outcomes, equity, affordability, and access and support the state's increased regulation of these entities. However, the definition of "health care entities" in the Budget Bill would include organizations like ours that are affiliated with a non-profit entity and have a demonstrated record of both effectively serving the State's diverse neighborhoods and committing to invest in local communities. We suggest this definition be changed to exclude physician practices affiliated with a non-profit entity. Doing so will ensure organizations that are not funded by private equity or a publicly-traded company like our independent physician practice can succeed in the evolving marketplace.

With additional support, we can continue to narrow the gaps and improve access to primary and specialty care for patients in underserved areas outside hospital systems, while continuing to partner with other entities across the State to drive better outcomes, value, and long-term stability.

Conclusion

ACPNY is honored to be submitting testimony for today's hearing. We look forward to continuing to work with Governor Hochul, Chairperson Krueger, Chairperson Weinstein, Chairperson Rivera, Chairperson Paulin, 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 – ACPNY Medical Office Locations

AdvantageCare Physicians Medical Office Locations

Effective January 2023

MANHATTAN

Flatiron District

21 East 22nd St.

Harlem

215 West 125th St.

Lincoln Square

154 West 71st St.

Midtown

590 Fifth Ave.

Upper East Side

215 East 95th St.

Washington Heights

4337 Broadway

BROOKLYN

Bay Ridge

740 64th St.

Bedford

233 Nostrand Ave.

Brooklyn Heights

195 Montague St.

Crown Heights

546 Eastern Parkway

Downtown

447 Atlantic Ave.

East New York

101 Pennsylvania Ave.

Flatbush

1000 Church Ave.

Kings Highway

3245 Nostrand Ave.

QUEENS

Astoria

31-75 23rd St.

Cambria Heights

206-20 Linden Blvd.

Elmhurst

88-31 55th Ave.

Flushing Annex

41-61 Kissena Blvd.

Flushing North

140-15 Sanford Ave.

Forest Hills

96-10 Metropolitan Ave.

Jackson Heights

40-31 82nd St.

Jamaica Estates

180-05 Hillside Ave.

Richmond Hill

125-06 101st Ave.

Rochdale Village

169-59 137th Ave.

LONG ISLAND

Babylon

300 Bay Shore Rd.

Bethpage

1055 Stewart Ave.

Lake Success/ New Hyde Park

1991 Marcus Ave.

Ronkonkoma

640 Hawkins Ave.

Uniondale

70 Charles Lindbergh Blvd.

Valley Stream

260 West Sunrise Hwy.

STATEN ISLAND

Annadale

4771 Hylan Blvd.

Clove Road

1050 Clove Rd.

BRONX

BronxDocs

East 149th Street

326 E 149th St. #8

BronxDocs

Southern Boulevard

932 Southern Blvd.

BronxDocs

Westchester Avenue

2044 Westchester Ave.

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