

Medicaid

Medicaid Matters New York

Matters

January 24, 2020

Statement on the 2020-2021 Executive Budget

Members of the Medicaid Matters New York coalition are deeply disappointed at the Governor's proposed 2020-2021 budget. Consumer advocates are pleased there seem to be no direct cuts to services or eligibility. However, history has shown a Medicaid Redesign Team process can be a way of pushing through changes and cuts under the guise of reform, with little meaningful consumer and community input. Medicaid Matters New York calls on the Governor to include the meaningful participation of consumers, community-based organizations and community-based providers on the Medicaid Redesign Team II.

The intent of the Medicaid program is to provide coverage and access to low-income people and people with disabilities. New York State has a rich history of providing a high-quality, comprehensive Medicaid program that honors that intent. The Governor's budget proposal turns its back on this commitment by leaving the fate of the program up to a process that could easily be rushed and with little chance for meaningful public dialogue. This will harm the New Yorkers who rely on Medicaid to keep them well, financially stable, and independent.

The Governor is calling for a reconvening of the Medicaid Redesign Team, yet Medicaid Matters leaders and partners are not aware of any contact by the Cuomo administration to invite consumers or consumer representatives to sit on a so-called "MRT II." Tasking a group of stakeholders with finding ways to achieve a more fiscally-sustainable program without including consumer perspective would be irresponsible and inappropriate. An MRT II must include a variety of perspectives, including (but not necessarily limited to) those of people with disabilities, older adults, people in historically-underserved communities, and people of color.

Medicaid Matters urges state policymakers to maintain its unwavering commitment to the Medicaid program and thoughtfully address the budget crisis by preserving its strengths. New York must show the nation that in times of financial challenge, we stand by our families, children, seniors and people with disabilities. To do that, our leaders must:

- Take a holistic approach and avoid taking from one area of the budget to bolster another;
- Look beyond one budget year to make smart, strategic investments;
- Enact revenue options to balance the budget, rather than expecting low-income people and people with disabilities to bear the brunt of the state's fiscal woes; and
- Establish an open process for meaningful public input and robust consumer representation to come up with policy and budget goals that honor the intent of the program.

Medicaid Matters looks forward to working with the Cuomo administration and the Legislature to reach a budget we can all be proud of.

Medicaid Matters is the statewide coalition of representing the interests of the over six-and-a-half million people who are served by New York's Medicaid program and the community-based organizations and safety-net providers that serve them. The mission of Medicaid Matters is to ensure those interests are included, understood, and met in any and all discussions on Medicaid in New York.