

# *Medicaid* **Medicaid Matters New York** *Matters*

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## Medicaid Consumer Advocates Express Deep Disappointment on the Failure of the Final Budget to Repeal the Medicaid Spending Cap

Medicaid Matters New York – the statewide coalition representing the interests of people who are served by New York’s Medicaid program – is deeply disappointed the Medicaid Global Spending Cap has been extended in this year’s budget. The spending cap, which has been in place since 2011, is an arbitrary limit that was never designed to keep pace with essential program growth. The cap has perpetuated the notion that Medicaid growth is a problem that requires austerity, when in fact, a strong Medicaid program is a solution that allows people to have access to health care. Investment in Medicaid is an investment in the one in three New Yorkers who rely on the program for their health and wellbeing.

The cap was not designed to be responsive to increases in the number of people covered by the program or the cost of health care services, but to impose arbitrary controls on increased spending. Due to the economic downturn and job loss associated with the Coronavirus pandemic, over 820,000 people have newly-enrolled in Medicaid over the last twelve months. Under the spending restrictions of the cap, the Medicaid program cannot function as a true safety net for New Yorkers, one that ensures access to care for those who are ill, provides benefits to prevent illness and maintain wellness, and upholds the right of those needing long term care to do so in the least restrictive environment.

Medicaid cuts deemed necessary to keep spending below the cap disproportionately impact:

- People with disabilities and seniors who rely on community-based services and supports;
- Safety-net hospitals and community-based providers, like community health centers providing primary care and community mental health centers; and
- Historically under-resourced communities of color.

Medicaid Matters New York believes there are smarter ways to manage Medicaid spending that do not exclude or harm the very people who Medicaid is designed to serve. New York should “Scrap the Cap,” and Medicaid Matters will continue to strive for this change on behalf of the millions of New Yorkers served by Medicaid.