

# New York State Academy of Family Physicians



16 Sage Estate • Albany, NY 12204  
Email: [fp@nysafp.org](mailto:fp@nysafp.org) • [www.nysafp.org](http://www.nysafp.org)  
518-489-8945

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

September 11, 2020

Contact: Vito Grasso, Executive Vice President at 518-469-5237/ [vito@nysafp.org](mailto:vito@nysafp.org)

### **Statement by NYSAFP President Dr. Jason Matuszak on Police Brutality in Rochester and Throughout the Country**

“The New York State Academy of Family Physicians (NYSAFP) condemns blatant disregard for human life and suffering, the use of violent methods by law enforcement, the lack of attention to mental health issues and systemic racism in all forms that have all led to the death of Rochester resident Daniel Prude and countless other black and brown people across the country.”

“The current state of policing and institutional racism found in all facets of the American experience is indeed a public health emergency. NYSAFP stands with the City of Rochester residents who have come together to nonviolently protest racism, discriminatory policing and use of unnecessary force, and the willful violation of due process by law enforcement. We further advocate for funding to support greater access to mental health treatment and supports for individuals in need, while also advocating for greater training of our law enforcement officials in recognizing and de-escalating mental health crises. Further, while we see value in training in implicit bias and anti-racism, as NYSAFP has required of its own leadership, we do not believe such training for police would have prevented the injustice perpetrated upon Daniel Prude. Instead, we believe police agencies should be required to engage mental health professionals when confronted with calls to restrain someone acting out irrationally and should also defer to mental health professionals at the scene to prevent escalation of incidents. Finally, we must all work together to promote funding for schools, health care, and social services in New York State in order to put an end to the injustice harming our underserved and communities of color.”

“By a Congress of Delegates-approved action, NYSAFP has resolved to advocate for policies at the state and federal level that will decrease the use of unnecessary police force. As family physicians dedicated to improving the lives and health of those we serve, we stand ready to partner with our communities and government officials to take the necessary steps to address systemic racism, starting with addressing police brutality and improving access to needed social and healthcare services across our state.”

*NYSAFP represents over 7,000 physicians, residents and students in family medicine across the State. NYSAFP Family Physicians are board-certified and specialize in family medicine. Family physicians focus on the whole patient providing care throughout their lifetime. They provide comprehensive healthcare services to treat diseases and injuries in all age groups from newborns to the geriatric population and across all medical fields. Family Physicians focus on prevention, wellness and overall care coordination for patients and family medicine is the only specialty to focus on the care of the entire family unit. Family Physicians are also a main source of primary health care in New York and across the country.*