

New York State Academy of Family Physicians

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STATEMENT

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New York State Takes Bold Steps to Bring Patient-Centered Pharmacy Care to Individuals with Medicaid

Statement by Andrew Symons, MD, President of NYSAFP

“Today, New York State took bold steps to reform its Medicaid pharmacy program to remove managed care plans and pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs). Instead, pharmacy care will be directly administered by the State Department of Health for individuals with Medicaid. We recognize the leadership of Governor Kathy Hochul and New York State legislators in choosing to take the right path, even if it was not the easiest path to challenge the status quo.”

“New York State launched NYRx to provide one formulary covering all FDA-approved medications and to provide one set of rules for prescribers to follow to ensure that their patients can get the medications they need to treat and manage serious illness and disease. What this means is better access to lifesaving therapies for all Medicaid patients.”

“The New York State Academy of Family Physicians was the first medical society in New York to advocate for a single payer system of universal health. We see the state’s decision to launch NYRx as a first and transformative step toward reform of health care in New York.”

“Absent enactment of single payer legislation, the Academy has advocated for streamlining and standardizing health coverage to reduce administrative burdens and make health care easier to access for patients and for those who care for them. NYRx simplifies the pharmacy benefit for all individuals with Medicaid. Patients will not be limited by pharmacy network requirements and varying plan protocols and processes. Also, removal of for-profit health plans and PBMs from this benefit will save money which can be applied directly to patient care and services.”

“New Yorkers with Medicaid need a simplified pharmacy benefit directly administered by New York State, as was the case a decade ago. NYRx is a model for the much broader system reforms we continue to advocate for to benefit all New Yorkers. Governor Hochul and the State Legislature have taken this historic step and made a conscious choice to put patients, before PBM or industry profits. Our 6,000 family physician, resident and student members are proud to stand with the Governor and State lawmakers today as this critical reform is implemented.”

NYSAFP represents nearly 6,000 family physicians, residents and students 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.