

**MEDICAL SOCIETY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
MONROE COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY
NEW YORK CHAPTER AMERICAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS SERVICES, INC.
NEW YORK CHAPTER AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS
NEW YORK STATE ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS
NYS AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS, CHAPTER 1, 2 & 3
NEW YORK STATE NEUROLOGICAL SOCIETY
NEW YORK STATE OPHTHALMOLOGICAL SOCIETY
NEW YORK STATE PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION
NEW YORK STATE SOCIETY OF ANESTHESIOLOGISTS
NEW YORK STATE SOCIETY OF DERMATOLOGY & DERMATOLOGIC SURGERY
NEW YORK STATE SOCIETY OF ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS
NYS SOCIETY OF OTOLARYNGOLOGY- HEAD AND NECK SURGERY
NEW YORK STATE SOCIETY OF PLASTIC SURGEONS**

November 10, 2022

Hon. Kathy Hochul
Executive Chamber
New York State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

**Re: Request to veto S5956A (Rivera)/ A6056 (Gottfried) related to Physician Assistants
Serving as Primary Care Providers under Medicaid Managed Care**

Dear Governor Hochul:

The above listed organizations collectively represent tens of thousands of physicians practicing in New York State. We are opposed to the above referenced legislation to add physician assistant to the definition of “primary care practitioner” under Medicaid Managed Care.

Under existing education law, section 6542, there are explicit requirements that physician assistants must be continuously supervised by licensed physicians. Further, a physician may supervise up to four physician assistants in New York. Given this we fail to understand the need for this legislation or how it would achieve the intended goal of expanding patient access to care under Medicaid Managed Care as stated.

Physicians greatly value physician assistants (PAs) who play a critical role on the healthcare team. The healthcare team, however, requires physician supervision and coordination. Physicians supervise PAs, oversee a patient’s care, arrange for care needs, and coordinate billing and other aspects of care delivery. In the hospital setting, administrators and supervising physicians coordinate care and manage care teams. Adding PAs to the list of primary care practitioners in Medicaid Managed Care could cause confusion or duplication of this role and there are no discernable patient benefits to be achieved from this arrangement.

We agree that PAs are well trained and educated, and that many practice in primary care. However, their scope of practice in New York and in most states requires their supervision by a physician. Physicians have significantly more education and training. That is the standard of care. A PAs training and experience are based on this model. The justification of the bill states that “expanding the definition of primary care practitioners to include PAs would be a meaningful way to expand access to primary care by qualified providers.” Inherent in the qualifications of PAs is the requirement that they work in conjunction with and under the supervision of much

more highly trained physicians. This bill does not and should not change anything related to the scope of PAs or practice standards. Practically speaking, the bill would not expand care since physicians would still be supervising care and overseeing a patient's care plan, handling insurance billing and other responsibilities of care coordination and management.

We are concerned that this legislation could create inconsistencies in NY laws, confuse patients and lead to complications between physicians and PAs related to roles and practice standards.

For these reasons, we urge you to veto this legislation. Thank you for your consideration of our comments on this bill. For more information, please contact Vito Grasso, EVP of the NYS Academy of Family Physicians at vito@nysafp.org/ 518-489-8945.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Symons". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Andrew B. Symons, MD
President
New York State Academy of Family Physicians