

**2020 NYS Policy Priorities**

*Look at all budget and policy proposals with a ‘rural lens’.*

*Will this change increase or decrease health disparities in rural communities?*

**NYSARH strongly supports the reactivation of the NYS Rural Health Council and urges the legislature to name council members who have significant connections to rural New York.**

1. **Preserve existing funding & infrastructure that support rural healthcare, disease prevention, health education and health workforce programs.**

* **Rural Health Network Development Program**
* **Rural Health Access Development Program**
* **Area Health Education Centers**
* State Office of Rural Health
* County Health Departments
* Alcohol/Drug/Tobacco/Vaping Prevention Programs
* Maternal & Child Health
* The Prevention Agenda
* Chronic Disease Prevention & Self-Management Programs
* Lead Education & Abatement
* Poison Control

1. **Implement strategies to increase the rural healthcare workforce. Shortages are experienced in all levels and disciplines.**
   * Expand loan forgiveness programs such as Doctors Across New York
   * Support Diversity in Medicine initiatives
   * Support Rural Residency programs
   * Include health workforce curricula at rural SUNY Colleges and Community Collages
   * Provide adequate funding for community-based Long-Term Care programs
   * Support cross training to promote workforce flexibility in Home Care [A1208/S1805]
2. **Build capacity to provide more comprehensive, timely, affordable and effective behavioral health care.**

* Standardize licensure/certification and payment regulations for Mental Health and Substance Use [Article 31 & 32] counseling professionals to facilitate retention and recruitment [A4383]
* Require fair payment for services provided by Certified Peer & Family Support positions
* Support 3% investment over 5 years to support the human services sector [3 for 5: to ensure communities thrive]
* Support OASAS funding to County jails for substance use treatment and transition services
* Support expansion of OMH-funded Supported Housing

1. **Address challenges for Rural EMS & support Paramedicine**
   * Provide direct insurance reimbursement for EMS services [S3528/A6211]
   * Provide greater licensure flexibility for Paramedics and Advanced EMT level personnel to provide and be compensated for Community Paramedicine for community-based care [S1805/A1208]
     + Provide billing codes for EMS services that do not result in transport to a hospital
   * Increase Medicaid ambulance fees to match Medicare rates
     + Address Medicare/Medicaid ‘cross-over billings’
   * Fund mileage reimbursement for EMS practitioners to attend training and provide more EMS training via webinar and remote locations to facilitate rural participation
   * Increase the mileage rate for ambulance services
   * Support integration of EMS patient data into the SHIN-NY health record
2. **Address challenges for non-emergency Rural Transportation**

* Rethink current dependence on Medical Answering Service for Medicaid transportation – other, locally-specific opportunities are preferable in some rural communities
* Allow Medicaid to provide vouchers for public transportation for rides to medical appointments
* Develop regulations to protect volunteer-based transportation programs from excessive liability

1. **Health in All Policies**

**Tobacco/Nicotine Products**

* Support restrictions on flavored tobacco & vaping products, including menthol [A8808/S6809 & A47-A/S428-B]

**Rural Broadband**

* Support meaningful implementation of increased broadband based on accurate assessments of current coverage

**Prevention Agenda**

* Support the Prevention Agenda <https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention_agenda>
* Preserve the gains made in Population Health improvement by programs that are sun-setting like Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment and the Population Health Improvement Program
* Work with Stakeholders to develop DSRIP 2.0

**Marijuana**

* + 50% of funds raised to be allocated to prevention & treatment
  + Mandate 25% Public Health Practitioners on Marijuana Advisory Council
  + Support a regional approach with adjoining states

**Seatbelts in the rear seat**

* Support requiring adults to use seatbelts in rear seats

**Immunization**

* Support ImmuNYze New York campaign <https://www.immunyze.org/>

**Coverage 4 All**

* Continue gradual expansion of the Essential Plan to make health coverage available to more New Yorkers [A5974/S3900]

**NY Health Act**

* Support analysis of the benefits of a single payer health plan [A5248/S3577]