



## **New York State Policy Priorities Winter 2024**

The Mission of the NYS Association for Rural Health is to improve the health and wellbeing of rural New Yorkers and their communities.

NYSARH supports policy reforms that will enhance healthcare for rural residents by facilitating access, increasing funding, and expanding the pool of healthcare providers.

NYSARH recommends the following regulatory reforms:

### *Department of Health*

- Implement reimbursement parity for tele mental health services provided to patients covered by Medicaid
- Address the disparity in Medicaid reimbursement base rates for services furnished in Upstate and Downstate NY. One potential solution proposes a third tier for Medicaid base rate reimbursement which factors in rurality.
- Require DANY to hold a certain number of seats for individuals interested in rural medicine, allowing physicians to choose to practice in a rural HPSA of their choice
- Promote insurance payment for EMS visits that do not require transportation
- Have Medicaid match CMS's 10% quarterly bonus to physicians practicing in HPSAs
- Streamline and clearly define New York State Medicaid billing policies for providers, helping to reduce the rate of claim denials
- Incentivize residency programs to open in rural and small towns in New York by allowing rural healthcare centers to receive additional payment under Medicaid for full-time residents who receive training in rural areas
- Provide state funding to continue NYS Public Health Corps Fellowship Program

### *Department of Education*

- Allow providers licensed in other states/countries to practice in New York; sign on to the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact
- Develop standards for Community Health Workers
- Recognize Medical Assistants (MAs) and allow them to deliver vaccines
- Support professionals practicing at the top of their licenses/credentials

### *Department of Mental Hygiene*

- Maintain increased Medicaid fee-for-service rates for all OMH programs
- Increase the fiscal rewards for mental health providers participating in New York State-sponsored loan forgiveness programs who practice in mental health HPSAs

### *Department of Budget*

- Tie the cost-of-living-adjustment to the consumer price index for nonprofit human service providers; funding for these organizations has been cut 26% since 2008