IMPORTANT - NYS Budget Alert - Medicaid Funding & EMS

For this year’s NYS budget, the Governor rather than issuing budget numbers for Medicaid, ordered a redesign of Medicaid through Medicaid Redesign Teams (MRT). The stated goal is to cut $2.5 billion out of Medicaid spending.

Next Wednesday January 29th the New York State Senate and Assembly Health Committees are holding a joint meeting covering this important issue. The meeting will be held in the Legislative Office Building in Albany – Hearing Room B beginning at 9:30 AM.

NYSVARA is teaming with the United New York Ambulance Network (UNYAN), the statewide proprietary ambulance association, to have as many UNIFORMED personnel in the room as possible during the meeting. We realize this is short notice, but we just learned of the scheduling of this meeting. In many cases legislators may not be aware of the already low rate of Medicaid reimbursement for EMS service and the devastating impact any reduction could have on EMS agencies and EMS systems throughout NYS. EMS needs to have a presence and a united voice to send a message that this is an important EMS issue and to fight any reductions in the already low rate of Medicaid Reimbursement for EMS. We need your presence at this event for the benefit of EMS statewide. We urge all EMS providers to the degree possible to send some uniformed providers and vehicles to Albany on the 29th. Please let our Legislative and Government Affairs Committee know who will be attending by e-mailing the committee at: legislation@nysvara.org

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

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Abstract on background:

In 2017, The NYS Department of Health studied ambulance rates and issued the Medicaid Ambulance Rate Adequacy Report which showed that NYS ambulance providers are substantially under-reimbursed by Medicaid. To put it in its simplest terms, the cost of providing the service (even in the volunteer sector) is significantly more than the reimbursement rates.

Below is the e-mail UNYAN sent to their members:

Subject: NYS Health Budget Hearing - Ambulances and Crews Needed!!

If you recall, last year, we had an amazing showing at the New York State Legislature’s Health Budget Hearing last year. It was noticed by the state Legislature and Governor’s Office. We NEED to do the same thing this year!

The Health Budget hearing is early this year, it’s NEXT WEEK!! We’re asking you to muster your crews and help out!! This is a crucial year. As you know, both the Crossover and Supplemental were not mentioned in the governor’s budget, but will more than likely be a hot topic for the Medicaid Redesign Team. We need the Legislature to know that we are a crucial part of the HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY!!

The budget hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, January 29th at 9:30 AM in hearing room B and we are asking every UNYAN company to send UNIFORMED PERSONNEL to the hearing so we have a large presence in the room when the Commissioner of Health gives testimony and answers questions.

Everyone should be there no later than 9:00 AM - earlier if possible. LOB security opens at 9:00 AM but the security at the Capitol opens earlier and you can go underground to the LOB – from experience, I can tell you that there is usually a long line at the LOB security (it’s usually shorter at the Capitol).

Parking is metered on the street.

THIS IS VERY, VERY IMPORTANT.