HEALI Meeting Notes

July 20, 2022

**Updates**

* The state is currently reviewing the public comments on the 1115 Waiver draft.
* The state will submit the document to CMS, which will then open the waiver to public comments again.
  + The RFPs are expected to be released around April 2023.
* The August HEALI meeting has been canceled, and the September meeting has been moved from September 21st to September 28th due to HWCLI’s Gala.

**Assemblywomen Solages**

* How can we reduce health inequality?
  + Engender trust between the community and healthcare providers.
  + Redistribute power to the community
  + Center the healthcare conversation around the community and let them lead the discussion. Make data publicly available and provide guidance on how to access services that address the Social Determinants of Health
  + Ensure accountability to foster equality
  + There is a misconception about the wealth on Long Island.
    - A US News report in 2019 ranked Nassau County 96th in the nation regarding health
  + Turn rhetoric into action by being knowledgeable about the system of government
    - New York State budget processes use the Executive Model, in which the Governor proposes the State budget to the legislature.
      * This is important to consider during this election cycle.
* New investments in the 2022 State Budget:
  + Investment in childcare doubled to $3 billion over the next three years.
  + Universal pre-k
  + Expanded healthcare for undocumented immigrants through one year postpartum & Medicaid coverage for undocumented seniors age 65+
  + $285 million in child tax credit
  + Increased the wage of home healthcare workers.
  + $800 million investment in distressed hospitals
  + A significant investment in the “rainy day fund.”
  + Required equal insurance reimbursement between telehealth and in-person services for the next two years
  + $35 million for the 9-8-8 mental health hotline
* 2022 tax revenue has exceeded expectations:
  + Mobile sports gambling tax revenue exceeded $300 million in 6 months
  + The legalization of cannabis is also expected to increase tax revenue
    - In the 2023 budget, it is essential to ensure that CBOs and communities most affected by the war on drugs receive some of the tax revenue
* It is troubling that NYS has struggled to roll out the monkeypox vaccine to those who need it most
  + This should have been a lesson learned from COVID-19
* The Health Committee Chair, Richard Gottfried, will retire.
  + The Committee will choose a new Chair who has a similar outlook on public health as Assemblymen Gottfried
* Next Steps
  + Long Island must be organized next session:
    - We must be prepared for a large increase in tax revenue while being ready for a possible recession and budget cuts.
  + Ensuring that the 1115 Waiver does not hand a significant amount of money to the hospitals at the expense of CBOs
  + Educate our Assembly and Senate members on the vital role non-profits and CBOs play in communities and the challenges we face.
    - It is essential to keep an open dialogue and hold them accountable
  + If reelected, there is optimism that Governor Hochul will increase investments in healthcare.

Questions:  
Q: How can you be a voice and help us as a powerful leader to help Long Island and make sure dollars from the 1115 Medicaid Waiver are geared to address the Social Determinants of Health needs?

Solages: There are a lot of changes in members in the House and Senate that may not understand the work you are doing on the ground. Welcome legislators into your meetings so they see what you are doing. Under Gov. Hochul, the Administration is trying to move the needle on healthcare through more investment in safety net hospitals. There could be a greater conversation about how to tackle social health inequities if the current administration is here next year.

Q: How do you address funding of community health workers in your community?

Solages: During Gov Hochul’s State of the State Address, the conversation about the healthcare workforce was centered around the budget process. Gov Hochul put in a $10B multi-year investment. We must make sure that conversations are leading with disadvantaged communities first.

Q: Do you have any thoughts about how to let our local leaders understand the significance of community-based care, social needs, etc. when they seem more interested in not acknowledging these issues?

Solages: When talking about healthcare, it is important to engage on the federal, state, and local levels and participate in local conversation.