



NEWS RELEASE



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Health Plans Respond to Supplement to DFS Circular Letter 8
Statement the New York Health Plan Association and
New York State Conference of Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans

“Throughout this public health crisis, our members have worked extremely hard to support our partners in the provider community to ensure that individuals and their families get the care they need, as well as helping employers struggling with the economic impact of this pandemic.

“While today’s guidance encourages health plans to work with hospitals facing cash flow issues, our members already have been assisting hospitals and others in the delivery system to address the financial uncertainty they’re facing as the needs vary among different providers. When coupled with yesterday’s announcement allowing hospitals to resume some outpatient elective and non-urgent procedures, along with \$100 billion directed to hospitals in the CARES Act, which included \$1.8 billion to New York hospitals from the recent initial \$30 billion distribution, and the \$75 billion in hospital funding from the stimulus package that Congress is expected to approve this week, these measures will help to further ease concerns hospitals have raised about their finances.

“There is a need to balance the interests of those New York hospitals in need of assistance during the COVID-19 crisis with the interest of individuals, businesses and union members who are struggling to afford premiums and making ends meet. Regrettably, this guidance upsets that delicate balance. At the end of the day, it will be New Yorkers with private health coverage who have to pay the price with unnecessarily higher premiums.

“Throughout this unprecedented crisis, our member health plans have been committed to working to protect the health of all New Yorkers and ensure the stability of the marketplace and the state’s economy as a whole, while making sure to preserve the availability of affordable, quality health care for consumers and businesses going forward. Whether it be advocating for state and federal assistance for our customers and providers, volunteering services to assist in the crisis, providing charitable assistance to not for profits in our communities, or expanding coverage and providing financial relief to our members, New York’s health plans have been vital to assisting the entire health care community during this unprecedented crisis and are committed to continuing that effort.”