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**The City of New York  
Community Board 8 Manhattan  
Health, Seniors and Social Services  
Monday, November 8, 2021  
This meeting was conducted via Zoom**

**Minutes**

**Board Members Present:** Gayle Baron, Lori Bores, Meryl Brodsky (Public Member), Alida Camp, Rebecca Dangoor, Wilma Johnson, Peter Patch, Ellen Polivy (Public Member), Rita Popper, Barbara Rudder, Tricia Shimamura, Rami Sigal, Russell Squire.

*The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM.*

**Item 1: Why are Upper Eastside Doctors Not Accepting Medicare? With world-renowned doctors and hospitals in our community, why does access remain limited? Guest Speakers: Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright and Assembly Member Richard Gottfried**

Our community has world renowned hospitals and doctors, but many of these doctors do not take Medicare and private insurance. The Health, Seniors, Social Services committee invited Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright and Assembly Member Richard Gottfried, Chairman of the NY State Assembly Health committee, to hear the community's concerns.

Assembly Member Seawright shared that she hears more and more from her constituents that their long-time physicians are not taking Medicare, it has become very hard to get a new physician, and there are long wait times for appointments to the point of having to direct patients to visit emergency rooms instead.

Assembly Member Gottfried is the architect of the New York Health Act; a single payer, healthcare solution that will provide benefits above and beyond those of Medicare. He believes this bill will solve many of the current problems. Doctors are currently not taking Medicare because they are not being paid fairly, there is too much paperwork, and our outstanding doctors feel they cannot provide the best healthcare. It is believed that if the Act became law, more doctors would want to practice in NY.

There were many questions about the Medicare Advantage plans, which were created to privatize Medicare. The general consensus was that plan provides inferior care, with many restrictions and deceptive advertising.

It is hard to assess how will the funding and taxation be handled until the Act is rolled out. The funds will come from Medicare, Medicaid, and a taxation on payroll and income.

If currently a doctor does not accept Medicare, the patient must pay entirely out of pocket. It will be the same if a doctor does not belong to the NY Health insurance. It was suggested that one has the ability to purchase private insurance to cover the costs. That idea was rejected.

The NY Health insurance will cover only NY State residents. Out of state residents who work full time in New York State will also have their insurance covered.

There is current opposition to the bill, from unions, to hospitals, and various medical societies. However, many other organizations, as well as a majority of the Assembly and Senate, do support the Act, and there is hope it will be passed by both this year.

Several years ago, the Health, Seniors, Social Services committee held forums to discuss the NY Health Act. It was agreed that we should revisit the issue to inform our community.

*The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 PM*

*Rebecca Dangoor, Wilma Johnson and Barbara Rudder, Co-Chairs*