

2-10-2015

NYS Out-of-Network Legislation

S.1846/A.3734 UPDATE

Dear Colleagues:

There has been much hoopla recently on the listservs about the reintroduction of the Hannon/Rosenthal Out-of-Network legislation in New York (S.1846/A.3734). To place it in the context of current Albany events, there have been more than 8,200 bills introduced since January 1, 2015. Due to the need to elect a new Speaker (Shelly Silver's resignation), the Assembly did not go into session to pass any bills until the week of February 9th. Their next adjournment starts Wednesday, February 11.

This legislation is the identical bill the NYSSCSW supported last session, and we will continue to do so. This year, we are working with like-minded health care organizations to support the idea of a patient's right to choose (out-of-network benefits) and encourage the legislature to take on this problem particularly as it affects the new insurance system, the New York Health Market Place. The group includes the New York State Psychological Association, State and City chapters of NASW, hopefully the New York State Medical Society and Psychiatric Association as well as the NYSSCSW.

What to do: As with the most effective therapeutic interventions, there is usually a strategically good time to make a suggestion heard. With Albany legislators, it is after the budget has been passed, usually in April. At that time we will invite all of our members as part of a coordinated mail campaign to target to specific, appropriate legislators with letters. Until then, it can't hurt to write as individuals to your legislator, but a more concentrated campaign is planned for April.

This is a complicated issue with insurance companies and Medicaid costs weighing in heavily on health care social policy. **See Sunday NY Times article for background, "Insured but Not Covered: New Health Insurance Policies Have Many Americans Scrambling":** <http://nyti.ms/1zJeJAM>

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