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March 18, 2020

Sent electronically

Dear New York Congressional Delegation:

On behalf of the Healthcare Association of New York State and our statewide membership, thank you for your commitment to supporting hospitals and health systems in our work to respond to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. HANYYS is very grateful for the actions you have taken thus far to assist patients and hospitals in this time of need. Yet, as the spread of the virus grows at tremendous speed throughout the state and nation, it is clear more needs to be done.

To support the care of patients with COVID-19 and assist our healthcare workforce, HANYYS recommends Congress take the following actions.

Support childcare for the healthcare workforce

As schools across the state close, many healthcare workers face the challenge of having to care for their children who are at home, adding additional strain to meet the growing demands of caring for COVID-19 patients.

We urge Congress to allocate funding to reimburse childcare expenses for essential workers, including healthcare workers.

Enhance testing capabilities

Testing capacity is critical to managing the spread of COVID-19 and remains an issue at this stage of the pandemic.

We urge Congress to authorize direct funding to hospitals to assist them as they ramp up testing capacity, including reimbursement for the purchase of needed technologies to improve access to testing.

Eliminate hospital reimbursement cuts

New York hospitals have been subject to nearly \$31 billion in reimbursement reductions over the last ten years, with more cuts scheduled to come. Now is not the time to undermine the financial viability of the safety net by allowing additional cuts to move forward. We urge Congress to take immediate action to relieve New York hospitals of \$1 billion in scheduled cuts this year:

- **Eliminate the Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital cuts** set to go into effect May 22, for at least two and a half years. New York's hospitals and health systems are facing \$659 million in DSH cuts over the next year. These cuts will total \$7.2 billion over ten years.
- **Eliminate the Medicare sequestration cuts.** New York's hospitals will incur \$254 million in sequestration cuts over the next year, totaling \$2.9 billion over the next ten years.

Provide funding to support care delivery

Hospitals and health systems are working around the clock to increase surge capacity, with many being forced to take substantial measures to expand their ability to care for current and anticipated COVID-19 cases. To support these extraordinary efforts, Congress should:

- **pass an additional increase in the enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP)** for states facing the highest burden of COVID-19;
- **authorize funding for an add-on payment through Medicare** to account for services provided to COVID-19 patients that otherwise would not be covered by insurance and for losses resulting from delayed elective services; and
- **increase funding for hospitals to create additional bed capacity** through programs such as the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund or the Social Services Block Grant.

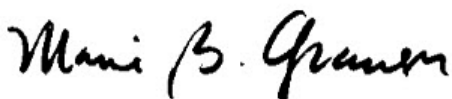
Address regulatory concerns

- **Prevent the implementation of the Medicaid Fiscal Accountability Rule.** MFAR would have a profound impact on a state's ability to finance its Medicaid program and would undermine supplemental payments to hospitals. This rule would weaken the already strained healthcare system.
- **Delay implementation of the new public charge regulations,** which create disincentives for certain populations to access care. In this time of crisis, we want to ensure people seek care without fear of deportation.

We continue to encourage Congress and the administration to work together **to ensure that ample funding flows quickly and directly to hospitals.** We urge flexibility in how it is spent, to best meet the needs of frontline providers who often work extended shifts throughout the course of an emergency.

Thank you again for your continued commitment and partnership as we work together to address the COVID-19 pandemic. Your strong support is greatly needed and appreciated during this challenging time.

Sincerely,



Marie B. Grause, RN, JD
President