

Speak

Mondays
@ 10:30 PM

Tuesdays
@ 9:00 PM

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Health system needs help

The Jersey City Medical Center has terminated its contract with Horizon Blue Cross and Blue Shield starting July 8. In a letter to its members, it states, "Horizon BCBSNJ is disappointed by the decision of the out-of-state consultants running Jersey City Medical Center. Horizon BCBSNJ could not accept their demand for a more than 95% increase in reimbursement rates."

I have covered many shows for my cable program, Speak NJ on health care. I truly believe the problem will get worse before our legislators take notice. Several years ago, I went

on a march organized by doctors to protest the cost of medical liability insurance in Washington, D.C. Our doctors are leaving New Jersey to practice in states that have a cap on liability claims. In fact, Bayonne has no doctor delivering babies due to the high cost of insurance. Our legislators are ignoring this problem.

Another problem is charity care. Charity care covers everyone, including foreign nationals. Patients suffering with heart disease or cancer visit their families in the U.S. while receiving health care in our local hospitals; when the treatment is over, they return to their countries. The hospitals must absorb the loss and cuts must be made elsewhere. Charity care contributed to the financial loss at St. Mary Hospital in Hoboken. Similarly, the Jersey City Medical Center stated charity care and Medicaid accounts for 77.1 percent of its pediatric patients.

Finally, hospitals are also responsible. The scandal at UMDNJ and the amounts of money many hospitals pays its CEO is hurting the health care system.

I also wish the governor a speedy recover, but in some ways, he is fortunate. A Horizon BCBS member who had a similar accident would have the additional worry of finding affordable treatment because the Jersey City Medical Center is also a state trauma center. It is time our legislators take action.

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JERSEY CITY