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In late September, news hit the airwaves that, Health Republic, the nation's largest nonprofit health insurer (created as a result of the Affordable Care Act), had been ordered to shutdown because of "severe financial problems." Given the plans popularity in New York State, this left more than 200,000 policyholders scrambling to find new coverage by November 30<sup>th</sup>. In addition, the shutdown leaves thousands of providers questioning whether they'll be reimbursed for services rendered. As such, both NASW-NYS and NASW-NYC have reached out to key officials at the Department of Financial Services (DFS), the Cuomo Administration, allied professional associations and legislative staff to learn more about the issue at hand.

To date, we've been informed that all Health Republic policy holders should be transitioned to a new provider (either voluntarily or through auto enrollment), however, there is little clarity regarding pending service claims. The DFS reported that "all such transactions are on hold pending a full examination of Health Republic's financial picture." Such news is disconcerting to providers across the spectrum and as such, NASW-NYS and NASW-NYC has been proactively engaging in legislative, administrative and internal solutions.

**Legislatively:** New York is one of only a few states that does not operate a state health "Guaranty Fund," a state administered fund typically endowed by a tax on the insurance industry that protects policyholders in the event that an insurer defaults on benefit payments or becomes insolvent. While specific language has not yet been finalized, advocacy efforts are underway to introduce legislation that would create such a fund to protect against future insolvencies *and* provide retroactive payments to providers. NASW-NYS and NASW-NYC will strongly advocate for such a remedy.

**Administratively:** NASW-NYS and NASW-NYC will continue to communicate with the Department of Financial Services, the State's Health Exchange and the Executive Administration to obtain information pertinent to patient transition issues and provider reimbursement avenues.

**Internally:** In instances such as this, data collection can be a vital component of making our case to the Legislature and the Administration, both of which will need to quantify the financial impact on providers. NASW-NYS and NASW-NYC have set up a short survey to assess the impact on licensed social workers. To complete the survey, go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/22P5J3M>.

In addition, we have (and will continue to) engage allied trade associations in an effort to combine our efforts. As more information becomes available we will distribute it widely to our members.