

Fiscal Year 2024

Annual Public Borough Meetings

Responses

Board of Directors Meeting

September 26, 2024

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Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Public Meetings

In accordance with §7384(10) of the HHC Enabling Act, the Board of Directors of the New York City Health + Hospitals facilitated the Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Public Meetings in all five boroughs of NYC:

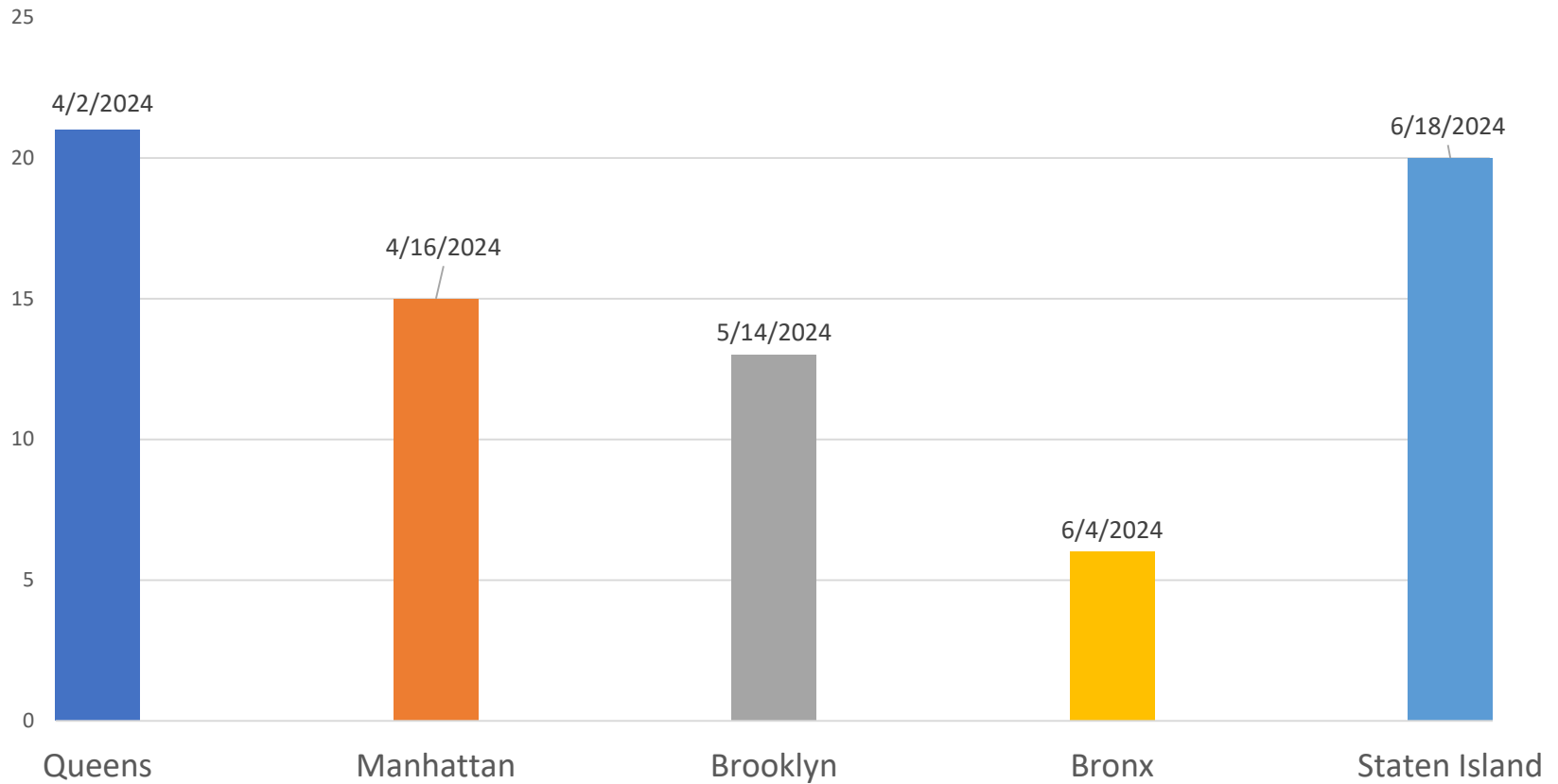
Queens	-	April 2, 2024		NYC Health + Hospitals/Queens
Manhattan	-	April 16, 2024		NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue
Brooklyn	-	May 14, 2024		NYC Health + Hospitals/Kings County
Bronx	-	June 4, 2024		NYC Health + Hospitals/Lincoln
Staten Island	-	June 18, 2024		NYC Health + Hospitals/Sea View

The President and CEO informed the public on the programs and plans of NYC Health + Hospitals, as well as afforded the public an opportunity to present oral and/or written testimony concerning the NYC Health + Hospitals performance to the Board of Directors.

Compilation of questions and responses

- NYC Health +Hospitals recorded the individual questions/ concerns from each of the public meetings.
- This deck contains a comprehensive listing of questions/ concerns and responsive information.
- We will provide an overview today.
- The full deck will be posted for public review:
<https://www.nychealthandhospitals.org/public-meetings-notices/>
- Each slide is identified with the name of the borough in which the question/ concern was raised.
- When a specific facility is referenced in the question/ concern, it is also included on the slide.

Total Speakers per Borough



Main Areas of Concern Raised by the Public

Extensive Wait Times

- >6 months for appointments for dental care and specialty care
- Long primary care appointment wait time in Staten Island
- Staffing shortage

Employee Satisfaction and Morale

- Pay parity for Social Work staff and Residents
- Wellness resources for staff morale
- Ensure kindness is implemented towards patients from reception through their care

Aging Structure and Infrastructure

- Buildings need updates and maintenance
- New machinery
- ADA compliance

Housing Projects

- Quality and size of HERRCS in Brooklyn
- Prospective residents of housing project in Bronx

Access to Health Care Locations

- Only one location in Staten Island
- Importance of a Trauma 1 center in South Brooklyn
- Access to Street Health Outreach and Wellness (SHOW) Vans

Public Concern:

Social Workers are asking for support in contract negotiations to include:

- Fair compensation
- Inclusion in City's cost of living compensation

Response:

DC-37 reached a deal with the city/NYC Health + Hospitals on a new collective bargaining agreement in March of 2023.

As part of the new collective bargaining agreement, additional “equity” monies are available as agreed to by the parties. The title of Social Worker did receive an equity increase.

Public Concern:

Resident physicians requested support for advocating for fair compensation for fellowships:

- Concerned low compensation will impact recruitment and retention of residents.

Response:

New York City Mayor Eric Adams, Office of Labor Relations (OLR) Commissioner Renee Campion, and NYC Health + Hospitals President and CEO Dr. Mitchell Katz announced on June 1, 2024 a tentative five-year and six-month contract agreement with the Committee of Interns and Residents Service Employees International Union (CIR-SEIU) that will provide fair wage increases to more than 2,300 medical interns and residents who work for NYC Health + Hospitals, the largest municipal health care system in the nation.

The tentative agreement is retroactive — beginning on December 16, 2021 — and expires on June 15, 2027. The agreement includes compounded wage increases totaling 16.21 percent over the term of the contract and the starting salary for residents will go from the current \$66,247 to \$81,238 in December 2025.

Public Concern:

Staff members expressed the need for a more efficient payroll system, to allow timely resolution of salary payment errors and more transparency on pay stubs regarding the rate at which salary is paid.

Response:

NYC Health + Hospitals is currently working on implementing a new payroll system, which will bring about greater efficiency and transparency into payroll processes and payments, including overtime payments. The new payroll solution will have better tools by which staff can view their earnings information not only on their paystubs, but within the solution itself. NYC Health + Hospitals is working with all appropriate stakeholders to ensure optimal planning, designing, building and implementation of the new payroll system. The precise go-live date for the new payroll system is under review by NYC Health + Hospitals and will be disclosed when available.

Public Concern:

Community member expressed the need to close the congregant Humanitarian Emergency Response and Relief Center (HERRC) shelter on 47 Hall Street which houses 3,200 single males, due to the poor infrastructure and size of the shelter. Suggested to open multiple smaller size shelters across the city. Concerns include the following:

- Current shelter does not have any privacy for shelter residents and is experiencing racial tensions
- Security guards do not assist when there is tension among the residents
- Shelter residents loiter on the street and panhandle
- There are thousands of scooters on the street

Response:

NYC Health + Hospitals is committed to ensuring the health and dignity of all of its community members, including those who are unhoused, and newly arrived immigrant community in North Brooklyn.

The Hall Street HERRC serves two populations in two different models of shelter. Single adult men are housed in congregate settings, which is the standard across NYC's shelter providers, and families with children are housed in pods to allow for privacy. The pods all have locks and the households have their own keys to locks to allow for privacy.

Response Cont'd

NYC Health + Hospitals has behavioral health staff available to help de-escalate any issues that may occur within the shelter, including guest disagreements. Security guards also monitor the site 24/7 to ensure guest and staff safety. Security guards work with behavioral health staff and site managers to identify safety issues and create action plans as needed.

Many guests use bicycles and e-bikes for work, however per FDNY e-bike batteries are not allowed inside. NYC Health + Hospitals works with guests on education to properly store bikes and work with DOT to increase bike racks where possible.

Public Concern:

Community member requested options to access the available language services during the Annual Public Meetings. Currently the only option is dialing a phone number to receive translation services, but there are no phones available to utilize the service.

Response:

NYC Health + Hospitals adheres to the law for interpretation services at each Public Meeting. Language services in Spanish, American Sign language (ASL) and other languages are available by request.

A number is shared at the beginning of each meeting (212-788-3359) and staff is available to help coordinate access.

Public Concern:

Community member expressed the need for a new trauma hospital in Far Rockaway to ensure community members can obtain care in crisis.

Response:

NYC Health + Hospitals supports the efforts of the Rockaway Trauma Healthcare Access Task Force, a blue-ribbon panel formed by City Councilmember Selvena Brooks-Powers to address the persistent lack of healthcare infrastructure in the eastern Rockaways.

Dr. Mitchell Katz, President and CEO of NYC Health + Hospitals, as co-chair of the task force, is committed to ensuring high quality healthcare access to residents of the Rockaway Peninsula.

The task force includes local residents and members of nearby community groups. Efforts are also ramping up for the opening of a new comprehensive community health center in Far Rockaway to expand access to primary care, women's health, dental, vision and mental health services for the peninsula community.

Councilmember Selvena Brooks-Powers has been able to get a \$50M commitment in the Mayor's FY25 Capital budget and an additional \$80,000 in expense funding.

Public Concern:

Does Bellevue Hospital have the capacity to accommodate additional patients, and what is the potential impact on overall patient care following the closure of Mount Sinai Beth Israel?

Response:

NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue is currently operating at or near capacity in many of its essential services. Over the last several months there have been ongoing discussions at both System and facility levels to project the potential impact to Bellevue, such as in medical walk in, behavioral health, EMS 911 arrivals and non-911 arrivals, due to the projected Mount Sinai Beth Israel closure.

NYC Health + Hospitals is working with Mount Sinai on plans to mitigate projected volume increases at Bellevue. Mount Sinai has pledged capital funding to support the necessary expansion of services at Bellevue, among other steps.

Public Concern:

Community members expressed satisfaction with medical care but were disappointed at the lack of respect, professionalism, and dignity upon entering the facility and during check-in.

Response:

Patient Satisfaction is a priority for NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue and we are committed to work hard to ensure we meet the needs and expectations of each and every patient. We invest in training programs for staff, solicit their workplace concerns through surveys and provide direct feedback on our patients' perceptions of care. As part of our commitment to our patients, when complaints and grievances are brought forward we work with our services and patients to meaningfully address these concerns. Through analysis of patient survey data, we work with our facility leadership to develop processes that enhance our patients' experience.

Public Concern:

Community members emphasized the importance of advocating for elected officials to secure capital funding.

Response:

NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue requests allocations every year during the application period from City Council, city, state and federal officials, and NYC Health + Hospitals representatives advocate for funding in Albany and Washington, D.C. We appreciate all capital funding allocations for Bellevue Hospital.

Public Concern:

Due to the aging infrastructure at Coler, the community expressed a profound need for infrastructure repairs and upkeep.

Response:

- Coler continues to work with the NYC Health + Hospitals Office of Facilities Development to identify the needs of the facility and access existing capital funding to address them, in addition to seeking capital improvement awards through the NYC Council and the Manhattan Borough President's Office, among other champions.

Existing projects include:

- installation of outdoor irrigation system and beautification, creating Resident-Staff Flower Gardens;
- scheduled to install LED/energy efficient lighting throughout the facility;
- lobby renovation (in progress);
- Nurse Call Bell project in progress (to be completed 1Q2025)

Future projects include:

- Elevator Modernization
- HVAC Upgrades
- Resident Greenhouse

Response Continued:

Coler continues to work on other internal upgrades, many of which include direct resident input:

- repainting all hallways, and now all Day Rooms;
 - repairing/painting all resident shower rooms;
 - installing new blinds in all Day Rooms;
 - installed new privacy curtains in all resident rooms;
 - installed new flat screen TVs for residents;
 - purchased new nightstands and over-the-bed tables for residents (delivery in Aug/Sep 2024);
 - new cable service for residents;
 - installed new security cameras throughout the building, in the elevators, and outdoors to improve staff and resident safety;
 - installed a permanent emergency generator
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- Coler is also exploring flood mitigation options that would address existing coastal vulnerabilities. More information available at www.colercoastalresiliency.com

Public Concern:

Community members mentioned the shortage of nursing staff and how it impacts timely service provision.

Response:

- Coler is proud to report that it exceeds the minimum staffing standards required for nursing homes, and received confirmation letter from NYS DOH indicating compliance
- Coler has 5-star CMS rating for Staffing: Staffing levels and turnover of staff in nursing homes may impact the quality of care nursing home residents get. Higher staffing ratings mean there are more nursing staff and less turnover of the staff, which may mean higher quality of care. Total number of nurse staff hours per resident per day (*Higher numbers are better*):
 - **Coler**: 4 hours and 20 minutes
 - **National average**: 3 hours and 47 minutes
 - **New York average**: 3 hours and 37 minutes
- Coler received the Beacon Award for Nursing Excellence in our Memory Care Units (based on resident outcomes, work environment, Nursing workforce)
- Coler has monthly onsite recruitment events and conducts ongoing interviews to fill vacancies
- Coler has recently launched its Certified Nursing Assistant Training program, to create career pathways into the field of nursing; first cohort graduation in May 2024
- Coler continues to network with schools and community organizations to promote career opportunities

Public Concern:

Community members expressed the need for more opportunities for employees to take advantage of available services and perks for their satisfaction and morale.

Response:

- NYC Health + Hospitals Employee Resource Center serves as a hub for all-staff to access benefits including:
 - Direct Deposits
 - Family & Medical Leave (FMLA)
 - Flexible Spending Account Programs
 - Health Insurance Plans
 - Municipal Credit Union (MCU)
 - Retirement Savings Plans (NYCERS, TDA, 403B, 457, NYCE)
 - Transit Benefit
 - Tuition Reimbursement
 - Union Benefits
 - Perks-at-Work (Employee Discount Program)
- Access to the Employee Gym (24/7; free to employee)
- Helping Healers Heal Resources to promote self-care and mental wellness
- Employee Wellness Room (24/7) - Periodic offering of Zumba classes, Meditation Bus/Meditation Classes
- Onsite Occupational Health Services (e.g. free vaccinations)
- Dedicated Employee Dining Hall
- Employee of the Month – Designated Parking Spaces

Public Concern:

Community members expressed the importance of behavioral health education and suggested highlighting educators and innovators like Roberto Clemente to amplify its significance.

Response:

Our comprehensive clinical encounters include patient-specific education on behavioral health. The site hosts tabling events throughout the year in our Lobby where community education on behavioral health is featured. Additionally, the site hosts forums to discuss issues related to health equity and access to care in the communities we serve, in which behavioral health is discussed.

Recently, as one example, Gouverneur sponsored the Lower East Side Community Roundtable. This interactive community engagement opportunity provided a platform for various community organization representatives comprised of specialists in housing, mental health, immigrant rights, LGBTQ+ Advocacy, and tenant rights among others to come together to discuss behavioral health amongst others.

Also, on August 1, 2024, an outdoor health fair featured community education on behavioral health with tabling to include mental health professionals and staff from Gouverneur and the Roberto Clemente Center.

Public Concern:

Community members shared the need for a formal program for patients on financial health.

Response:

Our comprehensive clinical encounters include opportunities for patient-specific financial counseling. The site hosts tabling events throughout the year in our Lobby where community education on financial health is featured. Additionally, the site hosts forums to discuss issues related to health equity and access to care in the communities we serve, in which finance is discussed.

Recently, as one example, Gouverneur sponsored the Lower East Side Community Roundtable. This interactive community engagement opportunity provided a platform for various community organization representatives comprised of specialists in housing, mental health, immigrant rights, LGBTQ+ Advocacy, and tenant rights among others to come together to discuss financial issues amongst others.

Also, on August 1, 2024, an outdoor health fair featured community education on finance with tabling to include our finance teams.

Public Concern:

Community members expressed the need for education on insurance and out-of-pocket payments and deductibles.

Response:

Our comprehensive clinical encounters include opportunities for patient-specific insurance discussions. As part of the site's community engagement efforts, it hosts tabling events throughout the year and hosts forums to discuss issues related to insurance and payments.

On August 1, 2024, the site hosted an outdoor health fair featuring various community education programs

Public Concern:

Community member expressed the need for a new sonogram machine at the facility.

Response:

The site has been actively pursuing capital funding for this imaging modality.

Public Concern:

Community member expressed the need for a more central location and a larger facility with easier public access.

Response:

Gotham Health was created to provide health care to all New Yorkers without exception, and over the years the Sydenham community of patients has grown to the point that a larger site is indeed needed. Gotham Health's leadership team and the Community Advisory Board at Sydenham have actively been scouting for a larger location that will not compromise the needs of the community. Easy access to the site is a priority.

Public Concern:

Community member expressed the need for a Developmental Evaluation Center at St. Nicholas, an essential and much-needed resource in the community, to be more patient-centric, painted, and attractive to patients and families.

Response:

The St. Nicholas site is unique in that it has the only developmental pediatrician in Gotham Health located at that facility. The Gotham Health team has actively worked with the physician to develop an optimal staffing model to best serve the community. It is agreed that the site needs cosmetic and patient-centered improvements, and Gotham Health is actively planning the resources for these.

Public Concern:

Community members expressed the need for accessible bathrooms in all areas, especially at the location where the Annual Public Meeting is to be hosted.

Response:

In response to community members' concerns regarding accessible bathrooms, particularly at the location of the Annual Public Meeting, NYC Health + Hospitals/Kings County is addressing specific issues identified with the restrooms. Facilities Management has initiated a comprehensive plan to address bathroom accessibility, outlining the scope, schedule, and corrective actions. An ADA compliance consultant will review the design to optimize space and ensure the installation of fully functional ADA-compliant restrooms. Support Services will oversee the project and provide regular updates on progress and completion schedules.

Public Concern:

Community members expressed the need to ensure sidewalks are safe and accessible for all participants, including individuals with disabilities and elderly.

Response:

Ensuring safe sidewalks for the public is a top priority at NYC Health + Hospitals/Kings County. All sidewalks within our campus are fully ADA compliant. Sidewalks adjacent to city streets are maintained by the City, and we actively monitor their condition, advocating for necessary repairs as needed. Our commitment to providing accessible walkways throughout the campus meets all regulatory requirements.

Public Concern:

Community member expressed the need for a Level I Trauma Center in South Brooklyn to ensure community members can obtain timely care in crisis. Currently the closest Level I trauma center from Southern Brooklyn is thirty minutes away.

Response:

South Brooklyn Health is prepared to care for hundreds of trauma patients per year in our fully prepared resuscitation rooms. The hospital has a trauma response team on standby for any incoming codes and performs multiple drills to be ready for patients that are brought in for care. In addition, the Emergency Department appointed an EMS and Disaster Fellowship trained Director for Trauma and Prehospital Medicine to ensure preparedness and quality.

Additionally, the hospital is now a New York State certified percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) Center, which means we can now care for South Brooklyn residents who are having acute heart attacks – they no longer need to have ambulances travel 20+ minutes to the next nearest hospital that offers comprehensive cardiac services. And, we are now an Advanced Primary Stroke Center, which means we can provide state-of-the-art care for patients with acute onset of a stroke.

Public Concern:

Community members shared the need for more dental services. Currently wait time for an appointment is up to a year and a half, often resulting in the need for emergency services for the patient.

Response:

South Brooklyn Health is in the process of expanding its dental service size and capacity to reduce patient wait times. We anticipate construction will be complete by Q1 2025. For patients with emergent care they will be seen the same day, urgent issues will be seen within 2 weeks or less.

Public Concern:

Community members expressed the need to hire more staff, which would increase access to care and reduce wait time for appointments, and increase salaries for staff retention.

Response:

NYC Health + Hospitals/Woodhull's Human Resources Department has made significant progress in recruiting and retention of staff. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE), New York City Health + Hospitals/Woodhull experienced historical reductions in staff due to retirement, resignations and non-compliance to the COVID mandate.

In the past 3 years Human Resources has increased strategies to attract and retain staff:

- Some efforts include hosting weekly job fairs for nursing and social worker positions, partnering with other city agencies and schools to fill clerical associate and administrative positions, and advertising through various social media outlets and campaigns.
- Additionally, Woodhull has implemented on-the-spot hiring and increased New Employee Orientation from monthly to bi-weekly. Also, salaries are maximized for many hard-to-recruit clinical positions (Social Workers, Psychologist, Dental Assistants, Respiratory Therapist) and Registered Nurse salaries were increased through union negotiations, which brought salaries in parity with other governmental healthcare institutions.

Response Cont'd:

In the past 3 years Human Resources has increased strategies to attract and retain staff:

- Lastly, since January to June 2024, 260 new employees were hired, 45 staff were promoted and 65% of nursing vacancies were filled at Woodhull. We continue to implement training programs to enhance employees' skills and prepare them for more promotional opportunities. Our efforts are ongoing, we will continue to look for ways to recruit and retain staff to ensure we are meeting the needs of all patients and the community.

Public Concern:

Community members expressed concern over long wait times to receive appointments for specialty care services.

Response:

Woodhull has expanded access to specialty services with next available appointments within 30 days for certain specialties including: Cardiology, Endocrinology, and General Surgery.

In addition, services such as pain management are now provided as of June 2024 and ENT services are expected to resume later this year. The current referral process used by Woodhull specialists also prioritizes any clinically urgent patients to ensure care is not delayed.

Public Concern:

Staff members expressed the need for the Human Resources Department to improve the approval process for overtime and parental leave for staff members.

Response:

All requests for leave of absences, including parental leave are handled by the Central Office/Leave Administration Team. Employees are required to submit documentation via email to LeaveAdministrationTeam@nychhc.org. The approval process for overtime is handled by the Payroll Department.

Public Concern:

Community Advisory Board member inquired about their suspension for one meeting due to their perceived conduct at a previous meeting. They expressed that volunteers can not be suspended.

Response:

All individuals that represent Gotham Health and/or participate in any capacity that represents the organization are held to a code of conduct that is reflective of behaviors that are consistent with respect and the non-discriminatory mission of Gotham Health and NYC Health + Hospitals. These behaviors include speech and action that reflects non-bias for race, gender, ethnicity, immigration status and ability to pay. This is inclusive of staff, patients, volunteers, contingent workers, vendors, community and board members, and is aligned with our mission and vision as an organization. Volunteers represent Gotham Health, and as such, the executive leadership and CEO of Gotham Health reserves the right to make decisions on any breach of conduct that does not represent the intent of our values and mission. In such circumstances, actions are taken to investigate and determine the remedy or expulsion of individuals who egregiously, knowingly and repeatedly comport themselves in such a manner. Such volunteers are not barred from participating in the facility permanently, only until the immediate issue is resolved.

Public Concern:

Community members expressed concern of long wait times for appointments including dental care and specialist appointments. Appointments can be between 6 months to a year away.

Response:

NYC Health + Hospitals/Gotham Health, Morrisania has brought on new providers. These new providers will allow for more access and will reduce wait times for appointments.

- 2 additional Primary Care providers have been onboarded (Nurse Practitioner)
- 1 full time and 1 part time dentist will be starting in the fall
- 1 additional Optometrist pending credentialing clearance

Public Concern:

Community members shared their opposition and displeasure regarding the housing complex on the NYC Health + Hospital/Gotham Health, Morrisania parking lot. They requested reconsideration due to the following concerns:

- Impact to doctors' accessibility to the facility which could result in a loss of doctors for the community
- Potential loss of programs the facility provides

Response:

There will be no impact to the providers accessibility to the facility. The developer is required to ensure all of those who had parking will continue to have parking during the construction. All services will remain available during the construction. NO services will be affected.

Public Concern:

Community members shared the community's opposition and displeasure regarding the Just Home proposal on the NYC Health + Hospital/Jacobi campus. They requested clarity on the reason the eligibility criteria has expanded to include pre-trial detainees, indicating the original criteria was incarcerated individuals who have complex medical conditions and are under the care of NYC Health + Hospitals/Correctional Health Services (CHS).

Response:

The eligibility criteria have not changed. A pre-trial detainee is a person who is detained on Rikers Island awaiting trial, likely because the individual cannot afford bail. About 87% of people held on Rikers are pre-trial. All of these individuals are patients of NYC Health + Hospitals/Correctional Health Services (CHS). Although potential Just Home residents will complete the initial screening and application process while detained, they cannot be in city custody (i.e. pre-trial detainees) at time of move-in.

Just Home is not a jail, and residents will not be detained or in custody. Just Home will be permanent apartments, and its residents will be free members of the community, just like the thousands of other justice-involved New Yorkers who are our neighbors.

The patients CHS refers to Fortune for Just Home will have complex medical conditions, which may include cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), cirrhosis, and end-stage renal disease. Most referred patients will be older individuals, but younger adults with significant health conditions will also be considered.

Public Concern:

Will Just Home residents receive priority for appointments or receive faster appointments? Currently appointment wait time for a dental visit is one year.

Response:

Fortune's case managers will collaborate closely with Jacobi Medical Center medical providers, but the Just Home residents will not receive priority for appointments or receive faster appointments than other Jacobi patients.

Public Concern:

Community members expressed need for a Street Health and Wellness (SHOW) van. Staten Island is lacking in resources and the SHOW van provides much needed care to vulnerable populations such as migrant and low income communities. Community members also expressed need for full time services and increased resources from the SHOW van.

Response:

NYC Health + Hospitals remains committed to bringing the full spectrum of health services to the residents of Staten Island. We are partnering with our former SHOW collaborator Project Hospitality to expand the range and availability of services through walk-in appointments at NYC Health + Hospitals/Gotham Health, Vanderbilt and a dedicated appointment line (718-616-0999). This new low-barrier model will allow Project Hospitality residents to receive pediatric, obstetrics, & gynecologic services in addition to comprehensive adult primary care.

Public Concern:

Community members are seeking expansion of NYC Health + Hospitals clinical services and care in Staten Island to increase access for vulnerable populations such as undocumented and uninsured communities. The Gotham Health facility has long wait times and the nearest NYC Health + Hospitals facilities are almost 2 hours away.

Response:

As part of NYC Health + Hospitals commitment to providing the highest quality health care services to all New Yorkers with compassion, dignity and respect, and regardless of immigration status or ability to pay, NYC Health + Hospitals/Gotham Health, Vanderbilt is proud to offer Project Hospitality Residents high quality, affordable care to healthy adults, children and adolescents, special services, women's health and many more.