

An Open Letter on Behalf of the Board of Trustees of Maimonides Medical Center

For 111 years, Maimonides Medical Center has been a pillar of our Brooklyn communities and a pioneer in the advancement of medicine. As the Board of Trustees charged with carrying on this legacy and overseeing the fulfillment of its mission, we wish to respond to the recent publicity campaign that has been launched against the hospital and appeal to its organizers for a constructive proposal.

Our Board is made up of 32 individual Trustees representing many different communities and backgrounds. We volunteer our time and energy because we are incredibly proud of Maimonides and the work done every day by its staff. Many of us are Maimonides patients ourselves, as are our parents, children, and spouses.

Year after year, Maimonides is recognized by objective third-party organizations for achieving clinical outcomes that are among the best in the country. The data tells us clearly that **we serve a population that is more at risk than average and provide medical care that is far better than average.**

We are not perfect. We continually seek to listen and learn from our patients, employees and communities. We strive to get better every day. We know the high level of medical care we provide is not always matched by the patient experience. Our medical technology is new but many of our facilities are old. That is why we built the new Doctors Pavilion, why we are modernizing and doubling the size of our emergency room, why we are building Brooklyn's only freestanding Emergency Room for children. These new facilities cost hundreds of millions of dollars and will benefit our communities for generations.

The pandemic has created enormous challenges for our society. Hospitals, in particular, have been exceptionally challenged. Maimonides is hardly alone in coping with nationwide staffing shortages, employee burnout, skyrocketing supply costs, and volatile demand for its services.

Moreover, Maimonides, like other hospitals that serve large Medicaid populations, has historically been disadvantaged by a deeply inequitable funding system. Medicaid has paid hospitals just 61 cents for every dollar of care provided. Put simply, we were paid far less for providing the same services than hospitals serving more affluent communities. **The clinical outcomes we achieve are all the more remarkable in this context.** New York State leadership recognizes this and has now included Maimonides among a select group of hospitals that are eligible for enhanced Medicaid reimbursement which will help mitigate this historical deficiency.

Early in the pandemic the Board made a decision that has guided it ever since: do what it takes and commit the necessary resources to meet the needs of our communities during this crisis. Like many hospitals, we spent more than we earned

in this period, drawing on our balance sheet to absorb losses rather than cutting back services.

As the pandemic waxed and waned, one of the ways we sought to mitigate this funding gap was through philanthropic support from individuals who expressed an interest in strengthening the organization. We were grateful for the generous support we received from many new donors.

We were surprised, however, when one prospective donor proposed to take control of our board as a condition of philanthropic support. We respectfully declined this proposal, which we believed was inconsistent with our fiduciary duties and our mission, and not in the best interests of the organization or the diverse communities we serve.

Apparently dissatisfied with this outcome, this individual, in collaboration with others, has now unleashed a destructive and deceptive campaign that discourages people from using the hospital, makes several false charges and claims, calls for a reduction in hospital funding, attempts to demoralize our workforce, and seeks to undermine the unions that represent most of our employees.

To those financing and organizing this campaign, we have a simple message: this is not the way to achieve anything constructive.

Whatever the campaign's intent, its practical effect is to harm the hospital, those who use the hospital, and those who work there. **The longer this goes on, the greater the damage will be.**

The last thing our communities or our workforce can afford right now is a manufactured crisis that threatens to weaken an institution that hundreds of thousands of Brooklynites rely on to access critical services.

If you have a sincere interest in improving the hospital's services, we call on you to come forward with a concrete proposal. We stand ready - as we always have - to engage with all people of good faith who wish to work together in furtherance of improving healthcare for our communities. For our part, we will continue to focus on doing everything possible to preserve and protect the delivery of world-class care for those we serve.

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