

## New York's Medicaid Program is Key to Helping Address the Opioid Epidemic

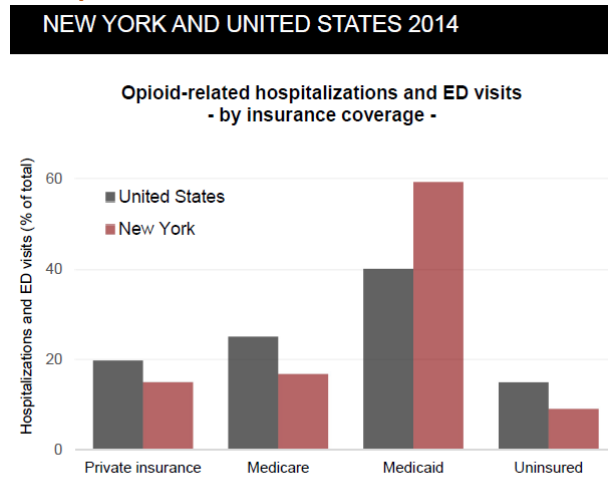
Medicaid and Medicaid Expansion through the ACA are vital allies in the battle against increased overdoses, hospitalizations and deaths related to opioids in New York. We urge legislators to sustain funding for Medicaid and reject any proposed cuts to the program to effectively address the opioid crisis, especially among low-income New Yorkers.

### New York is Being Affected by Opioids and Fentanyl More Intensely Than Most States

- New York's opioid overdose rate has increased for the past 6 years and is higher than the U.S. average.<sup>1</sup>
- New York's opioid-related hospitalization rate is 60% higher than the national rate and has remained relatively consistent over the past 10 years.<sup>2</sup>
- New York has consistently had a lower opioid-prescriber rate than the U.S. average, yet has experienced a sharper increase of fatal poisoning by all opioids from 2013 to 2015 that has outpaced the national average.<sup>2</sup>

### Medicaid and Medicaid Expansion Are Fighting the Opioid Epidemic

- Medicaid funds services that support recovery from opioid use disorder including detoxification, individual and group therapy, medication assisted treatment, and supportive housing.
- 60% of patients hospitalized or visiting the emergency room in New York due to opioids have Medicaid coverage, which is much higher than the national average of 40%.<sup>2</sup>
  - The rate of opioid-related hospital visits in New York has doubled since 2005.<sup>2</sup>
- Less than 10% of patients in New York with opioid-related emergency room visits are uninsured, compared with the national average of over 15%.<sup>2</sup>



Source: Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project (HCUP Fast Stats - Opioid-Related Hospital Use)

While significant progress has been made in increasing access to community based addictions services, through the implementation of Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics and other initiatives, obtaining comprehensive mental health and substance use treatment remains a challenge in New York. Medicaid plays a crucial role in connecting individuals with opioid use disorders to services.

Investment in mental health and addiction treatment and prevention saves money by keeping New Yorkers with mental health and substance use disorders out of emergency rooms, jails and shelters. **New Yorkers rely on Medicaid as a source of treatment, and we urge continued preservation of Medicaid. We also urge that 85% of the proposed Opioid Surcharge Fund be directed to OASAS, and 50% of those funds be used for NEW services.**

<sup>1</sup> Heun-Johnson et al. (2018). The cost of mental illness: New York facts and figures. USC Schaeffer Center. Retrieved from [https://www.bhecon.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/NY-Chartbook-2018\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.bhecon.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/NY-Chartbook-2018_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.