

Inter-County Association of Western New York

Representing the Counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tompkins, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates.

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-14-IC

MEMORIALIZING THE GOVERNOR AND NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE TO RESTORE STATE FUNDING TO LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS FOR RABIES HUMAN POST-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS

Offered by: the Inter-County Association of Western New York

WHEREAS, rabies is a deadly zoonotic disease, with a 99.9% fatality rate in humans if left untreated; and

WHEREAS, rabies post-exposure prophylaxis should be authorized and provided as soon as possible after exposure to an animal that is known to be rabid or is a high-suspect for rabies; and

WHEREAS, New York State Public Health Law Section 2145 states that the county health authority is responsible for the services and expenses necessary for the suppression of human rabies; and

WHEREAS, these activities include assuring that individuals exposed to rabies receive treatment at no cost and providing mandatory quarterly free rabies clinics for cats, dogs, and domesticated ferrets; and

WHEREAS, the 2021-22 Executive Budget proposal eliminates state funding that supported costs for authorized rabies treatment not covered by third party insurance; and

WHEREAS, rabies expenses can be unpredictable from year to year, based on the number of exposures; and

WHEREAS, a single large exposure, such as at a children's camp, or exposures in populations with higher numbers of uninsured individuals can quickly exhaust local budgets for rabies treatment; and

WHEREAS, the fatality risk of an untreated rabies exposure means that costs must be covered to assure treatment; and

WHEREAS, third party insurers should be required to cover treatment for rabies exposure; and

WHEREAS, current statute requires both county health authority and insurer approval of treatment; and

WHEREAS, county health authority assessment and approval of post-exposure treatment for rabies should suffice for insurers to reimburse for these expenses without further approval; and

WHEREAS, hospital rates for treatment vary significantly, exceeding third party reimbursement rates and placing the burden of the unreimbursed balance on both individuals receiving treatment and localities, and now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED:

1. The Inter-County Association of Western New York calls upon the Governor and New York State Legislature to restore funding for rabies program expenses to prior year levels; and

2. The Inter-County Association of Western New York urges the Governor and New York State Legislature to enact reforms to current public health law to reduce local and state taxpayer costs by increasing maximization of third-party insurance payments for post exposure rabies treatment; and
3. The Governor and New York State Legislature are additionally encouraged to enact reforms to current public health law to require health care providers to accept rates for reimbursement for rabies treatment set by the State Commissioner of Health; and
4. The Inter-County Association of Western New York Secretary is directed to send a certified copy of this resolution to state representatives and all others deemed necessary and appropriate.

This is to Certify that I, the undersigned, Secretary of the Inter-County Association of Western New York, have compared the foregoing copy of resolution with the original resolution now on file in this office and which was duly adopted by the Association at a session held on the 21st day of May 2021 and that the same is a true copy of said original and of the whole thereof.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed the official seal of the Inter-County Association of Western New York dated May 21, 2021.

Jodi Adams



Jodi Adams, Secretary
Inter-County Association of Western New York

Sponsored by: Steuben County, Moved by: C. Ferratella (*Steuben*), Seconded by: B. Scotchmer (*Steuben*)