

December 15, 2020

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Re: Keeping Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center Fully Functioning During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Dear Governor Cuomo:

It is with great urgency that we write this letter. We oppose the plan to close all acute care inpatient hospital beds at Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center in East Flatbush, Brooklyn by December 31, 2020.

In your press conference on Monday, November 30, 2020, you stated, “In the new battlefield, hospital capacity is the top concern, period. It’s about hospital beds.” You spoke about fearing the “nightmare of overwhelmed hospitals” that is expected as virus cases spike. You directed hospitals to recall retirees and prepare to expand capacity by 50%. You emphasized the need to direct special attention and resources to vulnerable communities and that Black New Yorkers died from COVID-19 at twice the rate of white New Yorkers.

Kingsbrook serves East Flatbush, a neighborhood with over 85% Black residents, double the COVID-19 mortality rate compared to New York State, and ten-times higher COVID-19 mortality than some neighborhoods in Manhattan. The hospital is one of several in Brooklyn and Queens that were completely overwhelmed during the first wave of COVID-19. If the plan for restructuring the Kingsbrook campus goes forward, around 200 hospital beds will be unavailable to nearby residents with COVID-19 and other life-threatening illnesses.

How can it make sense, from the point of view of public health, safety, and equity, to close Kingsbrook’s hospital beds when you call for hospital expansion?

We request that you intervene to ensure that Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center hospital beds remain open with the full capacity to treat severely ill patients during this unprecedented healthcare emergency. Lives depend on it.

Sincerely,

Staff Organizers of Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center #SaveKJMC

Advanced Eyecare of New York

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health

Barbara Baron Nutrition

Brooklyn NAACP

Caribbean Women’s Health Association, Inc.

Caringkind NYC
 CMM Hasan Physician PC
 Columbia Harlem Homeless Medical Partnership
 Columbia University Family Medicine Interest Group
 Columbia University Primary Care Progress
 Commission on the Public's Health System
 Empire State Medical Association, State Affiliate of the National Medical Association
 Freedom Socialist Party
 GMHC
 Left Voice
 Long Island Activists
 Now We Rise!
 New York #insulin4all
 New York Doctors Coalition
 NYPAN (New York Progressive Action Network)
 Manhattan Central Medical Society, Local Affiliate of the National Medical Association
 National Hispanic Medical Association
 New Alternatives for Homeless LGBT Youth
 New York City Democratic Socialists of America
 Physicians for a National Health Program, New York Metro
 Prasad Medical Physician PC
 Private Practice at 622 Schenectady Ave, Brooklyn
 Progressive Doctors
 Radical Women
 Students for a National Health Program, Columbia University
 Tau Omega Chapter, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.
 Warsaw ENT
 Westchester Bronx Black Physicians Society, Local Affiliate of the National Medical Association
 Young investigators Society, Feinstein Institutes for Medical Research

Aarti Patel, PA-C
 Abigail Weiss
 Abu Taher, MD
 Adam Sammons, MPH
 Adetunbi Ayeni, MD
 Adin Nelson, MD, MHPE,
 FAAP
 Adina Segal, LCSW
 Adrian Aurrecoechea, MD
 Adrienne Cowart
 Aimee M Parow, MD, FAAP
 Alaní Estrella, Medical Student
 Alexa Spiegel
 Alexander Epstein
 Alice M Dear
 Alyson Grant, MD
 Alyson Myers, MD
 Amanda Ramsdell, MD
 Andrea Card, MD

Andrea Lyman, MD, MSc, MS
 Andrew Goldstein, MD
 Aneela Nasim, RN
 Angel Roman
 Angela Coombs MD
 Angelica Saada, MD
 Anika Richards, DO, PhD, MPH
 Ankineedu N Prasad, MD
 Anna Marcus
 Anna Rose, MS1
 Anne Pruden, Retiree,
 1199SEIU
 Anne Rumberger
 Annie FilsAime, MD
 Anthony Feliciano
 Anya Snyder, BS, MPH
 Candidate
 Arlene Meertens, PCT
 Arlene Trim RN

Assita Diallo, DPT
 Audrey Williams Myers,
 Professor Emeritus, Baruch
 College CUNY
 Barbara Baron, MS, RDN,
 CDN, FAND
 Barry Kosofsky, MD
 Belinda Oyinkan Marquis, MD
 Ben Williams
 Benjamin Serby
 Betty Kolod, MD
 Beverly C Prince, MD, FACS
 Bianca Pierre-Louis, BC-FNP,
 MSN, RN
 Bruce G Trigg, MD
 Caitlin Monahan, MA
 Canna Liang
 Carla Seet, MPH Candidate
 2021

Carmen Rodríguez, MD
Carol Allen, MD
Carolyn Ochoa, MD
Chaplain James Litkett
Cheryl Marius
Cheryl Mensah, MD
Chimu Shikopa
Chinyere Onyenekwu, OD
Choddie Bryant
Choudhury M Hasan, MD,
FACC, FSCAI
Christie Offenbacher, LMSW
Claire Mahon
Cliff Willmeng, RN
Cristina Rodriguez-Hart, PhD
Daniel Laroche, MD
Daniel Lugassy, MD
Daniela Suarez-Rebling,
Medical Student
Darnel Lahens, EMT-B
Deborah S Socolar, MPH
Debra Lesane
Deepa Krishnan
Devendra Shrivastava, MD
Deyin Hsing, MD
Diana Torres-Burgos, MD,
MPH
Divya Anantharaman
Ebony Ali-Williams
Efua Wood RN
Elaine Barfield, MD
Elina Shtridler, MD, MPH
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Esmeria Reyes, RN
Faigie D Horowitz
Faven Araya, MPH
Fekade Tefera, MD
Francoise Neptune, CPC
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G Joanne Yarde
Gail L Forde
Gene Liaw, PA-C
Glen McWilliams, MD,
President of Manhattan Central
Medical Society
Gloria Tavera, PhD, MD
Candidate, Case Western
Reserve University
Guirlaine Lenore Agnant, MD
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Harry McAlister
Hilary Carlson, NP

Hiroko Hatanaka, Member of
the Board, JASSI
I Antoinette Sutherland, MD
MPH
Ian Dawkins, PCT
Inyanga Collins, MD
Ira Wechsler, Retired Registered
Ultrasound Technologist
Ivan Willig
Jack Tomascak
Jackie Hinds, Client
James Kim, MD
James Smith
Janeen Jordan, NYCDOE
Teacher
Janet Coleman-Belin, Medical
Student
Jasmin Browne
Jasmin Marie Harpe
Jasmine Thomas, LMSW
Jaya Goswami, MD
Jean Woods-Powell
Jed A Levine
Jen Epstein, Community
Organizer
Jennifer Esteen, RN
Jennifer Levine
Jenny O'Connel
Jeremy Cohan, PhD
Jessica Ho, MPH, MS2 at
Columbia
Jigar Patel, MD
Jillian Greenaway
Jillian Primiano, RN
Jitendra Patel, MD
Joan Marchant, RD
Joe Elwin
Joe Sackman
John Riggins Jr, MD
Jonah Green, MD
Jonathan Bogarín
Jonathan Michels, RT(R)
Josephine Ugochi Azuaru, RN
Josiah Ellis
Joy Howell
Judith Lewis
Judy A
Julianne Vasconcellos, PA
Julie Keefe, RN
June Kim
K Monterroso, RN
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Karen Acker, MD
Karen J Adamson, MD
Karina Galvin, PA-C
Karly Raber, MD

Karlynn Holland
Kate Barnhart, Exec Dir
Kathleen R Watson, MD
Kayla Ringelheim, MBA, MPH
Kaylee Knowles
Keisha Jones, RN-BC
Kelly Cahill
Kemi Babagbemi MD
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Khadijah M Davis, MPH
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Marc Shi, MD
Margarita Asiain
Marie Bernard, RN
Marlene Taylor, PA-C
Martin Viola, MA
Marvin François, CFA
Mary Nowocien
Mary S Tawfik, MD
Maureen Miller, MD, MPH
Meenal Shukla
Melanie Lawrence
Melvin Parasram, DO
Meron Samuel
Michael Pappas, MD
Michael S Sidney Goodman
Michele C Reed, DO, FAAFP
Michelle B Hardy
Millicent Okereke, MD
Mira Dermendjieva, PharmD
Miriam Bensman
Mohammad A Siddique, MD
Moises Dominguez, MD
Molly Piccione, DO
Monica Wright, Dietary Worker
Muhammad Dogar, MD
Muhammad F Hasan, MD
Nadia Makara, EIT
Nancy Joseph, DO
Naomi I Maria, MD

Nellie Stokeld
Nicole Anthony, MD
Nicole D Forman, MD
Nicole Grant, LCSW PhD
Nicole Kucine, MD, MS
Noah Goodman
Olivia Moscicki, Medical Student
Omoyeni O Clement, MS4, Zucker School of Medicine
Orlando Carpio MD
Paige Cloonan, Medical Student at Mt. Sinai
Patrice A Buckley, RT, (CT) (M)
Paul Hein, MD
Paula Rice, MBA
Pebbles Jaisarie, Active Duty Military/PTC
Peggy Leung, MD
Perry Nguyen
Phoebe Steel
Phone Oo, MD
Prakash Krishnan, BSc
Priscilla Chao, MD
Priyanka Datta, MD
Pwint Htwe, MD
R Purcell, MD
Rachel Villanueva, MD

Rachna Malani, MD
Raquel Perlman, LMSW
Ratesh Khillan, MD
Rayna Wang, LMSW
Rebecca Margolick
Rekha Bhandari MD
Rita Louard, MD
Rizwanullah Hameed, MD
S Yonah EtShalom, MSN, FNP, MPH
Sabrina D Martin, MD, FAAP
Samuel Uter, MD
Sarah Yurch
Sarita Patel, MD
Satrina Boyce
Shalimar James
Shamelia Loiseau, MD
Shardonay Pagett, Medical Student
Sharon Gerber
Sherline Joseph-Chery, PCT
Sibte Burney, MD
Sibyl Anderson, MD
Simone E Edwards, DrPH, MPH
Stefan Worgall, MD
Stella Safo, MD, MPH
Steven B Auerbach, MD, MPH, FAAP
Stu Sherman, JD, MPH

Subhash C Malhotra, MD
Susan E Williams, MD
Susan Wilson Broner, MD
Suzette Lewis, RN
Syed Ahmad, MD
Tahshann Richards, DO, MPH
Tameka Cambridge, Ward Clerk
Tara Kim, MD
Teresa Milner, PhD
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Timothy Clapper, PhD
Tine Byrsted
Tracy Layne
Tracy Scott
Tre Kwon, RN
Tunisia Bristol
Twatasha, Local Resident
Victoria Gonzalez, Medical Student
Viplov Mehta, MD
William Turner, MD
Winnie Chen
Wunmi Onile-Ere
Yinghui Guo, RD
Yinhsu Liu, ND, RD
Zia Ahmed, MD
Zoltan Antal, MD