



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

## Elected Officials Representing Lower Manhattan Rally to Save Mount Sinai Beth Israel

BRIAN KAVANAGH March 25, 2024

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**New York, NY**— Senators Kristen Gonzalez, Brian Kavanagh, and Brad Hoylman-Sigal; Assemblymembers Harvey Epstein, Deborah Glick, and Tony Simone; Council Members Carlina Rivera, Erik Bottcher, and Christopher Marte; and Congressman Jerry Nadler rallied on Sunday to stop the looming, unauthorized closure of services at Mount Sinai Beth Israel Hospital (MSBI). Co-sponsors of the rally also included Congressman Dan Goldman, Assemblymembers Grace Lee and Alex Bores; Senator Liz Krueger; Borough President Mark

Levine; and Council Member Keith Powers. Participants asked for the DOH to enforce the Cease and Desist order it issued on December 21st, 2023, and reaffirm that it will not approve any plans for service reductions or closure until a comprehensive review of the healthcare needs of the community has been concluded by DOH and vetted publicly, and ensure that there will be no gaps in access to care in the area. They also highlighted MSBI's lack of transparency and community engagement regarding their proposal to close the hospital entirely by July 12th.

For months, Mount Sinai Beth Israel has been suspending services, including the recent closure of the cardiac unit, and moving staff out of the facility without proper approval from DOH. A recently released community-led Health Equity Impact Assessment was shared with New York State Health Commissioner James McDonald, which found that Lower Manhattan lacks hospital capacity and the closure will disproportionately impact low-income people, people with disabilities, and vulnerable older adults. [Recent reporting](#) casts a dire picture of this scenario with MSBI transferring out seriously ill patients to other hospitals to their possible detriment. In one instance, a patient with sepsis waited over an hour for an ambulance to transfer them out of MSBI and into another hospital to receive desperately needed care. In situations where time is of the essence, lack of nearby care can be the determining factor in future health outcomes for the patient.

The public was encouraged to email Governor Hochul with the subject line: Save Beth Israel. Take action by emailing Governor Hochul at [Manhattan.IGA@exec.ny.gov](mailto:Manhattan.IGA@exec.ny.gov) and [MSBI@health.ny.gov](mailto:MSBI@health.ny.gov).

A [live stream](#) of the rally is available @HarveyforNY on Twitter.

“New York City residents and our constituents rely on Mt Sinai Beth Israel for critical emergency care and health care,” **said Representative Jerrold Nadler.** “The closing of Mount

Sinai Beth Israel would be devastating for the whole area, particularly low and moderate-income Medicaid users. What is the plan from Mt Sinai and the NY Department of Health if MSBI were to close and leave a gaping hole in the health care services for as many as 400,000 people? If this hospital were to close, where would these people go? Bellevue and NYU are already overwhelmed and stretched. We need to hear from the NY Department of Health and MSBI. Mt Sinai Beth Israel must continue to provide vital emergency and critical care for lower Manhattan. We need this hospital and the services it provides.”

“There are massive equity implications to Mount Sinai’s attempt to close Beth Israel Hospital,” **said Assembly Member Harvey Epstein.** “ The results of the recent community-led health equity impact survey show that people with disabilities and low-income and Medicaid-eligible folks will suffer the most. The closure of MSBI would disproportionately impact the most vulnerable people in our community. We will not stop fighting to preserve this vital neighborhood hospital and call on our partners in government, specifically DOH, and the Governor’s Office to achieve our goal of keeping services in the community.”

**State Senator Brian Kavanagh, who represents Lower Manhattan just south of MSBI, said:** “As elected representatives of this community, we have been doing everything we can to get Mount Sinai and the State Department of Health to hear and take into account the very serious concerns about the ways this process has unfolded to date, and ultimately to ensure that we maintain full access to the essential healthcare services our community needs. I thank my elected colleagues and all of our community members who have joined in this effort.”

“Mount Sinai’s persistent unwillingness to engage in transparent, good faith discussions with our community regarding this closure is unacceptable,” **said Assemblymember Grace Lee.** “Its responsibilities are not just to its shareholders, but to the more than 400,000 Lower Manhattan residents who depend on the services provided at Beth Israel. It is turning its

back on our community. I am proud to join elected officials, community members, and advocates to call on Mount Sinai, the Department of Health to join us at the table to find a solution that protects Lower Manhattan residents.”

“When Lower Manhattan lost St. Vincent’s Hospital in 2010, the New York State Department of Health assured residents that Beth Israel was in close proximity and their concerns about lack of access to care were unfounded. Yet, for the last several years, Mount Sinai has made it abundantly clear they are only focused on serving the downtown community’s ambulatory care needs and not running an acute care hospital,” **said Assemblymember Deborah Glick**. “The closing of its emergency department will put an extreme burden on Bellevue Hospital, thereby

exacerbating delays in treatment for thousands of patients. Mount Sinai’s suggestion that patients should rely on their Union Square urgent care center borders on insulting as it isn’t an adequate replacement for an emergency department. Mount Sinai has broken its promise to this community, and it is up to the State to ensure that residents of Lower Manhattan will have appropriate access to high-quality care at a community hospital.”

“Our community is not prepared for the closure of Mount Sinai Beth Israel,” **said Assemblymember Tony Simone**. “This closure will most harm people with disabilities and people with low incomes who are Medicaid-eligible. Yet another hospital closure is an unacceptable outcome and I look towards a partnership with the Department of Health and the Governor’s office to ensure full care is continued. We’ve also seen MSBI begin discontinuing services, which is a violation of their Cease and Desist order. DOH must enforce this Cease and Desist and MSBI must immediately restart and provide in full all services described in their license.”

"Residents of Manhattan and Brooklyn from diverse backgrounds have relied on Beth Israel for emergency and inpatient health care services for decades, ranging from complex surgical procedures to maternity and infant care to the treatment of cardiac and stroke patients," **said Senator Liz Krueger.** "We must ensure that high-quality healthcare is truly accessible to all New York City residents, regardless of income level, type or lack of insurance, and mobility. This includes access to emergency and inpatient health care services. After multiple hospital closures over the years, we cannot afford to lose another hospital in Lower Manhattan."

**Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal said:** "The proposed closure of Mount Sinai Beth Israel affects us all. For years, New Yorkers have relied on Mount Sinai Beth Israel for their healthcare needs. The planned closure, as well as the ongoing termination of services, has left residents fearful as uncertainty remains as to where they will be able to access the health care services they require. I join my elected colleagues in Manhattan in the call to ensure that lower Manhattan continues to have a high-quality hospital, with access to both emergency and inpatient services. As this process continues to unfold, it is imperative that the community stay engaged and that we guarantee that all New Yorkers Mount Sinai Beth Israel currently serves continue to receive high-quality healthcare."

"The potential closure of Mount Sinai Beth Israel is not about profit and loss, it's about life and death, and about ensuring our communities have the healthcare they deserve," said **Senator Kristen Gonzalez.** "Together with my fellow Manhattan electeds at every level of government, our constituents, and the 400,000 residents of Lower Manhattan who depend on this hospital for care, we are calling on Mount Sinai Beth Israel to stop the unauthorized closure of services at the hospital and urging the Governor's office and the Department of Health to ensure no service reductions or closures occur until a comprehensive review of the community's healthcare needs has been completed and publicly vetted. We must work together to protect healthcare access and continuity of care in this community."

“If allowed to close, the loss of Beth Israel Hospital will have devastating effects on our entire healthcare landscape, from further straining our over-burdened public hospital system to reducing badly needed access to care for local residents,” **said Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine**. “As this process continues to unfold, it’s imperative that the Department of Health consider the overall effect losing these key services, particularly emergency services, will have in Lower Manhattan. I sincerely hope that Mount Sinai, the State, and local stakeholders can come together to find a way to ensure that New Yorkers can continue to access care in their neighborhood.”

“Access to healthcare is a human right, and the looming closure of MSBI will make this access more difficult for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers”, **said Council Member Christopher Marte**. Low-income individuals and those with disabilities deserve the same health care as the wealthy in New York City. We will not give up on fighting for the most vulnerable New Yorkers and look to partner with the Department of Health and the Governor’s Office to maintain high-quality healthcare in Lower Manhattan. This is a matter of the utmost urgency as MSBI continues to cease services, turning away patients.”

“Despite our community’s collective urging of Mount Sinai to keep Beth Israel Hospital open because of the potentially devastating impacts this will have for access to healthcare in Lower Manhattan, Mount Sinai is marching forward with its plan to shutter the healthcare campus. Our community has seen services eliminated and moved across town over the years, and currently for residents below 14th Street, there is less than one hospital bed available per 1,000 people. With Beth Israel’s closure, 70,000 emergency visits will have to be absorbed by nearby facilities every year, resulting in lengthy waits for life-saving procedures or excessive travel for those with the most complex medical needs. Mount Sinai has an obligation to address these concerns through community planning and seriously consider retaining a presence downtown,” **said Council Member Carlina Rivera (D-02)**.

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