



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

Statement by Lower Manhattan Elected Officials on State Health Department's Conditional Approval of Mount Sinai Beth Israel Closure

BRIAN KAVANAGH July 26, 2024

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Rep. Jerry Nadler, Rep. Dan Goldman, Senator Kristen Gonzalez, Senator Brian Kavanagh, Senator Liz Krueger, Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal, Assemblymember Harvey Epstein, Assemblymember Deborah Glick, Assemblymember Grace Lee, Assemblymember Tony Simone, Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine, Council Member Erik Bottcher, Council Member Keith Powers, Council Member Carlina Rivera, and Council Member Chris Marte, all of whom represent parts of Lower Manhattan served by Mount Sinai Beth Israel Hospital, issued the following joint statement:

“As elected officials representing Lower Manhattan, we have fought to ensure that our communities continue to have full access to high-quality health care in response to Mount Sinai Health System’s application to close Beth Israel Hospital. Today, the State Department of Health (DOH) has issued a conditional approval of the closure, with several critical contingencies that Mount Sinai would have to meet before closing Beth Israel. While the conditions reflect efforts by DOH and Mount Sinai to respond to serious concerns we have raised on behalf of our constituents, the announcement today falls well short of providing the assurances our communities need and deserve that the closure will not impede access to essential healthcare. The lack of a clear timeframe for any closure also will continue to sow uncertainty in our communities.

“With regard to emergency care, it is helpful that any closure would be premised on other hospitals having the capacity to receive the full volume of ambulances and other emergency visits, and in particular that Mount Sinai would not be permitted to close Beth Israel until they reach a binding agreement with New York City Health and Hospitals (H+H) to provide adequate funding and other resources to enable Bellevue Hospital to expand its emergency department—to ensure high-quality treatment for the thousands of additional patients who would visit Bellevue each year. We will continue to advocate for patients at Bellevue and we urge H+H not to approve any agreement unless its terms ensure that all necessary resources are guaranteed by Mount Sinai and DOH. We also urge DOH to closely monitor treatment of stroke and cardiac patients following the closure of Beth Israel Hospital.

“We also believe that the new urgent care facility Mount Sinai would be required to establish permanently on the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary campus, open 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, accepting Medicaid, Medicare, and uninsured patients, and providing enhanced services beyond those typically available in an urgent care facility could mitigate some of the lost capacity of Beth Israel. We acknowledge and appreciate that DOH and Mount Sinai have

added this requirement and expanded its scope in response to our advocacy, but we are very concerned that the range of services at this facility are largely unspecified in the conditional approval of the closure and that 24/7 operations would only be guaranteed until a 3-month reassessment. We urge DOH to require that the new urgent care facility must offer a robust range of services, with sufficient staffing, specifically detailed in any final closure plan.

“Finally, it is critical that DOH and Mount Sinai follow through on the conditions of closure that require strong transfer agreements between Mount Sinai and nearby hospitals, including those that will ensure that patients with behavioral health needs can easily move from Bellevue and other hospitals to the Mount Sinai Behavioral Health Center on Rivington Street, a process which will be critical to keeping beds available as these hospitals see an increase in patients as a result of the closure.

“There is no substitute for the full-service general hospital that the community would lose with the closure of Beth Israel. We are very disappointed in today’s announcement, and remain committed to doing everything possible to ensure that the communities we represent have full access to high-quality health care. We urge Mount Sinai and DOH to proceed with utmost transparency and effective community engagement as this process continues.”

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