

Howard Fensterman Pens Long Island Press Op-Ed on Challenges Facing NUMC

FEATURED ATTORNEY



Howard Fensterman

Managing Partner

[Howard Fensterman](#), Managing Partner at Abrams Fensterman, LLP, wrote an Op-Ed article for the Long Island Press “OpEd: The Crisis At Nassau University Medical Center – Stop Pointing Fingers And Start Fixing The Problems”.

The article sheds light on the precarious situation facing Nassau University Medical Center, Nassau County’s pivotal hospital for trauma care and services to the economically disadvantaged and uninsured. Fensterman underscores the critical juncture at which the hospital finds itself, with a potential financial collapse looming by late April due to a staggering \$560 million loss over the past five years.

Fensterman called for a united front among all stakeholders to secure increased state funding and to undertake a transparent review of the hospital’s finances to identify potential savings, stating “NUMC and NuHealth, the public benefit corporation that runs the hospital, could run out of money by late April unless it rights its ship.”

Finally, he emphasizes the hospital’s vital role in the community, serving as a lifeline for the poor and uninsured on Long Island, and underscores the urgent need for action to safeguard the institution’s future.

Missed the original article? Click [here](#) to read the full op-ed published in the Long Island Press.

THE CRISIS AT NASSAU UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER - STOP POINTING FINGERS AND START FIXING THE PROBLEMS

Howard Fensterman is the Managing Partner and Co-Founder of Abrams Fensterman LLP, based in Lake Success



The crisis engulfing Nassau County's main safety net hospital providing trauma care and medical services to the poor and uninsured has devolved into finger pointing and partisan rancor at exactly the wrong time.

All stakeholders must get on the same page to save Nassau University Medical Center, the county's only public hospital. And they have to do it quickly. That will require increased state aid, as well as a transparent look at current expenditures and potential savings in order to augment the financial viability of the hospital.

The crisis is now, as state health regulators warn NUMC and NuHealth, the public benefit corporation that runs the hospital, could run out of money by late April unless it rights its ship. An independent auditor reported the hospital lost \$560 million over five years. The County of Nassau faces liability because they are a guarantor of the debt of the hospital.

Nassau officials, including County Executive Bruce Blakeman, ascribe blame to Albany for cutting subsidies - which Albany disputes - and officials in Albany have alleged that there is mismanagement at the hospital.

Nassau officials claim the state has shortchanged NUMC in recent years, while state officials say they have increased direct aid as well as covered insurance premiums which are in danger of lapsing. State Health Commissioner James McDonald has demanded greater transparency before the state pours more money into the system.

Each side lays out different numbers, including how much cash on hand the hospital has, whether they are counting state aid that covered insurance payments for the hospital staff, and whether the state cut aid for partisan reasons after Blakeman took office.

Newsday, in a recent editorial, called NUMC's finances "a complex house of

cards, and wrote that "everyone must stop the finger-pointing and start the hard work to resuscitate NUMC."

At stake is a public benefit corporation that is essential for Long Islanders who are poor, or without insurance, who have nowhere to go in a medical emergency, as well as the paychecks and retirement benefits of all of the nurses, doctors, and administrative staff who serve the hospital.

Time is short. The stakes are high. It is time for the state to step up and provide the hospital the funds it requires to service those on Long Island who most need the medical care it provides. Let's get to it.

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