

## **Healthcare Position**

Adopted by LWVNYS Board of Directors, March 20, 2021

### **HEALTHCARE (2021)**

#### **GOALS**

The League of Women Voters of New York State (LWVNYS) believes that everyone should have access to essential physical and behavioral healthcare. New York State has a proper role in the regulation of healthcare and must assure high quality care that is affordable and accessible to all.

Resources should be devoted to health promotion and disease prevention so that people can take active responsibility for their own health. People should have opportunities to participate effectively in decisions regarding their personal health and in healthcare policy decisions.

The League believes that New York State's primary role in healthcare is to assure that quality care is available to all New Yorkers. We believe that the state should provide planning and regulations to assure everyone, including the medically indigent, access to an essential level of quality physical and behavioral healthcare. Cost containment should be an important criterion in developing regulations. Such regulation, however, should not compromise the quality of care or its accessibility.

The League supports regulatory incentives to encourage the development of cost-effective alternative ways of delivering and paying for healthcare, appropriate to all areas of NYS, with coordination across regulatory bodies to avoid undue delays and contradictory, duplicative regulations. Delivery programs may take place in a variety of settings, including the home and online, and must provide quality care, meaning consistent with "standard of care" guidelines, by trained and licensed personnel, staffed adequately to ensure their own and patient safety.

Coordination of services is essential to assure that community needs are met. As public health crises increasingly reveal, NYS should protect the health of its most vulnerable populations, urban and rural, in order to protect the health of everyone. In addition, all programs should be evaluated regularly. Provider reimbursement should include incentives for efficiency and for disease prevention and health promotion activities. Public health, environmental health and research activities should be continued.

Decisions on medical procedures that would prolong life should be made jointly by patient, family, and physician. Patient decisions, including those made prior to need, should be respected.

#### **ESSENTIAL LEVEL OF QUALITY CARE**

The League supports uniform eligibility and coverage of essential healthcare services, both physical and behavioral, ideally including coverage of services such as vision, dental, hearing, and long-term care, through public financing. Access to optional insurance coverage for care not covered by public financing should be available. The League has a strong commitment to an emphasis on preventive care, health education, and appropriate use of primary care services.