

Resolution by the Village Independent Democrats Concerning the Drastic Downsizing of Mt. Sinai/Beth Israel Hospital

In the last decade lower Manhattan has witnessed a significant decrease in medical services, specifically hospital beds, specialty clinics and emergency centers attached to full service hospitals. This has occurred even while the resident population of lower Manhattan has increased. The Village Independent Democrats is concerned that the “transformation” of another hospital, Beth Israel, is being done without proper attention to the needs of the community.

The VID has the following major concerns which must be addressed.

1. The downsizing of Beth Israel hospital to a 70 bed medical/surgical center may be inadequate and will cause significant harm to health care services in Lower Manhattan.
2. Safety net funding will be inadequate to allow the new Beth Israel facility to continue serving the vast number of Medicare/Medicaid patients in the area.
3. Transfer for tertiary care (which will be necessary with the smaller facility and reduced services) may only be made available to Mt Sinai at 99th Street and Madison Ave rather than to a closer medical center.
4. Palliative and hospice care will be unavailable.
5. Clinics with established patient-doctor relations will be disrupted and endangered.

The Village Independent Democrats opposes the way Beth Israel is transforming its hospital and reducing the essential hospital and health services needed by the people of Lower Manhattan. The VID demands that:

1. Governor Cuomo guarantee that Beth Israel’s current transformational plan be enlarged to improve their hospital and health care services.
2. Governor Cuomo sign A7763/S5661A, the Enhanced Safety Net Legislation passed by the Assembly and Senate, which is needed to increase necessary Medicaid funding for hospitals that serve low income communities.
3. Mayor de Blasio join us in demanding that Governor Cuomo and the New York State Department of Health not let another vital hospital fail to meet the needs of Lower Manhattan.
4. An updated and comprehensive needs assessment report of the entire Beth Israel catchment area should be done promptly and made publicly available.

5. A detailed proposal for determining the need for and the method of expanding the new 70 bed facility at 14th Street and 2nd Ave. must be drawn up and made publicly available (although we favor that the size of the proposed facility be increased from the outset).
6. A plan to establish associated clinics in specialized areas that mirror the needs of the community must be drawn up, specifically addressing, but not limited to geriatrics, addiction services, and HIV.
7. A detailed plan for funding and income such that Beth Israel can continue its service of predominantly Medicare/Medicaid patients

The Village Independent Democrats will work with other political clubs, organizations, and task forces to make certain our elected representatives use their political power to bring about an excellent hospital and health care services for the people of lower Manhattan.

Achieving these goals will be a win-win situation. A vibrant facility in the midst of the lower Manhattan community can only strengthen the Mount Sinai Hospital System and serve to help train their medical students, nursing students and residents to become the compassionate professionals the medical field needs.