

**The Reporters:**

**Barbara Benson:** (718) 855-3304

**Gale Scott:** (212) 210-0746

*Crain's Health Pulse* is available Monday through Friday by 6 a.m.

**Reproduction, forwarding or reuse in any form is prohibited.**

For customer service, call (888) 909-9111.

---

## Today's News Friday, August 01, 2008

### **Keeping primary care on the radar**

The Manhattan-based Primary Care Coalition is pushing a five-point agenda for improving New York's primary care infrastructure. New York spends more on Medicaid than any other state but ranks 45th in Medicaid spending on primary care, the influential group points out.

While the Spitzer administration launched many primary care reforms, it's unclear whether these programs can survive the state's economic downturn.

The PCC wants higher reimbursement for primary care services. The state took a step in that direction in the fiscal 2008-09 budget by boosting primary care physician rates, creating a new fee-for-service payment system for clinics and outpatient departments, and paying for some components of prevention and care management. Now, PCC wants the state to fully phase in higher Medicaid primary care rates, have payments from all payers support prevention and care management, and align incentives to allow providers to share in the savings achieved by those measures.

Its agenda also includes preserving and expanding primary care infrastructure and workforce capacity. That includes fully funding the future phase-in of the Doctors Across New York loan-forgiveness program. The group is also pushing the use of health information technology among primary care providers.

The PCC's agenda is online at <http://www.nyprimarycarehome.org>.