

**New York Westchester Square Medical Center**  
**Must Continue to Serve the Community**

New York Westchester Square Medical Center and its administration are exploring ways to ensure that some form of an acute care facility remains open at its current site, including conducting ongoing discussions with the New York State Health Department, elected officials, and other parties. Its administrators and physicians will fight to keep the hospital open so that area residents retain access to essential medical services. Closing Westchester Square would negatively impact the communities in the Bronx, and result in a decrease in the quality of healthcare available to area residents.

Westchester Square fulfills a critical need for quality community healthcare. In hospital profiles maintained by The New York State Department of Health to help consumers choose the best hospitals, it ranked number one in the Bronx for the treatment of overall heart failure, and second in both overall pneumonia care and overall heart attack care. These rankings were based on data for the period of April 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006. For its ongoing commitment to quality care, Westchester Square has also met the rigorous standards of the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO).

Founded in 1929, Westchester Square is a 205-bed, acute care hospital that serves the Bronx and lower Westchester. The hospital, which is affiliated with the New York-Presbyterian Healthcare System, provides comprehensive, high quality in-patient care, diagnostic testing, and treatment services in a warm, community-based environment. Its affiliation with the New York-Presbyterian Healthcare System enables hospital patients to take advantage of the resources of one of the largest and most respected healthcare organizations in the country.

Rejecting the recommendation of its own Regional Advisory Committee for New York City that Westchester Square remain open, the New York State Commission on Health Care Facilities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (the Berger Commission) recommended closing the hospital.

-more-

Westchester Square is the epitome of a community hospital. The hospital serves a cross-section of neighborhood residents indicative of the area's diversity, with an average daily patient census of 40% White, 30% Hispanic, 28% Black, and 2% Other. More than half of the hospital's patients are women. Patients over the age of 65 comprise approximately 65% of the hospital's population at any given time.

Westchester Square provides high-quality and comprehensive medical services in a range of disciplines, including but not limited to cardiology; family medicine; internal medicine; pulmonary disease management; gastroenterology; endocrinology; geriatrics; laparoscopic, orthopedic, general and ambulatory surgery; allergy treatment; and physical therapy. Patients who are treated at Westchester Square also have access to the New York-Presbyterian Healthcare System for any additional treatment. All hospital services meet or exceed current standards of practice. Westchester Square's inpatient facility was designed to offer the best in modern medical and nursing care in a friendly and attractive environment.

Westchester Square operates under an attending physician model in which local physicians in private practice admit and treat their patients in the hospital. This fosters ongoing relationships between patients, their physicians, and hospital staff to ensure the highest level of patient care. Similarly, patients prefer to receive their care at Westchester Square because they receive personal attention in a caring, community environment.

The closure of Westchester Square would result in increased volume at other healthcare facilities in the Bronx, which are already overburdened with long wait times in emergency rooms. The hospital's closure would also force patients to travel further for treatment they would prefer to receive closer to home at Westchester Square, particularly a burden for the many elderly patients who use the hospital.

In conclusion, the East Bronx community recognizes the critical role Westchester Square fills in addressing local health care needs. The hospital's physicians, nurses and other staff members remain committed to keeping the hospital open.