



Response to the Open Letter from Maimonides Board of Trustees

Dear Members of the Board of Trustees:

On August 1, 2022, you published an open letter to the community. While we appreciate that the Board openly responded to our campaign, we believe much of what was written was both misleading and a gross mischaracterization of our efforts and position.

The Board wrote: The data tells us clearly that we serve a population that is more at risk than average and provide medical care that is far better than average.

The assertion that Maimonides provides “far better than average” care is entirely inconsistent with numerous independent rankings of the Hospital’s performance.

For example, US News Patient Experience Scores from discharged inpatients rate their satisfaction with Maimonides overall at 1 out of 5 stars.¹ The following metrics were also rated at 1 out of 5 stars by patients:

- willingness to recommend the hospital to others;

¹ <https://health.usnews.com/best-hospitals/area/ny/maimonides-medical-center-6210747>

- satisfaction with nurses' communications;
- satisfaction with the quality of discharge information;
- satisfaction with involvement in their recoveries;
- satisfaction with staff responsiveness;
- satisfaction with hospital room cleanliness; and
- satisfaction with noise volume.

Medicare.gov's patient survey rating from a random sample of recently discharged patients from Maimonides has Maimonides at 1 out of 5 stars.

Data analyzed by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services place Maimonides below the 30th percentile of hospitals for mortality, safety of care, readmission, patient experience and timely and effective care.²

The New York State Department of Health's patient satisfaction composite rating has Maimonides ranked the lowest in New York State -- 157 out of all 157 hospitals surveyed by the Department.³

Maimonides was also ranked by the New York State Department of Health as a "Poor Performer" (the lowest category) for:

- patient safety for selected procedures;
- admittance to departure time for admitted emergency room patients;
- hospital-acquired blood stream infections;
- percent of patients highly satisfied;
- doctors always communicated well;
- staff always explained about medicines;
- patient's room always kept quiet at night;
- patient given information about recovery at home; and
- patient would definitely recommend this hospital to friends and family.⁴

² <https://www.medicare.gov/care-compare/details/hospital/330194?id=513a7e5a-a7a3-44ac-a737-79644b6eff4c&city=New%20York&state=NY&zipcode=>

³ https://profiles.health.ny.gov/measures/all_state/17161

⁴ https://profiles.health.ny.gov/measures/all_state/10058

These are not our opinions. These are facts. You literally oversee the worst-ranked hospital in New York for patient satisfaction. The unmistakable conclusion from these objective rankings is clear: Maimonides is seriously broken, and needs serious remediation and reform. That's why we formed Save Maimonides.

The Board wrote: The pandemic has created enormous challenges for our society. Hospitals, in particular, have been exceptionally challenged. Maimonides is hardly alone in coping with nationwide staffing shortages, employee burnout, skyrocketing supply costs, and volatile demand for its services.

This statement ignores the publicly available rankings noted above. We do not dispute that the COVID pandemic was and continues to present challenges to hospitals and healthcare workers. Yet that alone does not refute that Maimonides was ranked the lowest in New York State for patient satisfaction, and a "Poor Performer" in several other metrics. This is not an indictment of the Hospital's brave and selfless doctors, nurses and staff. We salute them. However, the Hospital's many failures are a reflection on the Hospital management's poor performance and the lack of meaningful and effective oversight by you - the Board of Directors. Not the staff.

The Board wrote: Early in the pandemic the Board made a decision that has guided it ever since: do what it takes and commit the necessary resources to meet the needs of our communities during this crisis.

As you know, serving on the board of any non-for-profit hospital such as Maimonides Medical Center comes with an important financial commitment – to contribute one's own funds and/or raise funds from others. This is important not only for its own sake – to add significantly to the coffers of a not-for-profit institution – but also as an important sign of the Board's personal commitment to the organization. Based on our review of publicly available data it appears that many board members don't even make a minimum contribution to the hospital. That's shocking. We ask that the Board make public the amounts contributed and raised by all of its members for the last five years.

The Board wrote: We were surprised, however, when one prospective donor proposed to take control of our board as a condition of philanthropic support. We

respectfully declined this proposal, which we believed was inconsistent with our fiduciary duties and our mission, and not in the best interests of the organization or the diverse communities we serve.

We reiterate that we have not received a single dollar from this philanthropist. However, unlike you, we actually decided to do a deep dive and find out what actually happened here. Based on our research it appears that this is also a complete mischaracterization of the philanthropic proposal. The proposal was to require each Board member to contribute or fundraise at least \$2,000,000 over a two-year period - representing a \$64,000,000 capital infusion -- which would have enabled the Hospital to hire countless nurses and other critical staff and to carry out much-needed improvements to its facilities – or otherwise replace Board members with new members who would be willing to make such commitments. Evidently, the Board Chair and management ignored their fiduciary duties and failed to even share these facts with the full Board to give a fully-informed and serious consideration to this approach for a hospital that has consistently been losing money and is in desperate need of discretionary funds.

The Board wrote: The last thing our communities or our workforce can afford right now is a manufactured crisis that threatens to weaken an institution that hundreds of thousands of Brooklynites rely on to access critical services.

There is nothing manufactured about this crisis. We note the following quotes from Maimonides' own constituents – patients and staff, which are just a small sample of the truly overwhelming outpouring of damning criticisms of the Hospital - including everything from unsanitary conditions, patient deaths and serious injuries, to abject neglect of patients in need of care:

1. “People will do everything to avoid Maimonides.”⁵

⁵ <https://nypost.com/2022/07/11/nyc-politicians-residents-rip-alleged-unacceptable-quality-of-care-at-maimonides-medical-center/>

2. “We do not have enough nurses to do the job — a job that has become extremely difficult, even dangerous at times. We work under a threat to patient safety.”⁶
3. “I have PTSD from working at MMC.”⁷
4. “We were tortured as staff, as soon as I resigned I felt so much happier and the new hospital I am with is so much better.”⁸
5. “Executive management and floor management do not care for the staff at all. We are merely numbers to them, expected to work like robots or machines.”⁹

The Board wrote: Medicaid has paid hospitals just 61 cents for every dollar of care provided. Put simply, we were paid far less for providing the same services than hospitals serving more affluent communities. The clinical outcomes we achieve are all the more remarkable in this context.

The financial position of the Hospital’s patients is no justification for Maimonides ranking the lowest in New York State in patient satisfaction and a Poor Performer in several other metrics. The reality is that the failures at the Hospital result in non-Medicaid patients going to other area hospitals if they can. If the current management team and Board are unable to achieve better results for the population that is served by Maimonides, it is clear that change is needed.

Management and Board Responsibilities

We remind Hospital management and the Board that as fiduciaries who must answer to the population served by the Hospital, the failures at the Hospital rest squarely on **YOUR** shoulders. We look forward to engaging with you, in order to bring about much-needed change in the oversight and operation of the Maimonides Medical Center.

Sincerely,

The Save Maimonides Committee

⁶ <https://www.nysna.org/press/2022/media-advisory-today-february-24-patient-care-crisis-maimonides-medical-center-not-enough#.Yt7iXHbMJjE>

⁷ <https://www.mmcunites.org/>

⁸ <https://savemaimo.com/general/share/>

⁹ <https://savemaimo.com/general/share/>