

2022 Power Players in Health Care



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In the postpandemic world, New York’s health care providers, insurers, and policymakers are reimagining everything from delivery of care to disease prevention, from holistic wellness to home-based care, from mental health and substance use interventions to the modernization and integration of patient information. Cost, accessibility, and equity remain central to conversations about the future of health care, with some legislators and providers arguing that a single-payer system is urgently needed. Others claim that the solution lies in the expansion of community-based care, or a greater emphasis on preventive measures such as lifestyle and nutrition. One thing is certain, however. These conversations are being driven in large part by our 2022 Power Players in Health Care — extraordinary individuals with a deep and enduring commitment to improving health outcomes for all New Yorkers.

Dan Savitt-President and CEO, VNS Health

As president and CEO of VNS Health, Dan Savitt leads one of the largest not-for-profit home- and community-based health care organizations in the nation. VNS Health programs and health plans meet the diverse health care needs of the more than 43,000 New York residents the organization touches on any given day. For nearly 130 years, VNS Health has been embedded in the community, working to ensure that the most vulnerable have access to the care and services they need.

Why did you decide to pursue a career in health care?

Helping to make health care simple to understand, easy to access, and meaningful in outcomes has been a vision for me from the start. As VNS Health's CEO, every day brings opportunities to improve health care access and quality for vulnerable New Yorkers. Working with our talented clinicians and supporting teams is not only rewarding — it's a chance to support the critical role of home- and community-based services in today's changing health care landscape.

What is the biggest challenge currently facing New York's health care system?

Many in our rapidly aging population struggle to get the care that they need. Home-based long-term personal care, skilled home health services, and critical behavioral health interventions help bridge that gap and keep seniors safe, healthy, and out of hospitals and nursing homes. A tremendous workforce shortage however, coupled with inadequate payment mechanisms, undermines these programs and puts seniors at risk. We are working with our federal, state, and local partners to solve this crisis.

How can New York State ensure access to affordable health care?

To ensure that vulnerable seniors and communities of color have access to care, NYS needs to act now on payment and policy reform to solve the workforce crisis. We need Medicaid incentives for innovative care models — especially behavioral health, and, by integrating Medicaid and Medicare services, we can improve health outcomes, while controlling health care costs. NYS should also work with CMS to share Medicare savings that come from Medicaid long-term care investment.

What does the future of health care look like?

The future of health care is in the home. With hospital and nursing home capacity highly constrained, more people with more complex health care challenges will be having those needs addressed at home instead of in an institutional setting. This will require more than payment policy changes and value-based incentives. We need more robust care models that leverage both technology and in-home direct care, coupled with information sharing and close partnerships across providers and payers.

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