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**LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL
JOINS METROPLUSHEALTH CEO AND NEW YORKERS AT VIRTUAL TOWN HALL TO
STAND UP AGAINST ANTI-ASIAN HATE**

(New York, NY – May 26, 2021) – MetroPlusHealth, the five-star rated health plan of choice for over 600,000 New Yorkers, hosted a virtual town hall earlier this month addressing discrimination, bias, and hate against Asian Americans and other New Yorkers. The virtual event was moderated by WABC journalist Cefaan Kim and featured panelists Dr. Talya Schwartz, President & CEO, MetroPlusHealth; Kathy Hochul, NYS Lieutenant Governor; Carmelyn Malalis, Chair & Commissioner, NYC Commission on Human Rights; Dr. Eric Wei, Senior Vice President, NYC Health+Hospitals and Christina Seid, AAPI Influencer/Owner, Chinatown Ice Cream Factory.

“We need to start changing how we educate our kids at a younger age about the contributions of various ethnic groups,” said **Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul**. “People need to be upstanders not bystanders. We have a moral responsibility to these fellow citizens and neighbors. We’re New Yorkers. We’re tough and we can’t let these hurtful acts go unnoticed or unpunished,” she added.

“At MetroPlusHealth, we are a community and a family. When one of us is hurting, all of us are hurting. Standing together as a community against bias and hate is the surest way to help defeat both,” said **Dr. Talya Schwartz**.

The virtual town hall, viewed by more than 10,000 people so far, can be seen on the MetroPlusHealth YouTube channel or here: <https://fb.watch/5IQiQW7htn/>

Since the start of the pandemic, there has been a significant, troubling increase in anti-Asian hate crimes and bias incidents. In 2019 there was one reported incident; in 2020, thirty. Sixteen of the thirty were violent crimes. Between February and December of 2019, 30 bias incidents of anti-Asian discrimination and harassment were reported to the NYC Commission on Human Rights. During the same 11-month period in 2020, that number increased to 205. It is crucial to note that hate crimes and bias incidents have been found to be vastly under-reported so these numbers only reflect reported incidents.

To report an incident of discrimination, you can contact the NYC Commission of Human Rights by calling them directly at 212-416-0197, or visiting them at www.nyc.gov/humanrights.

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About MetroPlusHealth

Since 1985, MetroPlus Health Plan has provided access to affordable, quality health care to residents across New York City. A wholly-owned subsidiary of NYC Health + Hospitals, the nation's largest public health system, MetroPlusHealth is the plan of choice for over 600,000 New Yorkers and has a five-star rating based on the State's 2020 Consumer's Guide to Medicaid and Child Health Plus Managed Care Plans in New York City. The health plan's robust network of primary care doctors and specialists includes many independent community providers. Culturally sensitive, and fluent in more than 40 languages, MetroPlusHealth's staff is as diverse as the great city it serves. For more information about MetroPlusHealth plans, benefits, and services, visit www.metroplus.org or join the conversation at facebook.com/MetroPlusHealth/ and twitter.com/@metroplushealth.