Nurse practitioners urge workers' comp, preceptor bills

About 130 nurse practitioners and students will descend upon Albany Tuesday morning to call for the passage of budget provisions they say will reduce overall health costs. That includes a piece of workers' compensation legislation included in Gov. Andrew Cuomo's budget and the addition of a clinical preceptorship tax credit, according to the Nurse Practitioner Association New York State.

"The two issues that we'll be tackling [today] really do go to New Yorkers having access to quality health care," said Stephen Ferrara, associate dean of clinical affairs at Columbia University School of Nursing and executive director of the association.

The first provision would allow nurse practitioners to participate as providers in the workers' compensation system. "This would expand the network of authorized workers' compensation providers to get people back to work sooner," Ferrara said.

The second would incentivize community providers as preceptors, with tax credits of up to $3,000 for taking on students in clinical practice for mentoring and training, he said.

Four states—Georgia, Maryland, Colorado and Hawaii—have passed similar preceptorship legislation in the past few years, Ferrara said.

—J.H.