



## **CCH FY2025 Proposed Budget Introduction**

**July 26, 2024**

**Remarks as prepared**

**Dr. Erik Mikaitis**

We are pleased to present you with Cook County Health's proposed Fiscal Year 2025 budget. It's important to know that this is a balanced budget. It holds us accountable for the ongoing good fiscal management we have had in recent years, challenges us to grow in key areas of opportunity, and most importantly, strengthens our ability to carry out our mission.

I am proud to say that our government-sponsored health system is increasingly operating more and more like our private non-profit peers: efficient, disciplined, and strategic. We are doing this while keeping our commitment to care for all regardless of ability to pay as our true north.

I just want to take moment to reflect on the progress that the health system has achieved just in the last few years. This includes, increasing Stroger's Leapfrog Quality Score from an F in 2020 to a B in 2023, as well as its CMS star ratings from a 1 star in 2020 to 3 stars in 2023, and a sustained increase in our patient satisfaction scores in our ambulatory clinics. As well as creating and building out the Office of Behavioral Health and Office of Life Sciences. Importantly, these improvements did not come at the detriment of our fiscal health. CCH operated with a deficit in 2019 but has ended every subsequent year with a positive variance.

With this budget, we are continuing the significant progress on the path that system leaders, both past and present, have been charting over the past few years.

Key drivers in this budget include growth in key clinical areas including our new health center in Bronzeville, stabilization of our CountyCare membership post-redetermination, the provision of comprehensive services to new arrival patients, continuing progress in coding and reimbursements, as well as implementation and sustainability of ARPA-funded programs.

That's not to say the next year will be without its challenges. Like every other health system, we are faced with increasing costs for labor and supplies, the need to make necessary upgrades to our IT and facility infrastructure, and the shortage of health care professionals locally and nationally continues to frustrate our recruitment efforts.

Despite these headwinds, we are confident that Cook County Health is in a promising position and poised for continued success in 2025.

Before I turn it over to Pam, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to this Board, to President Preckwinkle and the County Board for your ongoing leadership and support. I would also like to thank Pam Cassara, Scott Spencer, Joe Franzwa, and the entire finance department for their efforts to develop this budget. And I also want to thank our Cook County Health team for their exceptional contributions to the health system on behalf of the patients, members and residents we serve.