

Progress Notes

December 2014



Published monthly by the **Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State LLC** . . . a consortium of 52 not-for-profit and public hospitals advocating for better health care policy for all those living and working in the nine counties north and east of New York City.

Spending Bill Averts Shutdown, Includes Money for Ebola Readiness/Response

President Obama is expected to sign the \$1.1 trillion spending package finally approved by Congress on December 13, 2014, just before the Continuing Resolution to keep the government operating was due to run out. The package mostly funds the government through September 30, 2015, including \$5.4 billion in funding for Ebola efforts domestically and internationally. Funding for the Department of Homeland Security would only extend through February 2015. Homeland's shortened extension is in response to legislators who are unhappy with President Obama's executive order about immigration and who want to keep pressure on the president, as we head into the next Congress.



Emergency Ebola Funding: Of the \$5.4 billion in emergency funding, \$733 million goes to the Department of Health and Human Services to prevent, prepare, and respond to Ebola. This money is available until September 2019. It is from this pot of money that

hospitals will seek funding for costs related to renovation and/or construction of Ebola treatment spaces, as well as expenses for staff training, equipment and supply needs, and the monthly competency attestations and emergency drills

that the New York State Department of Health mandated in October. New York's hospital industry estimates the designated Ebola centers alone have already spent between \$50 million and \$75 million. The Suburban Hospital Alliance will continue to work with the Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS) to ensure New York hospitals receive their fair share of this Ebola money. During the next 30 days, details about how hospitals can apply for Ebola funds will emerge. –

Janine Logan, jlogan@nshc.org; jlogan@normet.org.

<i>Inside this Issue . . .</i>	
<i>Regional Policy Forum</i>	2
<i>Medicaid Waiver Update</i>	3
<i>PHIP Awards</i>	3
<i>Region News</i>	5

DOH Awards Funds for Population Health Activities; Contractors Named in 10 Regions

The New York State Department of Health awarded a total of \$26.5 million to support population health efforts. The Population Health Improvement Program (PHIP) award for Long Island was granted to the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council (NSHC) and to Taconic Health Information Network and Community, Inc. (THINC) in the Hudson Valley. These two regions are served by the Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State, of which NSHC is a member. Both organizations will receive awards of \$2.4 million each, payable over two years.

The PHIP contractors are charged with advancing the state's Triple Aim (better health care, better access, and lower health care costs) in support of the state's two health improvement programs, the Prevention Agenda and the State Health Innovation Plan (SHIP). The Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council coordinates the Long Island Health Collaborative (LIHC), which formed in February 2013. LIHC is a diverse group of healthcare providers, community-based social and human



services organizations, academic institutions, the two county health departments on Long Island, behavioral health providers, health plans and unions, and patient advocacy organizations, among others. LIHC's work focuses on chronic disease prevention and treatment, with an emphasis on reducing obesity in adults and children. It will

also address the need for better coordinated mental health/substance abuse treatment and prevention services. This award provides the collaborative with the resources it needs to bring the group's work to the next level. – Janine Logan,

jlogan@nshc.org; jlogan@normet.org.

Hospital Senior Staff Discuss Concerns at Regional Policy Forum

Senior staff members from the Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS) traveled the state this past fall conducting regional policy forums for members. State and federal legislative and regulatory issues affecting hospitals now and into 2015 were the focus of these up close and personal member meetings. The HANYS strategic team made its last stop for 2014 on December 1st at the Doubletree Hilton in Tarrytown, NY where members from the Northern Metropolitan Hospital Association gathered for the briefing.

Securing a share of the recently-passed federal Ebola funding measure in Washington, DC, questions surrounding DSRIP and anti-trust regulations, and what piece of the projected \$6 billion state budget surplus hospitals may realize are some of the core issues facing hospitals. Other trends include calls for more price transparency, more quality and efficiency measurement, and even greater collaboration among providers.



HANYS President Dennis Whalen talks with Susan Fox, President, White Plains Hospital at the conclusion of the policy forum.

“There is a new ecosystem driving every part of the changing marketplace,” said Jeff Gold, Senior Vice President, Insurance and Managed Care/Special Council for HANYS. “There are opportunities for hospitals to look at care around the way consumers shop. It’s about price and transparency.” – Janine Logan, jlogan@nshc.org or jlogan@normet.org.

Medicaid Waiver Update . . .

There are just a few days left until the deadline for DSRIP Project Plan applications arrives December 22, 2014. PDFs of the applications will be posted on the state’s website for viewing and public comment on January 13, 2015. That comment period ends February 12, 2015. DSRIP Project Plan awards are expected in early March.

In related DSRIP news, the state released the **Capital Restructuring Finance Program (CRFP)** request for applications. The applications were originally due the same time as the DSRIP applications, but the state now extended the Capital Restructuring Finance Program deadline to February 20, 2015. The CRFP is jointly administered by the DOH and the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York. It will make available \$1.2 billion over the next six years for capital projects that aim to enhance quality, financial viability, and efficiency of the healthcare delivery system in New York State. CRFP funding will be made available to DSRIP and non-DSRIP applicants.

The DSRIP [dashboard](#) on the state’s website includes Medicaid data, which can assist applicants with their project plan applications, community needs assessments, prioritizing clinical projects, and understanding network utilization patterns.

HANYS’ [Medicaid Waiver website](#) is also another very useful resource.

Community Service Plan Updates Due

The annual progress report that captures work hospitals have completed regarding the Prevention Agenda priorities noted in their 2013 full Community Service Plan (CSP) submission is due to the state December 30, 2014. The update is in the form of an online survey. The survey asks hospitals to provide answers to brief, and in most cases, multiple choice

Tough Flu Season Ahead, But Healthcare Workers/Hospitals Ready

Influenza was declared prevalent throughout New York State by Acting Health Commission Dr. Howard Zucker on December 11, 2014, and the season may very well be a tough one for patients and providers. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 52 percent of this year’s flu strain (H3N2) “drifted” or changed from the 2014 – 2015

questions about the progress that has been made since the submission of the hospital’s 2013 Plan on two Prevention Agenda priorities and focus areas and interventions selected for implementation. Go to the state’s [prevention agenda page](#) on its website for more resources and helpful information.

strain. This may lead to surges in emergency room visits.

With the official declaration of flu season, the vaccine/flu mask regulations are also now in effect for healthcare workers. The regulations, originally released in 2013, were modified slightly this year. Under the original regulation, hospital staff was responsible for collecting and storing documentation on each employee’s vaccination status and for monitoring and enforcing mask use by unvaccinated employees. Hospitals will now be able to accept attestations in lieu

of official documentation of vaccination for students and some employees or vendors. Clarification was also provided in the revised regulations regarding where masks are required to be worn. The previous language mandated that masks be worn in areas where patients MAY be present. New language indicates that

employees must wear masks in areas where patients are TYPICALLY present. Under the revised regulations, some employees will be exempt from wearing masks based on the services they provide. To review all the changes to the regulatory language, [click here](#).

News Briefs

NYS Partnership for Patients (PFP) Initiative . . . ended December 8, 2014, but not after posting remarkable improvements in patient safety. For the past three years, the NYSPFP was a joint project between HANYS and the Greater New York Hospital Association (GNYHA) and almost every hospital member of the Suburban Hospital Alliance participated. HANYS and GNYHA served as a Hospital Engagement Network (HEN) under the CMS' Partnership for Patients program, a national initiative aimed at reducing preventable hospital-acquired conditions and readmissions. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reports that due to the patient safety efforts made by hospitals nationwide, 1.3 million fewer patient harms have occurred from 2010 to 2013. This represents a 17 percent decline in hospital-acquired conditions nationwide. In addition, about 50,000 hospital patients' lives were saved, and approximately \$12 billion in healthcare costs were saved. Hospitals made significant improvements across the board in such areas as elective deliveries, readmissions, and infections. It is estimated that there were 30,000 fewer patient injuries and complications across New York State as a result of hospitals' successes.

Compliance Certifications Due . . . by year's end. These forms must be filed with the Office of the Medicaid Inspector General (OMIG) by the end of December. For most members, two forms must be filed. The first, required by New York State, is a certification that the provider has an effective compliance program. The second certification is required by the federal Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. It applies to all providers receiving more than \$5 million in federal revenue.

Who Are the Hospital Heroes . . . is a new online initiative sponsored by the Coalition to Protect America's Health Care and the American Hospital Association. The program showcases hospital caregivers and many others, from administrative staff and nurses, to physicians and other allied health professionals, maintenance and security, who go above and beyond in their work to help patients in their communities. Visit the [Hospital Heroes website](#) to view featured heroes and to nominate a hospital hero.

Hospitals Adhere to the Triple Aim . . . and varied stories about how New York's hospitals are doing so are highlighted on the HANYS website through its "NYS Triple Aim" campaign. The campaign captures the widespread efforts of hospitals that are pursuing the Triple Aim approach of improving population health, enhancing the quality of patient care, and reducing the cost of healthcare. New York's hospitals are actively engaged in implementing new and innovative approaches to healthcare delivery despite fiscal constraints. Go to www.HANYS.org/tripleaim. Feel free to re-tweet and post the outstanding work performed by hospitals. To submit a story for the campaign, contact Michael Pauley at mpauley@hanys.org.

Educational Discount . . . available to employees of Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State, LLC, hospital members. Mercy College and the Suburban Hospital Alliance entered into a partnership that will allow employees of member hospitals a 15 percent discount on all undergraduate and graduate classes at Mercy College in Dobbs Ferry, NY. The Suburban Hospital Alliance includes all member hospitals of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council and the Northern Metropolitan Hospital Association. For more information contact Mercy College at: 1-877-MERCY-GO.



SPOTLIGHT ON: *Quality*

By Kate Warner, Director of Quality and Education

Federal Quality Reporting Measures under Review

On December 1, 2014, the National Quality Forum's (NQF) Measures Application Partnership (MAP) released a list of more than 200 measures under consideration by the Department of Health and Human Services for inclusion in the over 20 federal quality reporting programs. Not all of the measures on the list are entirely "new." Some are existing measures, for which revisions are being considered, or measures that may exist under one program and are now being considered for inclusion in another.

Of the measures under review, 29 could affect the hospital inpatient quality reporting program (IQR), 12 could affect hospital value based purchasing, 16 could affect outpatient quality reporting, and 4 could affect reporting for electronic health record incentive programs for eligible hospitals. Several trends emerge from the list of measures under consideration for the IQR program. For more detailed information, contact Kate Warner, director of quality and education, at kwarn@seagatealliance.com.

News from the Long Island Region . . .

A Report on Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council member hospital achievements and notable activities



Excellence in Stroke Care . . . was awarded to **John T. Mather Memorial Hospital**. It recently received the Get with the Guidelines@Stroke Gold-Plus Quality Achievement Award for implementing specific quality improvement measures outlined by the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association for the treatment of stroke patients. The hospital also received the association's Target: Stroke Honor Roll for meeting stroke quality measures that reduce the time between hospital arrival and treatment with the clot-buster tPA.

If you have news to share about your hospital's achievements, please send to Janine Logan at jlogan@nshc.org.

News from the Hudson Valley Region. . .

A Report on the Northern Metropolitan Hospital Association member hospital achievements and notable activities



Achievement in Clinical and Communication Efforts . . . goes to **Health Alliance of the Hudson Valley**. The system recently received the Get with the Guidelines® Stroke Silver Quality Achievement Award for implementing specific quality-improvement measures outlined by the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association for the treatment of stroke patients. HealthAlliance also won an “Award of Distinction” in the 2014 Communicator Awards hosted by the Academy of Interactive and Visual Arts for their newsletter, *HealthAlliance and You*.

Accreditation in Radiation Oncology . . . was obtained by the Dyson Center for Cancer Care at **Vassar Brothers Medical Center**. The hospital received a three-year term of accreditation in radiation oncology as the result of a recent review by the American College of Radiology.

Top Performer Status . . . goes to **Orange Regional Medical Center**. It was recognized as a 2013 Top Performer on Key Quality Measures® by The Joint Commission. Orange Regional attained sustained excellence in accountability measure performance for heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, and surgical care, and it is one of 1,224 hospitals in the United States to achieve the 2013 Top Performer distinction.

State Award for Mother/Newborn Care . . . was earned by **Catskill Regional Medical Center**. The Quality Improvement Award – part of the state health department’s Perinatal Quality Collaborative Obstetrical Improvement Project – recognized the hospital’s hard work and dedication of the staff that reduced scheduled newborn deliveries without medical indication between 36 and 39 weeks gestation. Catskill reported zero scheduled deliveries without medical indication during 2013.

If you have news to share about your hospital’s achievements, please send to Janine Logan at jlogan@normet.org.

NSHC Events/Meetings Report. . .

Communications Committee: Members of this committee and the Education and Public Outreach Subgroup of the Long Island Health Collaborative (LIHC) met on November 24, 2014. Plans are underway to roll out the LIHC’s Rx for Walking program. The group expects to debut the program in the spring of 2015 and will reach out to primary care physicians, pediatricians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners and other providers to enlist their support and involvement in this population health-based activity.

Corporate Compliance: At its November 18, 2014 meeting, the Compliance Committee focused on the reappearance of Medicare RAC audits and the CMS appeals settlement offer, among other audit topics. Staff reported on the HHS inspector general’s 2015 work plan and proposed changes to the federal anti-kickback statute and civil monetary penalties.

Finance Committee: At November’s meeting, Ms. Darwell forecasted the health care issues likely to be taken up in Albany and Washington next year, explained the proposed implementation of the Veterans’ Choice benefit, and discussed advocacy efforts to secure reimbursement for Ebola-related expenses.

Human Resources Committee: The committee received a guest presentation from Daniel Murphy, attorney for the League of Voluntary Hospitals, explaining the terms of the recent extension to the League/1199 contract. Other topics of discussion included policies for personnel returning from medical missions or personal travel to Ebola-affected regions of West Africa and the safe patient handling law for which the Department of Health is beginning implementation.

Quality Committee: The Quality Committee received presentations on the end of the Partnership for Patients program and Medicare Hospital Compare’s new rating system for consumers at its November 19, 2014 meeting. Kate Warner briefed members on quality reporting changes in the Medicare outpatient rule and summarized a recent call with the Department of Health on NYPORTS reporting.

NSHC January Events/Meetings

- Jan. 8 NSHC Board Meeting, 8 a.m.
- Jan. 13 Nurse Managers Meeting, 12:30 p.m.
- Jan. 14 Finance Committee Meeting, 8 a.m.
- Jan. 15 Long Island Health Collaborative, 10 a.m.
NSHC Communications Committee with the
Education/Public Outreach Subgroup, 11:30 a.m.
- Jan. 21 Nurse Executive Meeting, 8:30 a.m.

All meetings take place at NSHC offices in Hauppauge unless otherwise noted. Call 631-963-4153.

Happy Holidays and a Prosperous New Year to all our members from the staff at the Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State, your leading advocate for health policy and regulation.

NSHC Member Hospitals

Brookhaven Memorial Hospital Medical Center
Catholic Health Services of Long Island

- Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center
- Mercy Medical Center
- St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center
- St. Charles Hospital
- St. Francis Hospital
- St. Joseph Hospital

Eastern Long Island Hospital
John T. Mather Memorial Hospital
Nassau University Medical Center
North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System

- Franklin Hospital
- Glen Cove Hospital
- Huntington Hospital
- North Shore University Hospital
- Plainview Hospital
- Southside Hospital
- Syosset Hospital

Peconic Bay Medical Center
Southampton Hospital
Stony Brook University Hospital
Veterans Affairs Medical Center – Northport
South Nassau Communities Hospital
Winthrop-University Hospital

NorMet Member Hospitals

Blythedale Children’s Hospital
Bon Secours Community Hospital
Burke Rehabilitation Hospital
Catskill Regional Medical Center
Ellenville Regional Hospital
Good Samaritan Hospital
HealthAlliance Hospital Broadway Campus
HealthAlliance Hospital Mary’s Avenue Campus
Helen Hayes Hospital
Hudson Valley Hospital Center
Keller Army Community Hospital
Lawrence Hospital Center
MidHudson Regional Hospital
Of Westchester Medical Center
Montefiore Mt. Vernon Hospital
Montefiore New Rochelle Hospital
The New York Presbyterian Hospital, Westchester Division
Northern Dutchess Hospital
Northern Westchester Hospital
Orange Regional Medical Center
Phelps Memorial Hospital Center
Putnam Hospital Center
St. Anthony Community Hospital
St. Joseph’s Medical Center
St. Luke’s Cornwall Hospital
St. Vincent’s Westchester (Division of St. Joseph’s Medical Center)
Vassar Brothers Medical Center
VA Hudson Valley Health Care System
Westchester Medical Center