

# Progress Notes

June 2016



*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.*

## Session Ends; Med Mal Proposals and Nurse Staffing Ratio Mandate Gone – For Now

The 2016 state legislative session came to a close on Saturday, June 18 and neither medical malpractice nor nurse staffing ratio legislation was passed by both chambers. These two measures were particularly problematic for the hospital industry, as nurse staffing ratios would render individual hospitals helpless to adjust nurse staffing needs based on patient complexity, volume surge, and workflow fluctuations. Similarly, the medical malpractice legislation to extend the statute of limitations for filing a lawsuit for up to seven years posed concerns. Without any offsetting statutory changes that would benefit providers, such as a cap on pain and suffering damages, this legislation would have resulted in a dramatic increase in premiums. Nearly every other state that has such a discovery statute also has a cap on damages. These two issues will continue to be a priority and the Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State (SHANYS) is poised to work with state legislators, nurse leadership, and other special interest groups to come to a reasonable consensus in the future. For the first time, the nurse staffing ratio bill was passed by the Assembly,

indicating that the issue will gain momentum in the next legislative session.

Numerous healthcare-related bills were passed by the Assembly and Senate and are now on their way to the governor's office for acceptance or veto. Session highlights:

- **Heroin and Opioid Addiction Epidemic Package** – attempts to stem the worsening opioid epidemic. The bill addresses, but certainly does not solve, issues related to insurance coverage, access to addiction treatment, treatment requirements, prevention, training, and education.

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The bill also included modest relief from the e-prescribing mandate – emergency department prescribers who order five days or less of opioid medications do not have to check the prescription monitoring registry – I-STOP.

- **Organ Donation** – bills passed that encourage more opportunity for organ donation in New York state, which remains 49th in the nation in terms of organ donation registry success. These are intended to increase the number of individuals who participate in New York’s Donate Life Registry by reducing the legal age for donation from 18 to 16 years old, and by affirming organ donation participation upon application for a driver’s license.
- **Advanced Home Health Aide** – legislation that establishes a new designation of Advanced Home Health Aide, who could be authorized to work for a home care services agency, a hospice program, or at an enhanced assisted living residence. The enhanced scope of practice could include

administration of routine pre-filled medications, with some exceptions. Additional requirements for the designation will be determined by the Commissioner of Education in consultation with the Commissioner of Health. This designation will be helpful for population health management, as more care is rendered in home and community settings.

A series of managed care bills made their way onto legislators’ desks, but none passed both houses. The measures pertain to exclusion of prior approval for surgical and invasive procedures for concurrent symptoms, conditions, and side effects; plans honoring of assignment of benefits for out-of-network emergency services; and a shortened timeframe afforded to health plans to authorize nursing home care and align it with the time period for home care.

## Congress Addresses Opioid Addiction Epidemic

The two regions served by the Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State are experiencing a steep rise in heroin and opioid addiction much like the rest of the nation. Recently, the Senate passed the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act and the House passed a series of opioid bills. These measures together would authorize a number of programs and grants to help efforts to support prevention, treatment, and recovery programs.

As this is only authorization legislation, there is no funding attached. Legislators are expected to address funding through the appropriations process.

On July 6, 2016, the House and Senate Opioid Conference Committee members will meet. The conferees will work together toward a final package of legislative solutions.

# News Briefs

**Blood Center Inventory Update** – The New York Blood Center distributed a press release to call for donations as they declare a blood emergency. NYBC reminds hospitals to assist in this effort by encouraging everyone in their institutions to donate, as well as adhere to recommendations concerning their blood supplies:

- Please use shorter dated LRBC of all types whenever possible.
- Review your usage of O negative blood carefully.
- Work with NYBC to manage standing orders and reduce where possible.
- NYBC will be following strict FIFO practices for orders and appreciate your assistance with support for this protocol.

## HANYS Honors Dennis Whalen for Decades of Service

In recognition of his decades of service to the people of New York State and the healthcare community, the Healthcare Association of New York State honored Dennis P. Whalen with the 2016 Distinguished Service Award. Whalen—HANYS President—will retire in July.

As a respected leader, Whalen has been an unwavering advocate for improving healthcare in New York State for more than four decades, holding key leadership positions in state government in both Democratic and Republican administrations. He joined HANYS in 2009 and has served as president since 2013.

“All New Yorkers have been well served having Dennis as key figure in healthcare policy for the last four decades—a time of unprecedented transformation, using his political acumen and insight to shape the healthcare landscape of today and tomorrow,” said HANYS’ Board Chair Stephens Mundy. “We thank Dennis for his tremendous service and invaluable contribution to our greater community.”

Throughout his career, Whalen has used his knowledge, credibility, and capacity to reconcile conflict and achieve consensus on complex health policy issues. From his time on the Berger Commission to service as Director of State Operations, Deputy Secretary for Health and Human Services, Executive Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Health, Director of the Office of Health Systems Management, and Director of the New York State AIDS Institute, Whalen developed his strong reputation for seeing the bigger picture and ensuring the most appropriate outcome.



HANYS' Distinguished Service Award has annually recognized individuals who demonstrate extraordinary commitment to improving healthcare through service since its inception in 1979. This award was presented at HANYS' Annual Membership Conference.

## Bea Grause Outlines Her Plans for HANYS Future



Beatrice "Bea" Grause R.N., J.D., F.A.C.H.E., begins her presidency at the Healthcare Association of New York State on July 1, succeeding Dennis Whalen upon his retirement. The former President and CEO of the Vermont Association of Hospitals and Health Systems since 2001, Grause received her Juris Doctorate in May 1991 from Santa Clara University School of Law and her BSN from Boston College in 1979. She worked for 10 years as a Registered Nurse in the emergency room and intensive care areas before entering the field of law and holding a variety of health care positions in Washington, D.C.

At HANYS' Annual Conference on June 23, Grause thanked retiring HANYS CEO Dennis Whalen for his leadership and years of service, and spoke to the broad themes and trends that will impact healthcare in the near future.

"Our leadership on healthcare reform must be seen as part of New York's economic solution," she said. "We can't change the reality that healthcare is unaffordable for millions of Americans, but we can make sure that the public and policy-makers understand and appreciate our efforts to improve care and reduce spending."

### News from the Long Island Region

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



**Population Health Honors** – The Healthier Families Program at *Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center* of West Islip received an Honorable Mention from HANYS for its 2016 Community Health Improvement Award. It is presented to hospitals in recognition of their critical role in population health management.

**Population Health Awards** – *Nassau University Medical Center* was awarded a three year Healthy Steps grant, a national, evidence-based model of primary care enhancement. Awarded by the New York State Office of Mental Health, this grant assists in achieving population health outcomes that are most effectively influenced in early childhood.

**Diamond Safety** – The *Nassau University Medical Center* dialysis staff was recognized as a “Five Diamond Patient Safety Facility” by IPRO’s end stage renal disease initiative.

**Get With The Guidelines** – *John T. Mather Memorial Hospital, Brookhaven Memorial Hospital Medical Center, and St. Francis Hospital* were awarded the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association’s highest stroke-care award, the Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award with Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite. To earn the award, hospitals must achieve 85 percent or higher adherence to all guideline achievement indicators for two or more consecutive 12-month periods, and 75 percent or higher compliance with five of eight quality measures.

**Medical Society** – Christine M. Doucet, M.D., of *Brookhaven Memorial Hospital Medical* was installed as President of the Suffolk County Medical Society on June 3.

**Auxilians Recognized** – The NSHC held its Annual Auxiliary Recognition Luncheon on June 13, 2016 at Watermill Caterers. Incoming officers for 2016 – 2017 took their official oaths of office at the event.

Auxilians play a vital role in the delivery of compassionate care at each of their facilities and are major fund raisers for their respective institutions. Collectively, Long Island’s volunteer auxiliaries raise millions through gift shop and thrift shop sales, fashion shows and boutiques, and other events.

In addition, they are actively involved in advocating on federal, state, and local levels on behalf of their hospitals and the thousands of patients that these institutions serve each day.



From left: Outgoing President Virginia Bolla (St. Francis Hospital); New President Edna Fetkowitz (Huntington Hospital); Second Vice President Billie Schretzman (St. Charles Hospital); and Corresponding Secretary Anne Maione (St. Francis Hospital).  
Missing from photo: First Vice President Sara Banks (Good Samaritan Hospital); Treasurer Mary Yarusso (Peconic Bay Medical Center); Recording Secretary Joan Durson Serra (St. Francis Hospital).

If you have news to share about your hospital’s achievements, please send to Janine Logan at [jlogan@nshc.org](mailto:jlogan@nshc.org)

# Elmont Resident/Communications Student Wins LI Hospital Association Scholarship

Troy Blackwell, resident of Elmont, New York and student at City College of New York, was selected as the 2016 Ann Marie Brown Memorial Scholarship recipient. Awarded annually by the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council and its Communications Committee, the \$2,000 scholarship was presented to Blackwell at the group's annual luncheon on June 9, 2016.

Blackwell, a communications/public relations student graduating in May 2017 from CCNY, was chosen based on his outstanding academic achievement, demonstrated leadership, and commitment to community service. He has always had an interest in health and social service and has spent his time as an undergraduate volunteering with the Ricky Martin Foundation against human trafficking and child exploitation in Puerto Rico. His service has taken him to different parts of the world, including Senegal where, during his winter break, he helped build a village school.

Blackwell is a finalist for an internship at the White House Department of Communications. He is the recipient of numerous community service and academic awards, including a Colin Powell Fellowship. Upon graduation next year, he plans to enter the Peace Corps for two years before returning to the United States to obtain a master's degree in public policy and then entering the work world.



Pictured left to right; Janine Logan, Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council Senior Director of Communications and Population Health, Troy Blackwell, 2016 Ann Marie Brown Memorial Scholarship Recipient, Stuart Vincent, Chair of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council Communications Committee and Director, Public Relations, John T. Mather Memorial Hospital, Port Jefferson.

The Ann Marie Brown Memorial Scholarship has been awarded since 1994 and commemorates the late vice president for government and public affairs at the Hospital Council. Brown served in this role from 1983 – 1993. The scholarship is offered to a college junior, senior, or post-graduate student who is both a resident of Long Island and studies communication arts, journalism, or health care administration. For more information, go to [www.nshc.org](http://www.nshc.org).

The Hospital Council's Communications Committee is comprised of the senior public relations directors from Long Island's not-for-profit and public hospitals. In addition to administering this yearly scholarship, this committee oversees the Hospital Council's communication initiatives. It works to affect rational health policy and legislation, promote the programs and services offered by hospitals, and advocate for the health care needs of all Long Islanders.

## News from the Hudson Valley Region

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



**Leadership Award** – Catskill Regional Medical Group General Surgeon, Abdul Shahzad, M.D, was recently presented with the Leadership Award at the 2016 Physician Appreciation Dinner hosted by *Catskill Regional Medical Center*.

**Get With The Guidelines** – *HealthAlliance Hospital*: Broadway Campus in Kingston was awarded the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association’s highest stroke-care award, the Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award. *Orange Regional Medical Center* also received this award, with Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite.

**Community Service** – *Bon Secours Community Hospital*’s behavioral programs, New Directions Program and the Mental Health Unit, were presented with Outstanding Community Service Awards from the Orange/Sullivan Division Rehabilitation Support Services.

## State Legislator and Hospital Trustees Discuss Nurse Staffing Mandates

A regional advocacy event for hospital trustees and state legislators from the Hudson Valley was held by the Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State, Northern Metropolitan Hospital Association, and the Healthcare Association of New York on June 3, 2016 at the White Plains offices of Wilson, Elser. Legislators, trustees, and hospital CEOs spoke candidly about the issue of mandated nurse staffing ratios.

Trustees and hospital CEOs emphasized that nurse staffing cannot be subject to a one size fits all approach because staffing is really a local issue. Hospitals need the flexibility to respond to patient complexities that constantly change on some units, as well as be able to respond to surge capacity needs.

“It is not easy to get to the right answer for this issue,” said State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, who represents Westchester County.



From left: Assemblyman David Buchwald; Robert Spolzino, Trustee, Northern Westchester Hospital and Secretary/Treasurer, Healthcare Association of New York State Board; State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins.

If you have news to share about your hospital’s achievements, please send to Janine Logan at [jlogan@normet.org](mailto:jlogan@normet.org).

## NSHC Events & Meeting Reports

**Fiscal Policy Committee** – The Fiscal Policy Committee met via conference call on June 8 to discuss medical liability legislation under consideration in the state legislature and the progress of the committee's wage index review project. The group also received briefings on federal legislation that would add a socioeconomic adjustment factor to the Medicare readmissions penalty and provide modest relief from restrictions on hospital-based reimbursement for outpatient clinics.

**Human Resources Committee** – The focus of the committee's June 17 meeting was a guest presentation from labor law attorney John Ho of the firm Bond Schoeneck & King. He discussed the implications of new federal rules on overtime pay. He also provided counsel on Family and Medical Leave Act issues. Ms. Darwell updated the committee on several professional licensure changes pending in the state legislature, a state Department of Labor proposal on electronic payment of wages, and the committee's annual wage and salary surveys.

**Revenue Cycle Committee** – At its June 10 meeting, the group received updates from HANYS staff on managed care advocacy and the Medicare "two-midnights" rule, and discussed concerns about the Medicare beneficiary notification for observation care. Ms. Darwell gave a presentation on the new quality-driven Medicare reimbursement program for physicians.

**Long Island Health Collaborative** – On June 16, program manager Sarah Ravenhall updated the full Collaborative on the status of the Year 3 PHIP grant workplan, the first draft of which has been sent to the NYSDOH, awaiting approval. The Academic Partners completed and launched their student opportunities directory on the LIHC website, the Complete Streets/Nutrition workgroup partners have established communication on overlapping work and potential partnership opportunities within Long Island communities of high need, and the Data workgroup presented the second round of analysis on the community member survey data. The LIHC will hold its next event, a Sunset Stroll on Jones Beach, July 21 at 6 p.m., with NYS Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker is expected to attend.

## 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 – The Heart Center
- St. Joseph Hospital

Eastern Long Island Hospital

John T. Mather Memorial Hospital

Nassau University Medical Center

Northwell Health

- Franklin Hospital
- Glen Cove Hospital
- Huntington Hospital
- North Shore University Hospital
- Peconic Bay Medical Center
- Plainview Hospital
- Southside Hospital
- Syosset Hospital

Stony Brook University Hospital

Southampton Hospital

South Nassau Communities Hospital

Veterans Affairs Medical Center

Winthrop-University Hospital

## NorMet Member Hospitals

Blythedale Children's Hospital

Bon Secours Charity Health System

- Bon Secours Community Hospital
- Good Samaritan Hospital
- St. Anthony Community Hospital

Burke Rehabilitation Hospital

Catskill Regional Medical Center

Ellenville Regional Hospital

HealthAlliance Hospital

- Broadway Campus
- Mary's Avenue Campus

Helen Hayes Hospital

Keller Army Community Hospital

Montefiore Health System

- Mt. Vernon Hospital
- New Rochelle Hospital

The New York Presbyterian Hospitals

- Lawrence Hospital Center
- Hudson Valley Hospital
- Westchester Division

Northern Dutchess Hospital

Northern Westchester Hospital

Orange Regional Medical Center

Phelps Memorial Hospital Center

Putnam Hospital Center

St. Joseph's Medical Center/St. Vincent's Hospital

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 Health Network

- Westchester Medical Center
- MidHudson Regional Hospital

White Plains Hospital