



Progress Notes

June/July, 2017

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Senate Takes Action on Healthcare Reform

Passage of a revised Senate bill to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act could happen before July ends. Just released revisions to the Senate's Better Care Reconciliation Act (BCRA) maintain extremely harmful Medicaid cuts and language that would fundamentally re-structure the Medicaid program. Fifty votes are needed to pass the bill in the Senate. It is too soon to tell how much support the revised bill has, but the conservative and moderate factions of the Republican Party will likely continue to have different priorities, once the details of the revised bill are analyzed.

The initial BCRA and now this revised version are significantly worse than the House-backed American Health Care Act that passed that chamber in May. The proposal to block grant the Medicaid program through a per-capita program is particularly harmful to hospitals, New York State's budget, and most importantly, the state's poor and disabled children, adults, and elderly. Further, it allows states to apply for waivers to end the ban on lifetime caps and essential health benefit coverage.

An amendment by Senator Ted Cruz would establish two-tier health plans – ones that contain essential health benefits and ones that do not. The theory behind the amendment is that younger and healthier individuals would be enticed to buy the cheaper, bare bones plans. But economists say premiums for sicker people would balloon because a disproportionate amount of those with pre-existing conditions and other ailments would purchase the more comprehensive coverage and push up the premium price.

The Senate has delayed its August recess by two weeks in an effort to get healthcare reform done. Congress wants to complete work on healthcare so it can move on to tax reform and an infrastructure bill. Congress must also take action by the end of September to raise the debt ceiling threshold and extend several health care provisions, including reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program.

State Legislative Ends; Mostly Positive Results for Hospitals

The New York State legislative session ended June 23, 2017 with hospitals achieving victories in key policy and legislative areas. The efforts of HANYS, the Suburban Hospital Alliance and other regional advocates were able to thwart advancement of many harmful medical malpractice bills. However, one bill, which expands the statute of limitations under which a malpractice suit can be filed for up to 10 years, did pass both houses. The bill, known as Laverne's Law, was reportedly intended only to cover cancer cases, but the language of the legislation is ambiguous. Suburban Hospital Alliance leaders and HANYS policy staff continues to work with the governor's office to clarify the language to ensure it is clear about its limitation to cancer cases.

Advocacy efforts were also successful in opposing harmful nurse staffing ratio bills and a physician collective bargaining bill. Legislation supported by the hospital industry and passed by both houses includes the "BSN in 10" bill (requirement that registered nurses achieve bachelor degrees within 10 years of beginning practice), and legislation ensuring that managed care plans must cover NICU bills without requiring a prior authorization.

The Faces of Medicaid

This multi-media campaign, organized by the Healthcare Association of New York State, highlights the negative consequences of the House and Senate reform bills' deep Medicaid cuts through compelling infographics. Members should use these graphics and facts of the [The Faces of Medicaid](#) campaign when communicating with members of Congress.

Coalition to Protect America's Healthcare



A quick and easy way to register opposition to the Senate bill is to utilize the online platform [Coalition to Protect America's Healthcare](#).

The reform bills on the table now will jeopardize the economy, the healthcare workforce, and most of all, patients.

Healthcare Voices

Healthcare Voices is a campaign spearheaded by the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council to highlight the stories about New Yorkers' experiences with the health insurance marketplace, coverage issues, and healthcare access. The Hospital Council is also a state-certified navigator agency and is in a unique position to interact with New Yorkers who are seeking health insurance coverage. The campaign is bringing attention to these otherwise unheard voices through social media, traditional media channels, and through conversations with legislators.

Recently widowed, Ruth Zaporta, who is now raising her school-aged children by herself, learned she had breast cancer soon after obtaining affordable coverage through the Affordable Care Act. Zaporta says without the coverage, she would never have seen the doctor who diagnosed her cancer. According to Zaporta, the insurance saved her life. Read more about Ruth's story and other stories at [Healthcare Voices](#).



Understanding the Human Harm of Proposed Reform Bills

Expert panel features Medicaid recipient from Healthcare Voices campaign

Medicaid recipient Ruth Zaporta brought her story about insurance loss and gain to life when she participated in two separate expert panel presentations organized by the governor's office. The panels – one held June 22 at Hofstra Northwell School of Medicine (Hempstead, NY) and one held June 27th at Charles B. Wang Center Auditorium, Stony Brook University (Stony Brook, NY) – featured physicians, leaders from community-based organizations, and consumers, including Stacy Villagran who oversees insurance enrollment programs for the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council. "The Hospital Council is a certified enrollment agency for the New York State marketplace. Our enrollers have experienced first-hand the desperation people feel when faced with an illness and no insurance. Ruth's story is just one of dozens we have encountered through the years," said Villagran. "New York's marketplace offers folks like Ruth affordable options and a fighting chance."

News Briefs

Blood Emergency Exists – The New York Blood Center has declared a blood emergency and is asking hospitals to host blood drives, especially throughout July and August when the blood supply traditionally runs dangerously low. The New York Blood Center staff will assist with all blood drive planning details. On Long Island contact: Karen Muscolino (516) 903-5104, kmuscolino@nybc.org; In the Hudson Valley contact: Andrea Cefarelli (914) 760-3173, acefarelli@nybc.org.

Circle of Life Award – Nominations are sought by the American Hospital Association for its 2018 Circle of Life Awards. The award recognizes hospitals' innovative palliative and end-of-life care programs. Go to www.aha.org/circleoflife for more information and to apply. Applications are due August 14.

Advocacy Guide for Trustees – Healthcare trustees are integral to advocating on behalf of hospitals and health systems. [Advocating for Healthcare - A New York State Trustee Guide](#), offered by the Healthcare Association of New York State, is a helpful publication designed to assist trustees in their advocacy efforts. The guide offers an update about the current environment and the advocacy issues facing hospitals.

Spotlight on Quality

The Joint Commission Increases Focus on Self-Harm Risks in Hospital Environment

In March, The Joint Commission announced it would be increasing its focus on assessment for ligature or self-harm risks during routine surveys of inpatient psychiatric hospitals and inpatient psychiatric units in acute care hospitals ([link](#)). Patient suicide has been on TJC's top five sentinel event list for the last several years as rates of suicide in healthcare facilities have been on the rise. The recent added emphasis on behalf of TJC is likely in response to increased attention to these issues by CMS and other regulatory agencies over the last couple of years.

During surveys, hospitals can expect that surveyors will be evaluating the organization's process for assessing environmental risks. Any risk observed during a survey will be cited at the requirement for improvement (RFI) level under EP-1 Environment of Care (02.06.01). The infraction would also be considered a condition-level finding under CMS's Physical Environment standards (CoP 482.41).

In the event of a finding, TJC will investigate whether the facility had previously identified the risk in its self-assessment process and if there are plans currently in place for removing the risk. According to TJC other factors that will be assessed include:

Plans and policies for protecting patients during the mitigation process including maintaining staffing levels that reflect the level of risk

Processes for patient suicide risk assessment and policies and practices for patients that are identified as at risk including ensuring staff awareness of the risk

The organization's history of patient safety events and the results of root cause analyses of these events

The organization's process for monitoring compliance with its policies and past responses by the organization in the event that noncompliance was identified

Considerations for the likelihood to harm, a factor that determines how the finding will be scored using the new SAFER matrix will take into account the factors listed above. Hospitals will have 60 days to correct any findings. To avoid potential findings, TJC recommends that hospitals become familiar with "[The Design Guide for the Built Environment of Behavioral Health Facilities](#)" and resources offered under the [Zero Suicide campaign](#).



News from the Hudson Valley

[Click here for Northern Metropolitan Hospital Association member listing](#)

Tech Update – Awarded by the American Hospital Association, Most Wired® hospitals are identified as those that invest in analytics to support new delivery models and effective decision-making and training clinicians on how to use analytics to improve quality, provide access and control costs. NorMet member winners include,

- For the second year in a row, *Orange Regional Medical Center*
- *Catskill Regional Medical Center*
- *St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital*

Top 10 – Bariatric care at *Orange Regional Medical Center* is, for the second year in a row, among the top 10% in the nation as measured by volume-weighted performance according to this year's evaluation from Healthgrades.

Get With The Guidelines – In June, the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association recognized two Health Quest hospitals for providing quality stroke care to their patients. *Vassar Brothers Medical Center* was recognized with the Get With the Guidelines - Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award with Target: Stroke Honor Roll. *Putnam Hospital Center* received the Get With the Guidelines – Stroke Silver Plus Quality Achievement Award.

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



News from Long Island

[Click here for Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council member listing](#)

Tech Update – Awarded by the American Hospital Association, Most Wired® hospitals are identified as those that invest in analytics to support new delivery models and effective decision-making and training clinicians on how to use analytics to improve quality, provide access and control costs. NSHC member winners include,

- *Catholic Health Services of Long Island*
- *Huntington Hospital*
- *Long Island Jewish Medical Center*
- *North Shore University Hospital*
- *Plainview Hospital*
- *Southside Hospital*
- *Stony Brook Medicine*
- *Syosset Hospital*
- *Winthrop University Hospital*
- *Southampton (N.Y.) Hospital*, winner of a *Most Improved* designation

Get With The Guidelines – In June, *Nassau University Medical Center* was recognized by the American Heart Association with the Get with the Guidelines Resuscitation Silver Award, for implementing specific quality improvement measures for the treatment of patients who suffer cardiac arrest in the hospital. *St. Charles Hospital* reached its tenth stroke quality milestone Get With The Guidelines®-Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award. *Nassau University Medical Center* also received the Get With The Guidelines-Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award with Target: Stroke Honor Roll.

Meeting the Triple Aim – Highlighted this month in the HANYS Innovation Spotlight for meeting the Triple Aim were, *South Nassau Communities Hospital* for establishing a multidisciplinary task force that identified four significant areas of opportunities related to improved infection prevention, *Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center* for their Healthier Families Program

Gold Seal Approval – *St. Francis Hospital, The Heart Center* earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® and the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Heart-Check mark for Advanced Certification for Primary Stroke Centers.

HANYS Highlighted – Catholic Health Services' *St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center* and *St. Joseph* hospitals were named by the Healthcare Association of New York State as winners of the 2017 HANYS Pinnacle Award for Quality and Patient Safety. *St. Joseph* Hospital was recognized for successfully addressing alarm fatigue, which resulted in a significant improvement in patient room quietness, while *St. Catherine's* winning initiative enabled the hospital to exceed state and national performance levels in administering plasminogen activator (tPA) to stroke patients.

Public Health Information Line – On June 5, the Suffolk County Department of Health activated a Public Health Information Line – 631-787-2200 – to enhance communicable disease surveillance efforts. The line is available 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Communications Scholarship – James Bie, a resident of Hauppauge and a student at Boston University, was selected as the 2017 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 Bie at the committee's annual luncheon held June 8. Bie is pursuing a dual major in the fields of communications studies and film/TV, as well as a minor in political science. Awarded since 1994, the scholarship commemorates the late vice president for government and public affairs for the Hospital Council.

Blood Service Awards – Several hospitals were honored for their extraordinary blood collection efforts by the New York Blood Center at the May 4, Hospital Council board meeting.

Winthrop University Hospital
Highest Number of Blood Donations
1,227 Blood Donations

Winthrop University Hospital
Highest Blood Donation Rate
19 Pints Per 100 Employees

South Nassau Communities Hospital
Highest Number of Blood Donations
1,157 Blood Donations

South Nassau Communities Hospital
Highest Blood Donation Rate
41 Pints Per 100 Employees

Mercy Medical Center
Highest Number of Blood Donations
495 Blood Donations

Mercy Medical Center
Highest Blood Donation Rate
33 Pints Per 100 Employees

*Cohen Children's Medical Center And
Long Island Jewish Hospital*
Largest Increase in Blood Donations
19% Increase, 157 Blood Donations

Auxilian Executive Committee Takes Oath of Office -

The 2017-2018 Executive Board of the Nassau-Suffolk Council of Hospital Auxiliaries are sworn into their posts at the Annual Auxilian Luncheon held June 12, at the Watermill Restaruant. Left to right: Kevin Dahill, President/CEO of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council; Anne Maione, Corresponding Secretary, *St. Francis Hospital*; Virginia Bolla, Recording Secretary, *St. Francis Hospital*; Mary Yarusso, Treasurer, *Peconic Bay Medical Center*; Thelma Booker, Second Vice President, *Peconic Bay Medical Center*; Billie Schretzman, First Vice President, *St. Charles Hospital*; Sara Banks, President, *Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center*.



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

Committee Updates

Fiscal Policy Committee: At the June 7 meeting of the Fiscal Policy Committee, Hospital Council staff provided members with an update on ACA repeal and the passage of the American Healthcare Act. Staff also discussed the DSH program and the use of S-10 data to distribute DSH funds. An update on state legislative activity was provided and included information on several bills of interest. Mr. McLeod, Director of State Fiscal Policy and Special Studies at HANYS discussed ICR, DSH and HCRA surcharge audit issues with the group.

Human Resources Committee: At their June 28 meeting, members of the Human Resources Committee were provided updates on the status of federal overtime rules, debit card and direct deposit regulations and the Paid Family Leave program. Hospital Council staff discussed the status of legislative bills of interest and provided detailed information on the prescriber education requirements that must be met by July 1.

Long Island Health Collaborative: The Collaborative met on July 13. Performing Provider Systems for the region – the Suffolk Care Collaborative and the Nassau Queen PPS – presented updates, with a specific emphasis on the role community-based organizations play in integrated care delivery. Opportunities for CBOs to align with the PPSs continue to exist through affiliation agreements and contracting. Kevin Dahill, president/CEO of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council, updated the group regarding current federal health reform activity and how population health intersects with efforts to deliver care in a more coordinated way. Members also heard an update about the Library Asset Mapping project from Dr. Lisa Benz-Scott who oversees the master of public health program at Stony Brook University. This program seeks to utilize MPH students to assist in mapping social determinant of health programming offered by libraries throughout Nassau and Suffolk counties. This research project is connected with the University of Pennsylvania. Research results from this mapping project will help direct future social determinant of health programming at area libraries, especially in under-resourced locations.

Upcoming Events

[The Academy for Healthcare Leadership Advancement](#)

A seven-week Cornell certificate program

Sep. 24 - 26 (at Cornell University)

Oct. 3 - Nov. 1 (6 virtual sessions)

Nov. 12 - 14 (at Cornell University)

For questions, contact Cathy Oxentine, Office Manager, HANYS Solutions, at (800) 388-9821.

[Registration now available.](#)