

Progress Notes

April 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.

State Budget Approved

Budget favorable to hospitals, but Health Republic situation remains unresolved

The budget approved April 1, 2016 included several favorable health provisions. These are new capital funding, rejection of the excess medical malpractice redistribution, and an adjustment of the Medicaid global spending cap to account for the impact of the rejection of the increased Medicaid share for New York City.

There was no money in the budget to address the more than \$200 million in provider losses from the collapse of Health Republic last fall and no language to establish a guaranty fund to guard against future health plan insolvencies. However, the state did commit to establishing a special fund to compensate providers for unpaid claims. The account will be seeded with the proceeds from various legal settlements that come to the state as well as any remaining Health Republic assets. It is not clear what percentage of compensation providers will receive or when funds will be made available.

On April 22, 2016, the Department of Financial Services began liquidation proceedings against Health

Republic. A hearing at New York State Supreme Court is set for May 10, 2016. It is hoped that the special fund will cover any outstanding claims not fully paid through liquidation.

Hospitals in the Suburban Hospital Alliance regions of Long Island and the Hudson Valley were disproportionately affected by the Health Republic demise, as nearly 70 percent of the health insurer's beneficiaries resided in these two regions.

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CMS Quality Star Ratings Delayed

Due to hospitals' urging and pressure from more than 225 members of Congress, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) delayed the release of its Hospital Quality Star Ratings on the CMS Hospital Compare website until July 2016. The ratings were scheduled to post on April 21, 2016.

Congressional members and hospital leaders argued that the star ratings do not portray an accurate picture of care rendered at many hospitals. This is because the methodology used in the five-star rating system does not account for varying degrees of patient complexity and the many socioeconomic factors that affect health outcomes. These include such influences as poverty, education, race, ethnicity, and geography among others. These factors, also known as the social determinants of health, have been shown in numerous research studies to significantly affect patient outcomes and health status. They also upheld that there was not enough time to verify the methodology used and its accuracy.

CMS is attempting to provide consumers with an easy metric, through the overall hospital quality star rating, in which to compare hospitals. However, this consolidation oversimplifies the complexity of delivering high-quality care and does not adjust for socioeconomic factors, according to hospital leaders. CMS currently publishes more than 100 measures regarding hospitals' care. Many of these measures are technical and confusing to the average consumer.

CMS has agreed to gather further guidance and hospitals may submit their feedback to cmsstarratngs@lantangroup.com. The agency will also hold a National Provider Call on May 12 to answer questions, explain the methodology, and help hospitals understand the details of the reports. Updated data on Hospital Compare will be available for hospitals' preview beginning May 6.

Staffing Ratio Mandate Threatens Balance

Proposed legislation (A.8580/S.782) seeks to create specific staffing ratios for nurses and other direct-care staff in hospitals and nursing homes. Suburban Hospital Alliance member hospitals strongly oppose such a mandate, as its value is not proven and, in fact, disrupts staffing levels by not accounting for patient acuity and surge needs. Peer-reviewed studies in California – the only state with mandated ratios – found no direct link between clinical outcomes and statewide staffing ratios. Research shows that the factors that do make a difference are the use of evidence-based protocols, team-based approach to care, and communication. HANYS will hold a Staffing Ratio Lobby Day in Albany in mid-May. Details will be sent via email.

News Briefs

Donate to Life – HANYS is introducing a program in conjunction with April, which is National Donate Life Month, to increase organ donation through new public awareness, advocacy, and policy initiatives, while also providing opportunities to register and support for donors. New York State has the third highest need for donors in the U.S., but the lowest percentage of registered donors. Enroll in the [New York State Organ and Tissue Donor Registry](#) online.

Cybersecurity Forum – Cybersecurity is a concern shared by many industries, including the hospital and healthcare field. Developing a solid relationship with all levels of law enforcement is a key way for hospitals to thwart and/or combat cyber threats and attacks. This was the message conveyed at the cybersecurity briefing event held in New York City on April 20, 2016. HANYS's Cybersecurity Forum was hosted in partnership with New York Langone Medical Center. More than 200 HANYS' members gathered in person and on the phone for this unique event.

Representatives from the FBI, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the New York City Police Department, New York State Police, and the Global Cyber Alliance took part in the forum. Law enforcement is increasingly sharing threat information with the healthcare sector. DHS in particular offers a variety of cybersecurity resources and training tools, including free risk assessments and evaluations. HANYS members can also sign up for the FBI Liaison Alert System (FLASH) and Private Industry Notification (PIN) for informational updates.

TCU Demo – The Transitional Care Unit (TCU) state demonstration program was recently expanded and now includes Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center on Long Island and Nyack Hospital and Helen Hayes Hospital in Rockland County. TCUs provide a level of care geared toward complex patients who no longer need full acute care services, but who are not well enough to be discharged home or to a nursing home. Length of stay is usually five to 21 days.

Auxiliary Acknowledgement – Governor Cuomo has proclaimed May 4, 2016, Healthcare Auxilian Day in New York State. The proclamation recognizes the vital role that auxiliaries serve as community wellness ambassadors and acknowledges the valuable contributions that auxiliaries make to advance the overall quality of public health in New York. The proclamation can be read on the [HANYS website](#).

Quality Measuring Matters – HANYS published a contribution to the national, ongoing dialogue surrounding the call for a “common set of valid, reliable, and evidence-based measures,” in the healthcare industry. While each set of required measures is complex and deserving of its own thorough evaluation, new measures would address fundamental shifts in the nation's healthcare delivery systems, such as value-based payment and integrated care models. The HANYS piece, “[Measures that Matter](#),” outlines tactics that will assist in aligning definitions and requirements, while integrating the needs of all involved parties – measurers, reporters, payers, patients, etc. – with quality and safety measures that will appropriately allocate previously monopolized resources. Recommendations from HANYS' Statewide Steering Committee on Quality Initiatives include four example strategies,

- a centralized oversight system within the organization (e.g., Performance/Quality Improvement Council) that analyzes measures and determines which ones the organization will use;

- a method for evaluating and categorizing measures based on their perceived value and utility;
- criteria to assess the importance of specific quality measures within the organization;
- a weighting system that applies numerical values to the evaluation process

Each strategy is accompanied by detailed, tiered approaches that incorporate the basic stakeholder calls-to-action HANYS outlines for the entire process; streamlining, aligning, focusing, and collaborating. The Healthcare Association of New York State hopes to improve upon practices demanded of hospitals that, while necessary, have the potential to interfere with dedicated care without providing a balanced return of measurement. The full report is accessible online at bit.ly/HANYSmtm.

News from the Long Island Region

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



Nurse of Excellence Award Ceremony – The 2016 Nurse of Excellence Award will be bestowed on May 18 at a special ceremony at the Woodbury County Club. Each hospital and nursing school nominates a candidate who exemplifies the ideals of nursing practice or education. All of the nominees are honored at the annual ceremony.

Achieving the Triple Aim – *St. Charles Hospital's Good Shepherd Hospice* was highlighted by HANYS for its vigil volunteer program, which is dedicated to helping family members who are unable to be by the bedside of dying patients. The story is published on the [HANYS Triple Aim website](#), where hospitals can submit their own stories.

Comprehensive Care – The Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program accredited *Good Samaritan Hospital's Bariatric and Metabolic Surgery Program* as a Comprehensive Care center, having met essential criteria for staffing, training and facility infrastructure and protocols for care, ensuring its ability to support patients with severe obesity.

Trustee Award – Carole G. Donlin, Vice Chairman, Board of Trustees at *Eastern Long Island Hospital* was selected for the 2016 United Hospital Fund Distinguished Trustee Award, recognizing Donlin's extraordinary service, leadership and a deep commitment to not-for-profit hospitals in the New York region.

Service Award – President and CEO of *NuHealth/NUMC* Dr. Victor Politi was presented with the RotaCare Distinguished Community Service Award earlier this month at RotaCare's 22nd Annual Caregiver's Ball.

Safety Awards - The Spring 2016 Hospital Safety Score, provided by The Leapfrog Group, was published earlier this week. *John T. Mather Memorial Hospital*, *Northwell Health's Huntington Hospital*, and *St. Francis Hospital* all received A ratings, three of only 15 hospitals in the state achieving tops scores.

Walk in the Park – The Long Island Health Collaborative (LIHC) marked the American Heart Association’s 10th Annual National Walking Day on April 6 with a Walk in the Park at Nassau County’s Eisenhower Park. Attended by LIHC members, the region’s two health commissioners (Dr. Lawrence Eisenstein, Nassau County and Dr. James Tomarken, Suffolk County) , and Nassau County Executive Edward Mangano, the event gained regional coverage and highlighted the park’s Complete Streets projects. The LIHC, the main workgroup of Long Island’s Population Health Improvement Program, promotes walking as a way to combat chronic diseases, especially those related to obesity. Its **Are You Ready, Feet?**™ health promotion campaign is drawing upon the support of the physician community, as well as nurse practitioners and physician assistants, to prescribe walking to patients. It is also committed to expansion of complete street policies throughout Long Island and is focusing on the health benefit inherent in this policy. The path walked on April 6 was one completed as a result of Nassau County’s Department of Public Works complete streets initiative.



Pictured from left; Nassau County Health Commissioner Dr. Lawrence Eisenstein, Nassau County Executive Edward Mangano, Director of the Long Island Health Collaborative Janine Logan, Nassau County District 17 Legislator Rose Marie Walker, Suffolk County Health Commissioner Dr. James Tomarken, Nassau County Parks and Recreation Commissioner Brian Nugent.

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



CNO Briefing – The Northern Metropolitan Hospital Association (NorMet) in conjunction with the Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State held a special educational briefing for chief nursing officers on April 2, 2016 at the Tarrytown Hilton. Topics included staffing ratio legislation, implementation of the 2014 Safe Patient Handling law, and surveillance activities by the Department of Health and Joint Commission. New York State Partnership for Patients regional program manager CarlaLisa Rovere-Kistner provided an update on quality improvement activities in the region,

and the group learned about the Qualaris Audit tool available to members for ease of checking compliance with clinical improvement and patient experience goals.

New Affiliate – *HealthAlliance of the Hudson Valley* and Westchester Medical Center Health Network announced a consolidation and affiliation, with HealthAlliance becoming part of the WMCHHealth, overseeing their hospital operations, as well as operations at other HealthAlliance facilities.

Official Sponsor – A new advertising campaign from *Burke Rehabilitation Hospital* featuring television commercials, radio spots and print ads, is serving to position Burke as the “Official Sponsor” of many of life’s special moments by ensuring patients make the fullest possible recovery from illness, injury or surgery. You can view the campaign at www.burke.org/officialsponsor.

Safety Awards – The Leapfrog Group published the Spring 2016 Hospital Safety Score earlier this week, where *Northern Westchester Hospital* received an A rating, one of only 15 hospitals in the state achieving top scores.

Patient Experience – *Putnam Hospital Center* received the 2016 Outstanding Patient Experience Award, one of seven in New York, and 448 across the nation, placing them in the top 15 percent of the country. Healthgrades analyzed patient survey scores for admissions between April 2014 and March 2015 to determine the award recipients

Award of Excellence – National healthcare research organization Professional Research Consultants has awarded *Health Quest* and its three hospitals several Excellence in Healthcare Awards across a spectrum of patient services.

Health Quest

- Top performer, Outpatient Oncology Services (Radiation Oncology) – Overall Quality of Care

Northern Dutchess Hospital

- 5-star, Emergency Department – Overall Quality of Care
- 4-star, Inpatient Services – Overall Quality of Care
- 4-star, Sleep Lab Outpatient Services – Overall Quality of Care

Putnam Hospital Center

- 5-star, Outpatient Therapy Services (Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapies) – Overall Quality of Care
- 5-star, Inpatient Services – HCAHPS Discharge Information
- 4-star, Inpatient Services – Overall Quality of Care
- 4-star, Outpatient Services – Overall Quality of Care

Vassar Brothers Medical Center

- 5-star, Outpatient Therapy Services (Physical Therapy) – Overall Quality of Care
- 5-star, Outpatient Ultrasound Services (Outpatient Echocardiogram) – Overall Quality of Care

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

NSHC Events & Meeting Reports

Fiscal Policy Committee – At its April 13 meeting, the Fiscal Policy Committee received briefings on the outcome of the state budget negotiations, the state's value-based payment model under DSRIP and a Medicare proposal to change the reimbursement methodology for physician-administered drugs. The group discussed best practices for HIPAA business associate agreements.

Revenue Cycle Committee – On April 8, the Revenue Cycle Committee received an update on the Health Republic liquidation and state legislation to compensate providers, and discussed other insurance processing issues that were raised at HANYS' managed care roundtable on March 23. Ms. Darwell briefed the group on the transition of Medicaid patients into new managed care products and the mandatory Medicare bundled payment program for hip and knee replacements that began on April 1.

Nurse Executives Committee – The committee was briefed on April 27 on nursing legislation under consideration in Albany, the delay of a new CMS quality rating system, and the progress of the regional patient experience collaborative. The New York State Partnership for Patients regional program manager also provided an update on quality improvement activities.

Long Island Health Collaborative – The Long Island Population Health Improvement Program convened a full Long Island Health Collaborative meeting on April 20, providing updates on the work of the Complete Streets, Data, and PECE workgroups. The LIHC launched their new website, designed as a resource for both community members and Collaborative members, as well as a host for the interactive *Are You Ready, Feet?*TM physical activity portal. The LIHC is promoting the launch across all available earned media platforms, as well as through a mass mailing to primary care physician practices. LIPHIP staff provided analysis on results from data collection tools used to inform the Community Needs Assessments for Long Island hospitals and county health departments.

LIPHIP Legislative Briefing – Members of Long Island's state delegation were briefed on March 11 on the work of the Long Island Population Health Improvement Program and the Long Island Health Collaborative (LIHC). Legislators were each provided with maps and information about constituent health in their district. LIPHIP staffers reinforced their ability to provide legislators with district specific demographic and disease prevalence data to help lawmakers better assist, understand and serve their constituents.

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 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