

# eProgress Notes . . . November 2010

A Monthly Publication of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council, Inc.

*eProgress Notes publication is a summary of regulatory and legislative news, advocacy messages, and other relevant issues affecting the delivery of hospital and health care on Long Island.*

## Health Community Re-affirms Commitment to a Tobacco-free Long Island

*Region's hospitals pledge voluntary move to be totally tobacco-free campuses*



From Left: Kevin Dahill, President/CEO, NSHC; Dr. Eli Avila, Chief Deputy Commissioner of Health for Suffolk County; Dr. Maria Carney, Commissioner of Health for Nassau County; Sue Kennedy, Advocacy Director, Tobacco Action Coalition; Leah Jefferson, Regional Advocacy Director, American Cancer Society.

Nassau and Suffolk County health commissioners joined Long Island's hospitals and smoking cessation advocacy groups on November 17, 2010 at Hofstra University to re-affirm their commitment to eliminate tobacco use across Long Island and to stand firm on their stance that the sale of cigarettes be banned in pharmacies. The press briefing and informational event jump started the groups' support of the American Cancer Society's Annual Great American Smoke Out and represented the culmination of the work of both county tobacco cessation workgroups and their community partners.

Kevin Dahill, president/CEO of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council, announced that by mid-2011 all Long Island hospitals will be tobacco-free campuses, meaning no tobacco products of any kind will be allowed on hospital property. This is a voluntary commitment that

goes beyond requirements of current local and state laws. The Long Island hospital region is one of only a few in the state to adopt this policy.

"Quitting tobacco is one of the best things you can do for yourself and your family," said Dr. Maria Torroella Carney, Nassau County Health Commissioner. "... I urge all smokers to quit and young people not to start."

Dr. Eli Avila, Chief Deputy Commissioner of the Suffolk County Department of Health Services added, "Strict enforcement of state and local tobacco control laws, and school and community education programs have dramatically reduced tobacco use in Suffolk. Suffolk residents are indeed fortunate to be living in a county dedicated to improving their health through the reduction of tobacco use and exposure to environmental tobacco smoke."

According to Tobacco Action Coalition (TAC) Advocacy Director Sue Kennedy, the smoking rate among college-aged youths has increased, while there has been a decline among smoking rates with teenagers. Strict laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to minors have contributed to this trend. TAC is embarking on a campaign to eliminate the sale of tobacco products in pharmacies. "Young adults are the new at-risk population," said Kennedy.

Tobacco cessation was the priority issue selected by both county health departments from among the State Health Department's Healthy Prevention Agenda for New York. Counties were asked to work collaboratively with community partners in raising awareness about this public health issue. The Hospital Council, along with representatives from several member hospitals, worked with the county groups for more than a year.

In addition to the smoking cessation programs offered by local hospitals, Long Islanders can get help quitting by contacting their local county health department, or the New York State Quit Line [www.nysmokefree.com](http://www.nysmokefree.com). – Janine Logan, [jlogan@nshc.org](mailto:jlogan@nshc.org).

## Legislative Session Spares Hospitals from Medicaid Cuts

### *Hospital leaders remain wary*

The extraordinary legislative session called to order by Governor Paterson on November 29, 2010 did not result in any new Medicaid cuts to hospitals. However, the current fiscal year's \$315 million budget hole continues and hospitals remain a vulnerable target now and into the next state fiscal year, when a huge budget deficit is anticipated once again.

The governor's deficit reduction plan had called for 6.7 percent Medicaid cuts effective December 15, 2010 through March 31, 2011. That percentage was later revised to 5.3 percent. Neither chamber took up the proposal or presented it as a bill during the extraordinary session.

The legislature did, however, conduct some business and the following proposals by the governor were passed:

- A chapter amendment to prohibit health plans that offer a pharmacy benefit from creating specialty tiers within their prescription drug formulary and charging higher co-pays, deductibles, and co-insurance for specialty drugs.
- A bill establishing a special commission on judicial compensation
- A chapter amendment regarding illegal hotels

The Senate adjourned and the Assembly moved to recess. It is believed that one or both chambers will reconvene before the year is out. – Janine Logan, [jlogan@nshc.org](mailto:jlogan@nshc.org).

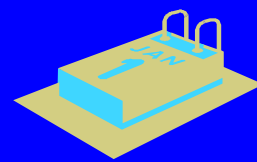
## NSHC Rolls Out Re-designed Website

The Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council launched a re-designed website last month that will make it easier for members and others looking for information on hospital and health policy to search for information. Just a few mouse clicks at [www.nshc.org](http://www.nshc.org) will take site users to news reports, policy statements, and testimony.

The home page highlights breaking news related to federal, state, and local regulatory and legislative activities. The Help Your Hospital tab is zip code-driven, taking visitors to a screen that details the economic impact hospitals have in a particular area and the damage Medicare/Medicaid cuts will inflict if enacted. Visitors have the opportunity to contact their legislators from that link.

The new website uses simplified tabs to organize the Hospital Council's advocacy efforts, policy briefs and analyses, news, and publications. A key new feature on the website is the internal search engine located on the top right hand corner of the page. Enter a keyword or search phrase and a list of results will show up based on the entry.

Also included on the home page is a link to the Hospital Council's Facilitated Enrollment Program. This is a New York State grant-funded service provided by the Council to assist eligible families and



### Mark Your Calendar for NSHC Events in December

- Dec. 2. NSHC Executive Committee, 8 a.m.
- Dec. 6. NSHC/NorMet Regional Trustee Event, 4 – 7 p.m., LaGuardia Marriott
- Dec. 8. Finance Committee, 6 p.m., Crestwood Manor, Northport
- Dec. 10. Revenue Cycle Committee, 12:00 p.m., Crestwood Manor, Northport
- Dec. 14. Nurse Managers Committee, 12:30 p.m. Dave and Busters, Islandia

\*Meetings for NSHC members only and are held at the Hospital Council office in Hauppauge unless otherwise noted. To register/info call: 631-963-4153.

children in applying for Medicaid, Child Health Plus, or Family Health Plus. This program plays a key role in the Council's mission to enhance health care for all Long Islanders.

The information technology department at the Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS), the Hospital Council's managing partner, designed the new website with the input and advice of NSHC.

## NSHC Committee News ...

**Nurse Executives Committee** . . . met November 12 and bid farewell to Yvette Mooney, RN, senior vice president, patient care services, South Nassau Communities Hospital. She is retiring after a long and productive career in nursing and nursing

administration. The Hospital Council and her colleagues presented her with a plaque. *In photo at right from left: Wendy Darwell, chief operating officer, NSHC; Yvette Mooney, and Patricia Darcey, vice president patient services, Southampton Hospital and a member of the NSHC Nurse Executives Committee.*



### 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
- East End Health Alliance
  - Eastern Long Island Hospital
  - Peconic Bay Medical Center
  - Southampton Hospital
- Long Beach Medical Center
- 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
- Stony Brook University Hospital
- Veterans Affairs Medical Center – Northport
- Winthrop-South Nassau University Health System
  - South Nassau Communities Hospital
  - Winthrop-University Hospital

**Finance Committee** . . . received a report on the activities of the Revenue Cycle Committee by its chairman, Philip Nies of Winthrop-University Hospital, at its November 10 meeting. The committee discussed Medicare and Medicaid rate changes and audits with participating HANYS staff, and then reviewed proposals from law firms to represent hospitals in a Medicare wage index appeal.

**Nurse Managers Committee** . . . At its November 9 meeting, past committee chair Dianne Gianfelice of Nassau University Medical Center offered an educational presentation on the “medical home” model of care.

**Human Resources Committee** . . . received a presentation from Wesley Price of HANYS Benefit Services at its November 18 meeting. The group discussed requirements for achieving “grandfathered” status of employee health plans, and Ms. Darwell provided a legislative and regulatory update.

## News Briefs . . .

**Updated Health Care Career Guide** . . . is now available from NSHC for a nominal fee of \$4 per book to cover production costs. Supplies are limited. To order contact Janine Logan at [jlogan@nshc.org](mailto:jlogan@nshc.org).

### ***Regional Member Program for Trustees and Executives***

***Monday, December 6, 2010 4 – 7 p.m.***


***LaGuardia Marriott***

***Featuring:***

**Richard Umbdenstock, President, AHA**

***Event Highlight: Presentation, Member Quality Awards***

**Please register online at [jstewart@hanys.org](mailto:jstewart@hanys.org).**



**NASSAU-SUFFOLK HOSPITAL COUNCIL**  
1383 Veterans Memorial Highway, Suite 26  
Hauppauge, NY 11788 • (631) 435-3000  
[www.nshc.org](http://www.nshc.org)  
*The collective voice of Long Island's not-for-profit and public hospitals.*