

Progress Notes May 2011

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

Progress 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.

Nurse Educator Takes Top Honor



From left: Patricia Darcy, MS, RN-BC-NE, Chief Nursing Officer and VP Patient Care Services at Southampton Hospital and Chair of the NSHC Nurse Executives Committee, 2011 Nurse Excellence Winner Lisa Quinones, RNC, MS, OGNP, ICCE and Frances LaFauci, TN, Ed.D., Associate Dean/Professor of Nursing, Suffolk County Community College.

hospitals and teaching institutions from across Long Island.

Professor Quinones considers herself to be a humanitarian because she says she teaches “compassion, sensitivity, the human touch, communication, and caring interventions.” She has brought this philosophy around the world to such countries as the Dominican Republic, Honduras, El Salvador, and Panama where she has taught nursing skills to indigenous populations through the Hope for a Healthier Humanity Program. In 2010, she addressed the World Health Alliance at the United Nations regarding maternal/infant issues and goals for better health outcomes.

Nominator Frances LaFauci, RN, Ed.D, associate dean at Suffolk Community College, describes Prof. Quinones as “uplifting” and “a role model for faculty and students who has brought our nursing program to a new level of international service and awareness.”

The Hospital Council’s annual salute to nurses is fashioned after the New York State Legislature’s Nurse of Distinction Program that ended in 1995. NSHC is one of the few hospital associations in the state to continue this program voluntarily. It is now in its 16th year.

“We are so pleased to continue this celebration of nurses,” said Wendy Darwell, chief operating officer of NSHC. “They are truly the backbone of our hospitals. We are equally delighted to honor nurse faculty. They are the ones training and educating the next generation of nurses so that our hospitals can continue to provide outstanding nursing care.”

For more information about this program and a full listing of nominees, visit www.nshc.org. – jlogan@nshc.org.

Nurse leaders from Long Island’s hospitals and nursing education programs gathered Wednesday, May 18, 2011 at the Woodbury Country Club to bestow recognition upon their nurse peers at the Nurse of Excellence Award Ceremony hosted by the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council (NSHC). One nurse from each of the Hospital Council’s member hospitals was nominated for this award, which recognizes outstanding leadership and clinical practice. Deans of area nursing schools also submitted nominations recognizing nursing excellence in education and *for the first time ever the top recognition went to a nurse educator.*

St. James resident and Suffolk County Community College full professor of nursing Lisa Quinones, RNC, MS, OGNP, ANP, ICCE, who specializes in teaching and practicing maternal/child health nursing, took the top honor as Long Island’s “Nurse of Excellence.” She was selected from a field of more than 500 nurses at

**Harmful Medical Malpractice Legislation Threatening Hospitals
Advocacy Needed Now . . . See Page 2 for Details . . .**

Hospitals Must Halt Proposed Med Mal Bills

The small medical malpractice reform success that the hospital industry enjoyed this past budget season, with the passage of a medical indemnity fund to pay for the cost of care of neurologically-impaired infants, would be overshadowed if current proposed bills now making their way through the state legislature become law.

Particularly troublesome is a bill that seeks limits on defense counsel interviewing. The bill – **A.694-A (Lancman) and S.3296-A (DeFrancisco)** – would prohibit defense counsel in a malpractice lawsuit from privately interviewing the plaintiff's treating physician. No limit, however, would be placed on the plaintiff's attorney. The bill would overturn the 2007 *Arons vs. Kutkowitz* Court of Appeals ruling that reaffirmed the need for all litigants to seek out relevant information to assure greater fairness in the adjudication of civil lawsuits. Without the opportunity for free and open discovery that is essential to fair litigation, cases will drag on and costs will add up for all involved, especially hospitals.

Also of concern are two other malpractice bills:

- **Wrongful Death - S.2540 (DeFrancisco)/A.4851 (Weinstein)** – This proposal would vastly inflate medical malpractice premiums and encourage frivolous lawsuits by allowing the award of damages for emotional pain and suffering to the friends, family, and others affected by the death of an injured patient.
- **Contingency Fees – S.2541 (DeFrancisco)** – New York consumers are protected from excessive contingency fees under current law. S.2541 would undo those critical protections by allowing claimants' attorneys to receive unlimited contingency fees in medical, dental, and podiatric malpractice cases.

All three bills are picking up momentum as we near the close of the state legislative session scheduled for June 20. They would corrupt the free and open discovery process that is essential to fair litigation and would impose excessive legal costs upon all involved. Contacting state lawmakers now is imperative. Go to www.nshc.org and click on the link from the home page to access a sample letter to send to legislators, as well a contact list for legislators.

On a positive note, **Certificate of Need (CON) Reform bills S.4992 (Hannon) and A. 7665 (Russell)** would provide regulatory relief to Long Island's hospitals and promote the more efficient use of state and provider resources. It would remove all routine maintenance and non-clinical projects from the Department of Health's CON process. Please urge legislators to enact this CON legislation.

Congress' Pressing Agenda Items

Congressional lawmakers are busy addressing the looming debt ceiling, developing a fiscal year 2012 budget, modifying provisions of the Affordable Care Act, and considering medical malpractice reform.

Key considerations at stake include:

- The federal government is due to default August 2, 2011, if the debt ceiling is not raised by then. For some lawmakers, raising the debt ceiling is tied to spending cuts. The Medicare and Medicaid programs are vulnerable targets.

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

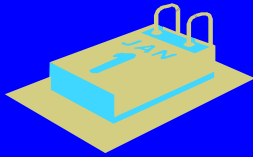
- Winthrop-University Hospital

- Privatization of Medicare through a voucher system and block granting the Medicaid program remain the major components of the GOP's FY 2012 budget blueprint that the House already passed and the Senate rejected.. The Senate plan continues as a work in progress. Fixing the physician fee schedule remains a top priority for the Senate. Physicians deserve full and fair Medicare reimbursement, but paying for that should not fall to hospitals through Medicare reimbursement reductions.
- The House approved its State Flexibility Act that would roll back provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and the Affordable Care Act (ACA) that require states to maintain Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) eligibility – otherwise known as maintenance of effort provisions. States are required to maintain their current levels of coverage until full Medicaid expansion kicks in 2014 when eligibility settles at 133 percent of the federal poverty level.
- The House Energy and Commerce Committee recently approved a medical malpractice measure limiting awards for non-economic damages to \$250,000. New York hospitals fought for a similar cap during recent budget negotiations. The cap was not enacted on the state level.



Staff members of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council's Facilitated Enrollment Program proudly display the FOLIO Award they and the program's website recently won. Coveted Folio Awards are presented by the Fair Media Council each year and winners are chosen by the public. NSHC won under the Community Service Category for the "Best Blog Site or Web Site Devoted to Issues of Interest to a Particular Community." The Facilitated Enrollment website is bilingual and very user friendly. It contains all the information potential applicants need to assemble documents and begin the application process for public health insurance. NSHC has been offering a Facilitated Enrollment Program since 2000 through a grant from the Department of Health. Enrollment sites are held in the community at libraries, hospitals, civic centers and open houses are periodically held at the Council offices in Hauppauge. For more information about the program and the enrollment site calendar go to www.coverage4healthcare.com or call 631-656-9783. Technical website design assistance was provided by the health information department at the Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS).

Standing from left: Enrollers Neffy Townes, Ellen Wahl, Herb Wahlsteen, Lead Enrollment Supervisor Michelle Satriano; Enroller Luz Ayala, and Administrative Assistant Vivian Billings. Seated from left: Annette Butindari, Quality Assurance Coordinator, and Enroller Liliana Gomez. Missing from photo: Stacy Villagran, Director of the Facilitated Enrollment Program, and Laura Danisi, Data Coordinator.



Mark Your Calendar for NSHC Events in June

- June 6 Nassau Suffolk Council of Hospital Auxiliaries Recognition Luncheon, Noon, Watermill Inn, Smithtown
- June 14 Nurse Managers Committee, 12:30 p.m.
- June 17 Revenue Cycle, 1:00 p.m.
- June 17 AMB Scholarship Luncheon, Communications Committee, 1 p.m. at Four Food Studio, Melville
- June 28 Gold STAMP Pressure Ulcer Conference, Wang Center, SUNY Stony Brook

*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.

News Briefs . . .

Long Island Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness . . . takes place June 14 – 15 at Adelphi University with an evening orientation/reception taking place June 14 at the Hofstra University Club. There is no fee to attend the summit. This is a joint program of the Centers for Disease Control, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the Harvard School for Public. Go to <http://meta-leadershipsummit.org/long-island>.

Gold STAMP Pressure Ulcer Conferences. . . The Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council is pleased to present the program, “Gold STAMP: (Success Through Assessment, Management, and Prevention) to Reduce Pressure Ulcers,” on Tuesday, June 28. Recognizing that pressure ulcers are a shared responsibility, this program has received statewide and national recognition as a critical launch toward improvement in prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of pressure ulcers. The Council has partnered with HANYS, the Greater New York Health Care Facilities Association, the NYS Department of Health, and others that represent the continuum of care beyond the hospital walls. The conference will be held at the Wang Center on the Stony Brook University campus. For more information, contact Lillian Curry at lcurry@nshc.org or 631-963-4153.

Long Island’s Top 50 Most Influential Women in Business . . . come from the hospital field. **Dr. Jean Cacciabaudo**, Chief of the Division of Cardiology at Southside Hospital; **Karol Kain Fray**, Vice President for Finance and Administration at Stony Brook University; **Dr. Neeta Shah**, Vice President of Women’s Health Services for the North Shore-LIJ Health System and the Hospital Council’s own **Janine Logan**, Director of Communications, were honored at a May 19 ceremony sponsored by *Long Island Business News*.

Tools to Prevent Hospital-Acquired Infections . . . are available from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Healthcare Quality. A new interactive learning tool, Partnering to

Heal: Teaming Up Against Healthcare Associated Infections provides training and information on basic infection protocols for most common disease transmissions and promotes six key behaviors: teamwork; communication; hand-washing; vaccinations against influenza; appropriate use of antibiotics; and proper insertion, use, removal of catheters and ventilators.

Two National Patient Safety Awards . . . were bestowed upon Stony Brook University Medical Center from the National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems (NAPH). The hospital won the 2011 NAPH Safety Net Patient Safety Award for its demonstrated 50.8 percent reduction in the incidence of severe sepsis mortality. The hospital was also selected for an Outstanding Leadership Award for achievements in eliminating central line-associated bloodstream infections. This award was presented by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Critical Care Societies Collaborative. Stony Brook was recognized for dramatically decreasing its hospital-wide CLABSI rates by 59 percent from 2008 to 2010, resulting in a decrease of 1,144 patient days and an estimated cost savings of \$7.6 million.

Unusual Births . . . recently took place at Nassau-University Medical Center (NUMC) when the hospital’s resident falcons, Mr. and Mrs. Meadowbrook, hatched five baby falcons. A total of 55 peregrine falcons have been born to NUMC’s Mr. and Mrs. Meadowbrook, since 1997. Peregrine falcons, an endangered species, mate for life.

NSHC Committee News . . .

Communications Committee: The NSHC Communications Committee sponsored its 3rd annual “Meet the Legislative Aide” event on Friday May 20, 2011 at the Council offices in Hauppauge. Exploring the topic “Community Health – Working Together to Meet Constituents’ Needs” legislative aides from the federal, state, and county levels engaged in an open dialog with senior public affairs directors from Long Island’s hospitals. The panel talked about a range of community concerns such as access to affordable, primary care, Long Island’s heroin epidemic, and barriers to insurance.


Legislative Aides from left: Susan Eckert from Suffolk County Legislator Lynne Nowick's Office; Jackie Vita, State Senator Kemp Hannon's Office; Josh Teitelbaum, Legislative Counsel to Congressman Steve Israel; and Ali Nazir, Chief of Staff for Suffolk County Legislator John Kennedy.



Finance Committee: At its May 11 meeting, the Finance Committee focused on a series of federal regulatory proposals that will affect Medicare reimbursement for the 2012 fiscal year, and the ongoing work of the state's Medicaid Redesign Team.

Nurse Managers Committee: The committee met May 10 and received an educational presentation from St. Charles Hospital staff entitled, "Improving Patient Satisfaction with Noise Around the Room at Night."

Human Resources Committee: The committee discussed the impact of recent state legislative and regulatory changes on employee wage notifications and payroll deductions, as well as the 2011 survey of hospital salaries and wages conducted by the Association of Healthcare Human Resource Administrators (AHHRA) of Greater New York and sponsored by the Hospital Council.



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*The collective voice of Long Island's
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