

Progress Notes . . . June 2013

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.

Legislative Session Ends, Hospitals Secure Key Victories in Nurse Staffing and Managed Care

The intense grassroots advocacy offered by member hospitals of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council and the Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State, LLC, did not allow **nurse staffing ratio bills** to become a reality this legislative session. This is in spite of widespread sponsorship and support of the legislation in both chambers. The session officially ended June 22, 2013. However, nurse-to-patient staffing ratios will continue as a top legislative priority for the state nurses union; the hospital field's advocacy must continue to ensure this issue remains defeated. The proposed legislation brought with it a price tag of about \$3 billion to the health care industry – the largest unfunded mandate to date.

Other notable successes include:

Safe Patient Handling: No agreement on safe patient handling legislation was reached. This legislation, too, was a very costly, unfunded mandate and as crafted was highly prescriptive and over reaching. The NSHC and Suburban Hospital Alliance, along with the Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYs), certainly support patient and employee safety and had tried to work with legislators to develop more workable, reasonable legislation.

Managed Care Reform: Suburban Hospital Alliance and HANYs-backed legislation designed to ensure fairer consideration of patients' access to quality care and of providers' ability to process claims and payments advanced through both chambers. Managed care reforms were the genesis for the formation of the Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State, LLC, back in 2006. Since that time, the Suburban Hospital Alliance has strengthened its presence and voice, especially in Albany, where the advocacy coalition, of which NSHC is a part, has advanced a dozen managed care reforms to date. The coalition also extends its advocacy efforts and influence to Washington, DC.

Medical Malpractice: There was no action on a variety of proposals advanced by the plaintiff trial bar. One bill sought to convert the statute of limitations to a discovery statute. This would delay the commencement from the time of the alleged act until the discovery of the alleged act, which is often significantly later.

A variety of other high-priority issues remain and advocacy work continues. Some of these items include: out-of-network physician billing, access to capital and for-profit investment, and physician collective negotiation to name few. – Janine Logan, jlogan@nshc.org.

Region's Auxiliary Council Elects New Leadership



From left: Terese Weber, President (Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center); Sheila Norris, First Vice President (Mercy Medical Center); Virginia Bolla, Second Vice President (St. Francis Hospital); Edna Fetkowitz, Treasurer (Huntington Hospital); Georgia Priebe, Recording Secretary (St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center); Sarah Banks, Corresponding Secretary (Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center) are sworn in by NSHC President/CEO Kevin Dahill.

The executive board of the Nassau-Suffolk Council of Hospital Auxiliaries changed hands on Monday, June 10, 2013, when officers for the 2013 – 2014 service term were sworn in by Hospital Council president/CEO Kevin Dahill. The ceremony took place during the Hospital Council's Annual Auxilian Luncheon held at the Watermill Inn in Nesconset. This luncheon pays tribute to the work of auxiliaries at all Long Island hospitals.

Hospital auxiliaries 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.

See page 2 for more Auxilian news . . .

Good Samaritan Hospital Auxilian Next President of Regional Group

Terese Weber, a Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center volunteer auxilian, was elected to a one-year term as president of the Nassau-Suffolk Council of Hospital Auxiliaries. Her term expires June 2014.

Weber joined the hospital's auxiliary force when Good Samaritan Hospital was still just a vision on paper. She has amassed a half century of service to the institution, serving in a variety of support and leadership roles throughout her years as an auxilian. One of the first presidents for the then newly formed auxiliary, Weber has since served as chair of the junior volunteers and president of Good Sam's Central Council, which oversees the hospital's six auxiliary guilds. Currently, she is secretary to the hospital's foundation board. She is retired from her professional position as executive assistant to the district superintendent for Eastern Suffolk BOCES.

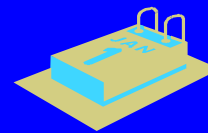


"We have a dedicated and hard working executive board," said Weber, "and together we strive to uphold the goals and traditions of the Nassau-Suffolk Council of Hospital Auxiliaries." Weber says she hopes to increase individual auxilian involvement in the regional group from among all hospitals in Nassau and Suffolk counties.

In her role as Nassau-Suffolk Council of Hospital Auxiliaries president, Weber will continue to lead this organization of hospital volunteers that is aligned with the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council (NSHC). – Janine Logan, jlogan@nshc.org

Auditing Practices Need Revision; Legislation Proposed

The Senate's Medicare Improvement Act (S.1012) introduced in May and the House's companion legislation (H.R. 1250) introduced earlier this year would make important changes to the Medicare Recovery Audit Contractor (RAC) program and other Medicare audit programs. RAC audits in particular have intensified in recent years, placing extensive financial and administrative burdens on hospitals. Hospitals are not adverse to auditing programs that root out true fraud and abuse by utilizing sound medical review of treatment and admission decisions. The current RAC program veers from this guidance. The House and Senate proposals each seek to streamline processes, establish more reasonable standards, and create a greater degree of fairness in auditors' operations. Specifically, the legislation would allow denied inpatient claims to be billed as outpatient claims, when appropriate; require physician review of Medicare denials; establish a consolidated limit for medical record requests; improve auditor performance by implementing financial penalties and by requiring medical necessity audits to focus on widespread payment errors; improve recovery auditor transparency; and ensure due process appeals for claims re-opening. Passage of these proposed bills before the House and Senate is absolutely necessary to ameliorate the numerous challenges and issues of unfairness that hospitals will continue to experience with the RAC program.



Mark Your Calendar for NSHC July Events

July 10 Nurse Executive Committee Meeting, 8:30 a.m.

July 30 Population Health Workgroup(Suffolk) 2 p.m.

For more information please call: 631-963-4153.

News Briefs . . .

IPRO Quality Award Winners for 2013 . . . North Shore University Hospital (Beneficiary and Family-Centered Care and Patient Empowerment) and the following hospitals/dialysis programs were recognized for their commitment to improving quality through staff development, patient education, and collaboration with the IPRO End Stage Renal Disease Network of New York. – **Nassau University Medical Center Dialysis, Southampton Hospital Regional Dialysis Center, and Winthrop Dialysis Centers** at Bethpage, Glen Cove, Roslyn Heights, and Mineola. All these dialysis centers previously received IPRO's Five-Diamond Status designation for patient safety commitment.

National Quality Award Applications . . . sought for the American Hospital Association's McKesson Quest for Quality Prize. The award is presented annually to honor hospitals pursuing excellence through hospital leadership and innovation in quality improvement and safety. Cash awards and/or merit recognition awarded. To nominate a hospital download an application from www.aha.org/questforquality. Completed applications must be e-mailed by midnight, Central Time, Sunday, October 13, 2013 to questforquality@aha.org.

Magnet Recognition Granted to . . . John T. Mather Memorial Hospital. Magnet Recognition from the American Nurses Credentialing Center recognizes health care organizations for quality patient care, nursing excellence, and innovations in professional nursing practice. Presently, only seven percent of hospitals in the United States have earned Magnet designation.

Nursing Scholarship Program Aids Nurse Retention ... at the Long Island State Veterans Home, part of Stony Brook Medicine. The Home's Virgie Bowie Nursing Vision Awards were recently granted to 10 employees who are enrolled in nursing school. The Bowie Scholarship has been offered for 10 years. The awards help the Home maintain a nurse vacancy rate below one percent – well below the current and national averages for skilled nursing facilities, according to the Home.

National Nursing Quality Award . . . was earned by **St. Francis Hospital - The Heart Center**, when it received the American Nurses Association National Database for Nursing Quality Indicators (NDNQI)® for Outstanding Nursing Quality® Award. St. Francis was one of only six hospitals in the United States to achieve this prestigious recognition for enhancing the quality of nursing services that directly affect patient outcomes.

First Class of Physician Business Executives . . . graduated from a joint **venture MBA educational program** offered through Catholic Health Services and the Adelphi University Robert B. Willumstad School of Business. Sixteen graduates, each a physician affiliated with a Catholic Health Services facility, received their master of business administration degrees.

State Medicaid Spending . . . came in \$202 million under the global Medicaid spending cap, with \$200 million being utilized as part of the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities budget plan, according to the State Department of Health.

New Infection Reporting Mandate . . . from the New York State Department of Health requires all hospitals to participate in a pilot program to report laboratory carbapenems-resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE), effective July 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013. During the pilot phase data will not be publicly reported. Following the pilot, the DOH will discuss the preliminary results with its Technical Advisory Workgroup and make a determination if CRE should be made part of the public infection reporting program in the future.

New Tracking System . . . to locate patients during emergencies and evacuations was recently launched by New York State. The New York State Evacuation of Facilities in Disasters System (NYS e-FINDS) is a secure, confidential, fast, and easy-to-use system to provide real-time access to patient locations. The system will be in place for the 2013 hurricane season, with training for providers already taking place.

Excellence in Stroke Care . . . was achieved by **St. Francis Hospital – The Heart Center** and for the third year the hospital earned the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Get with the Guidelines®-Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award. To receive the award, St. Francis developed and implemented preventive procedures to improve patient care and outcomes.

I-STOP Law Implementation Webinar . . . happens Monday, July 8, 2013 at 10:30 a.m. and is hosted by the Healthcare Association of New York State. Go to the HANYS website to register for this free webinar. Effective August 27, 2013, the new law will require most prescribers of controlled substances to consult New York's online prescription monitoring registry for information about their patients' past use of certain drugs.

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

More News and Notes . . .

Hospital Council Awards Scholarship



Pictured at left is the 2013 Ann Marie Brown Memorial Scholarship Winner Joseph Toole with Theresa Jacobellis, Chair of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council Communications Committee and Director, Public and External Affairs, Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center.

Joseph Toole, a Manhasset, New York resident and Hofstra University student, was selected as the 2013 Ann Marie Brown Memorial Scholarship recipient. The Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council (NSHC) and its Communications Committee bestow the award annually. Toole, who is also a certified EMT, is pursuing a bachelor's degree in health sciences/health administration at Hofstra University. The \$2,000 award was presented to Toole at the group's annual scholarship luncheon held this year on June 12, 2013 at the Bonwit Inn in Commack, New York.

Toole was chosen for the award based on his outstanding academic achievement and his hands-on experience in the health care field. As a critical care certified EMT, Toole understands the complexities of health care from both a clinical and administrative viewpoint. He said, ". . . to be effective in the medical field one must have a working knowledge of all of the concerns that come together to provide health care to the public . . . my goal is to become a member of the integrated health care system of the future."

The Ann Marie Brown Memorial Scholarship has been awarded each year since 1994 and commemorates

the memory of the late vice president for government and public affairs at the Hospital Council. Brown served in this role from 1983 – 1993. The \$2,000 award and optional internship is offered to a college junior, senior, or post-graduate student who is a resident of Long Island and who is studying Communication Arts/Marketing, Journalism, or Health Care Administration. For more specific information go to **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**

The 2013 Academy for Healthcare Leadership Advancement

Three-day opening session: September 29 – October 1, 2013 • Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Participants will then engage in six online sessions before returning to Cornell November 10 – 12 for the closing session, project fair, and certificate ceremony. Through the joint sponsorship of Winthrop-University Hospital, HANYS, and the Johnson School at Cornell University, the program has been approved for 50.0 American Medical Association Physicians Recognition Award (AMA PRA) Category 1 Credit(s)TM. Contact: Rachel Hajos (518) 431-7838.

ABC's of
Health Care Reform
and You

Brought to you by the hospitals on Long Island

For news and updates about the Affordable Care Act go to www.nshc.org
Find out about **A**ccess, **B**enefits, **C**osts as they apply to you and your hospital now and in the future. . .



A public information campaign sponsored by the NSHC Communications Committee