

NorMet News . . . February 2013

A Monthly Publication of the Northern Metropolitan Hospital Association

NorMet News publication is a summary of regulatory and legislative news, advocacy messages, and other relevant issues affecting the delivery of hospital and health care in the Hudson Valley.

Gov's Budget Amendments Show Some Promise: Hospitals Press Lawmakers for Passage

The governor's recently released 30-day budget amendments include a proposal to eliminate late in 2014 the scheduled two-percent across-the-board Medicaid cut. This is a positive development for the region's hospitals, as this two-percent cut has siphoned about \$17 million from hospitals in the NorMet region the last two years. What is not included in the governor's amendment package is restoration of the Medicaid trend factor. Hospitals have not seen a full Medicaid trend factor increase since 2005. The trend factor is crucial to ensuring that Medicaid reimbursement rates keep pace with escalating costs to provide care. These proposals will now be taken up by the legislature in what will be a condensed budget negotiation process. Lawmakers hope to complete the state budget by March 21 – a full 10 days before the state fiscal year ends.

“We are encouraged that the governor's 30-day amendments include no new cuts to the hospital industry

and there is a proposal to drop the two-percent Medicaid cut to providers,” said Kevin Dahill, president/CEO of NorMet. “Hospital providers have done their part in spending below the Medicaid global spending cap these past two years and the industry has also worked with the state and federal governments to streamline efficiencies and improve the quality of care. It makes sense that hospitals should share in the savings achieved.”

The state estimates nearly \$2 billion in savings associated with implementation of components of the Affordable Care Act, particularly from enhanced federal matching funds the state will receive for its Medicaid expansion efforts.

Hospital leaders are intensifying their advocacy efforts to ensure the passage of these amendments in the legislature. The next three weeks are crucial to preserving funding for hospitals and achieving regulatory relief.- Janine Logan, jlogan@normet.org.

Please join your colleagues at . . .

HANYS Leadership Advocacy Day March 6 in Albany

*****New this year*** Governmental Affairs Update Meeting
March 5, from 3 to 4 p.m. at the HANYS offices in Rensselaer**

All registration: Christopher Guyon, cguyon@hanys.org. (518) 431-7834

Sequestration Means Another 2% Reduction for Hospitals

With the sequestration deadline just days away there is still no viable plan in Congress to stop the automatic defense and domestic program cuts that will take effect March 1, 2013. The two-percent Medicare reimbursement cuts will be felt beginning April 1, 2013. Hospitals in the NorMet region are set to lose \$251 million (2013 – 2021). Other industries, most notably defense, are gearing up for program reductions and furloughs. Economists agree that the sequester cuts will disrupt the country's economic recovery and incite job loss.

Following on the heels of sequestration is the expiration on March 27 of the continuing resolution. Congress must either extend it, negotiate new spending levels, or if an agreement is not reached, shutdown the government. It seems likely, however, that a deal to extend current spending levels for several months will be struck.- Janine Logan, jlogan@normet.org.

NorMet Members Learn State Budget Proposal Details

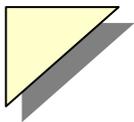


Pictured left to right: Catherine Yukon, Assistant Vice President, Financial Planning, Health Quest; Sharon Lucian, Vice President /Chief Financial Officer, Stellaris Health System; Angela Skretta, Vice President, NorMet.

On February 1, 2013, staff from the Healthcare Association of New York State held a 2013 budget briefing at NorMet offices in Newburgh, NY to help members understand the broad implications of the governor's proposed 2013 – 2014 budget, as well as nuances related to health care policy and funding that will have an impact long after the budget is enacted in March. In the ensuing weeks, respective legislative leaders and committee chairs will be reviewing the governor's proposed budget and subsequent 30-day amendments and will forward their versions of the budget for consideration and conference. Lawmakers hope to wrap up budget business by March 21, 2013.

Member Hospitals

Blythedale Children's Hospital
Bon Secours Community Hospital
Burke Rehabilitation Hospital
Catskill Regional Medical Center
Ellenville Regional Hospital
Good Samaritan Hospital
HealthAlliance Hospital
Helen Hayes Hospital
Hudson Valley Hospital Center
Keller Army Community Hospital
Lawrence Hospital Center
The Mount Vernon Hospital
The New York Presbyterian Hospital Westchester Division
Northern Dutchess Hospital
Northern Westchester Hospital
Orange Regional Medical Center
Phelps Memorial Hospital Center
Putnam Hospital Center
St. Anthony Community Hospital
Saint Francis Hospital
St. Joseph's Medical Center
St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital
St. Vincent's Westchester (Division of St. Joseph's Medical Center)
Sound Shore Medical Center of Westchester
Vassar Brothers Medical Center
VA Hudson Valley Health Care System
White Plains Hospital



The Quality Corner

An update on quality improvement issues

Mary Jane Milano, Director

Joint Commission Expands Measure Sets: The Joint Commission will expand performance measurement requirements for accredited general medical/surgical hospitals from four to six core measure sets. The additional requirements will take effect January 1, 2014. Four of the six core measure sets will be mandatory for all general medical/surgical hospitals that serve specific patient populations and include: acute myocardial infarction, heart failure, pneumonia, and surgical care improvement project. Hospitals with 1,100 or more births per year will be required to implement the perinatal care measure set. The sixth measure set (or fifth and sixth measure sets for hospitals with fewer than 1,100 births per year) will be chosen by all general medical/surgical hospitals from the approved complement of core measure sets. All hospitals must modify and update measure set selection two months before the start of data collection on January 1, 2014.

States Proposed Rules Require Sepsis Protocols, Parents Bill of Rights and

More: The February 13, 2013 New York State Register contained three proposed rules which will affect hospitals. The first and second rules arose largely due to the circumstances surrounding the death of 12 year old Rory Staunton, who died from severe sepsis last year.

- The first rule, **Hospital Sepsis Protocols**, calls for hospitals to develop and implement protocols for the early identification and treatment of sepsis; for these protocols to be submitted to the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) on or before July 1, 2013; and for them to be implemented no later than 45 days after the NYSDOH approves them. The rule includes specifics of what needs to be addressed in these protocols.
- The second proposed rule, labeled **Hospital Pediatric Care** includes provisions directly related to pediatric care and many that are related to other aspects of hospital care. These rules call for hospitals to post a Parent's Bill of Rights to include in particular a provision that says that patients may not be discharged from the hospital or ER until tests that could

be reasonably expected to yield “critical value results” are completed and reviewed by medical staff and communicated to the patient/parent or guardian. The proposed rule also calls for training of staff in the Pediatric ICU and Emergency Room in pediatric advanced life support or a comparable program. Hospitals must develop numerous policies and procedures that are included in the proposed regulation and relate to admission and discharge, emergency services, surgical services, anesthesia services, and radiologic and nuclear medicine. NorMet, through its advocacy organization, the Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State, LLC, will be working with HANYS to provide input into the comment letters for these regulations.

- The third proposed rule in the February 13, 2013 State Register pertains to a requirement for hospital staff to either be immunized against influenza or wear a surgical or procedural mask while in areas where they come into contact with patients. The rule could be finalized as early as May 2013 meaning that it would in effect for the 2013-2014 flu season. – mmilano@normet.org.

News Briefs . . .

Cancer Care Accreditation . . . was earned by **Phelps Memorial Hospital Center’s Community Hospital Cancer Program**. The three-year accreditation with commendation is from the American College of Surgeons’ Commission on Cancer.

Local Planning Board Approves Proposal . . . of **Lawrence Hospital Center** regarding the construction of a new 40,000 square foot Surgery and Oncology Pavilion on its Bronxville campus. The Village of Bronxville Planning Board approved the proposal in early February. The \$34 million building addition and renovation will provide facilities to supplement the hospital’s existing cancer treatment services with radiation therapy and expanded infusion capabilities, and a modern surgical unit designed to meet today’s standards. Next steps for the project include the completion of design documents, local permitting, and bidding and construction.

Hospital Sponsorship . . . concerning **Benedictine Hospital** has been relinquished by the Benedictine Sisters, paving the way for the combining of Benedictine Hospital and **Kingston Hospital** campuses into a single, full-service secular hospital. The Benedictine Sisters will continue to provide pastoral care services at the hospital. Both hospitals will begin to be known as HealthAlliance Hospital – Mary’s Avenue Campus and the Broadway Campus.

Raising Fund and Awareness of Heart Disease . . . is a goal of **White Plains Hospital** and it was recently named the winner of the Heart Walk Hospital Cup trophy presented by the American Heart Association. One of seven hospitals in Westchester County to participate in the Heart Association’s signature event last year, White Plains Hospital recruited hundreds of employees and friends to its team.

HANYS 2013 Health Improvement Award . . . nominations are sought. The award recognizes outstanding initiatives by members to improve the health and well-being of their communities. All NorMet/HANYS members are eligible to apply. Application deadline is March 11. For more information and to apply go to: <http://www.hanys.org/awards/chia.cfm>

Doctors across New York . . . third cycle of funding applications is due March 29, 2013 and must be submitted electronically. The application has been streamlined and now includes only one application for either practice support or loan repayment funds.

Historic National Cancer Prevention Study . . . involves six hospitals in the NorMet region. The American Cancer Society’s Epidemiology Research Program will be enrolling participants for their newest research study, the Cancer Prevention Study-3 (CPS-3). The study will follow participants for 20 years in an effort to figure out who gets cancer and why. Weight and physical activity will be a major focus of the study, but other behaviors, including the use of medications, will be examined as well. NorMet member hospitals participating in the study are **Hudson Valley Hospital Center, Lawrence Hospital, Northern Westchester Hospital, Orange Regional Medical Center, Phelps Memorial Hospital Center, and St. Luke’s Cornwall Hospital**. For more information go to: <http://www.cancer.org/Research/ResearchProgramsFunding/Epidemiology-CancerPreventionStudies/CancerPreventionStudy-3/cps3-locations#ny>



VET CONNECT

An employment, health, and community resource for veterans provided by the hospitals in the Hudson Valley

Go to www.normet.org and click on this Vet Connect icon to find online links to hospitals’ job banks, health care services, and other community resources. The initiative is coordinated by NorMet and members of its Communications Committee. The Vet Connect icon is also located on each member hospitals’ website.



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