

# NorMet News . . . November 2012

## 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.

## Hospital Trustees Celebrate Quality Initiatives

*Hospital trustees, chief administrators, and quality directors from the Hudson Valley recognize their peers for excellence in quality and patient safety*

Trustees from hospitals in the Hudson Valley region gathered Monday, November 12, 2012, at the Doubletree Hotel in Tarrytown, New York for a celebration of clinical excellence and to learn more about the crucial role trustees play in the changing health care environment. The Regional Trustee Briefing, sponsored by NorMet, paid tribute to hospital quality and patient safety initiatives selected by NorMet members as the most outstanding for 2012.

“As our health care delivery system becomes much more patient-centered and reimbursement becomes more value-based, quality improvement initiatives will play an ever increasing role across the continuum of care,” said Kevin Dahill, president/CEO of NorMet. “Those facilities that embrace the challenges inherent in developing and maintaining robust performance improvement programs and can demonstrate measurable and meaningful results will succeed.”

NorMet recognized first place regional winners in four categories:

- Hospital Division or Unit – **Good Samaritan Hospital** for *Elimination of Elective Deliveries (C-section and vaginal births) of Less than 39 Weeks*
- Small Hospital – **Northern Dutchess Hospital** for *Maintain Optimal Pain Control and Increase Patient Satisfaction by Decreasing the Amount of Opioid Use as Well as Adverse Opioid Effects Following Total Joint Replacement of the Hip and Knee*
- Large Hospital – **Vassar Brothers Medical Center** for *Improving Sepsis Treatment Leads to Saving Lives*
- System – **Greater Hudson Valley Health System** for *Project ZERO Central Line-Associated Blood Stream Infection: Hardwiring Central Line Maintenance Best Practices in ICU.*

White Plains Hospital received an Honorable Mention in the Large Hospital category.

The awards were presented by Steven Kelley, president/CEO of Ellenville Regional Hospital and Chair-elect of the NorMet board. Kelley offered remarks about the importance of ongoing performance improvement initiatives and the positive return those efforts have upon patients, their families, and the community. - [jlogan@normet.org](mailto:jlogan@normet.org) ( **Photos page 2** )

## Recovering from Superstorm Sandy . . .

One month ago superstorm Sandy struck the New York metropolitan area and forced the evacuation of hospital and nursing home patients at some facilities in New York City and Long Island. Some of the evacuated city patients were transferred to hospitals in Westchester, as hospitals in this county, Orange, Rockland, Putnam, Sullivan, and Ulster counties dealt with power outages, surge capacity issues, and staffing needs. These six Hudson Valley counties were declared disaster areas, allowing these counties to participate in the Federal Emergency Management Association's (FEMA) public assistance program. Hospitals must submit their Request for Public Assistance by December 2. Hospital workers exhibited extreme dedication during the storm, many working extended hours and remaining at their hospitals during the storm, and are commended for their efforts in keeping patients safe throughout the crisis. There are thousands of hospital employees, however, who suffered the loss of homes and property and are working to re-build their lives. The **Hurricane Sandy Health Care Employee Relief Fund** was established by regional and state hospital associations, including the Northern Metropolitan Hospital Association, as well as the American Hospital Association, to provide assistance to these impacted employees. To donate: [http://www.uhfnyc.org/hurricane\\_sandy\\_relief\\_fund](http://www.uhfnyc.org/hurricane_sandy_relief_fund). The United Hospital Fund is receiving the charitable donations. Hospital CEOs should submit names of impacted employees to UHF and grants will be disbursed to facilities for distribution to employees. Immediately following the storm, the Department of Health filed an 1115 waiver with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to assist with short-term needs. CMS is reviewing its statutory authority in this area. DOH will soon file an additional waiver for longer-term needs. Due to the disaster area declaration, CMS issued an 1135 waiver for hospitals, relaxing documentation, billing, and recordkeeping rules and a blanket waiver covering quality reporting guidelines.

# *NorMet 2012 Patient Safety and Quality Award Winners*



**Hospital Division or Unit – Good Samaritan Hospital** *From left: Registered Nurses, Maternity Unit Joyce Lavecchia; Annie Ikin; Meg Moore; Deborah Marshal, Vice President, Bon Secours Charity Health System; Nicole Richmond; Jeanne Boydston, BSN, RNC-OB, C-EFM, Clinical Nurse Manager, Labor and Delivery; and Steven Kelley, President/CEO of Ellenville Regional Hospital and NorMet Chair-elect.*



**Small Hospital Division – Northern Dutchess Hospital** *From left: Jackie Kavouras, Assistant Vice President Quality Systems; Pam Rhodes, Vice President Patient Services and Chief Nursing Officer; Lori Armstrong, bone and Joint Coordinator; Michelle Tierney, Director, Med/Surg; and Steve Kelley, President/CEO of Ellenville Regional Hospital and NorMet Chair-elect.*



**Large Hospital Division – Vassar Brothers Medical Center** *Judy Flaherty, Manager of Clinical Operations at Vassar Brothers Medical Center, accepts the NorMet Quality Award from Steven Kelley, President/CEO of Ellenville Regional Hospital and NorMet Chair-elect.*



**Large Hospital Division – Honorable Mention – White Plains Hospital** *From Left: Sue Kenny RN, Magnet Program Coordinator; Susan O'Boyle RN, Vice President of Quality; and Steven Kelley, President/CEO Ellenville Regional Hospital and NorMet Chair-elect.*

*See more Patient Safety and Quality Award winners on page 3*

# *NorMet 2012 Patient Safety and Quality Award Winners*



**System Division – Greater Hudson Valley Health System (Orange Regional Medical Center and Catskill Regional Medical Center)** *From left: Orange Regional employees Laura Mansfield, Nursing Service Administrator, Emergency Department, ICU and PCU; Elizabeth Klimczak, Director of Infection Control; Nicole Sewell, Clinical Coordinator, 3East/West ICU; Kimberly Darrigo, Nursing Unit Director, ICU; Rosemary Baczewski, Vice President of Quality; Scott Batulis, President/CEO, Orange Regional Medical Center; Rolland B. Peacock III, Chair, Orange Regional Board of Directors; and Steven Kelley, President/CEO, Ellenville Regional Hospital and NorMet Chair-elect.*

## **Hospitals Heed Fiscal Cliff**

Shortly after President Barak Obama secured his second term, he turned his attention toward the impending “fiscal cliff” crisis, calling upon congressional leaders to work quickly and in a bipartisan fashion to avert drastic tax increases and spending cuts. The President and congressional leaders have talked several times about the crisis, but no definitive solution has emerged.

Sequestration – automatic across-the-board cuts to defense and domestic spending, including Medicare – are most worrisome for hospitals. In the NorMet region, hospitals would collectively absorb \$255 million in new Medicare cuts come January 1, 2013.

Economists from both sides of the aisle agree that the

“cliff” would short-circuit the nation’s fragile economic recovery and affect the pocketbook of every American. Scheduled to expire January 1, 2013 are the Bush-era tax cuts and the Social Security payroll tax holiday and scheduled to take effect that same day is a 27 percent Medicare pay cut to the nation’s physicians. The “doc pay cut” is not a new threat, as Congress has failed to fully fix the flawed sustainable growth rate formula in prior years, opting instead to move the issue further down the road. In the past, hospitals helped fund the temporary fixes through Medicare/Medicaid cuts. The industry remains especially vulnerable, as defense spending cuts are less popular. - Janine Logan, [jlogan@normet.org](mailto:jlogan@normet.org).

### **\*\*\* ADVOCACY in ACTION in Washington, DC \*\*\***

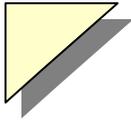
***Join Your Colleagues on Tuesday, December 11***

Make a profound statement in person with your congressional representatives about your hospital’s ability to survive the impending fiscal crisis due to hit all providers in 2013. Medicare physician pay cut of 27 percent, expiring Bush tax cuts, expiration of the Social Security payroll tax holiday, and automatic two percent sequestration cuts ensure a fiscal fiasco at year’s end. Congress must understand hospitals’ vulnerability to arbitrary payment cuts and what that would mean to patients. To register and for more info about hotel locations go to: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/WMDJCWK> - Michael McCue, [mmccue@aha.org](mailto:mmccue@aha.org) ADVOCACY DAY is sponsored by the American Hospital Association in conjunction with state and regional hospital associations. ***Suburban Hospital Alliance and NorMet President/CEO Kevin Dahill will participate in the December Advocacy Day. Let him know if you will join him.***

## State Senate Leadership Still Unsettled

Several weeks after Election Day control of the State Senate remains unclear. The 46<sup>th</sup> district race between Republican George Amedore and Democrat Cecilia Tkaczyk is razor close and will likely end up in the court room. The 46<sup>th</sup> district, located in the Hudson Valley/Capital region, is one of the new districts created as a result of re-districting. The outcome of this race is significant, as the winning candidate will ultimately

decide what party controls the senate. The senate is currently split at 31 seats for each party. However, regardless of who ultimately wins the race, final control could fall in the hands of Senator Jeff Klein, a Bronx Democrat who leads the Democratic Independent Conference. He has not stated publicly the conference's allegiance. – Janine Logan, [jlogan@normet.org](mailto:jlogan@normet.org).



## The Quality Corner

*An update on quality improvement issues*

Mary Jane Milano, Director

**Patient Information, the Internet, and Smart Phone Apps:** The Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project recently released data from its 2012 health survey. There continues to be an upward trend in terms of people using the internet. Now, 80 percent of American adults use the internet while 85 percent have a cell phone. Of the cell phone owners, half say that they own a smart phone. Approximately 31 percent of people who have a cell phone have used their phone to look up health information, which is up from 17 percent in 2010. In their general survey research, Pew found that there was a growth of general app use and downloading. But in health, apps are flat. First measured in 2010, one in 10 cell phone owners had a health app on their phone. In 2011 and then again in 2012, this number remained the same. When asked what kinds of apps people have, cell phone users mention exercise and fitness, weight and diet. As health care providers increasingly look for ways to engage their patients in preventing and managing their own health problems, referring patients to credible internet sites and useful apps is becoming more popular.

**Leapfrog Group Releases Grades:** The Leapfrog Group is releasing its hospital grades the week of November 26. Leapfrog is one of many organizations evaluating hospital quality. The Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS) believes that the Leapfrog methodology to calculate the Hospital Safety Score, which is based partly on Leapfrog Hospital Survey results, is flawed. HANYS has encouraged the Leapfrog Group to join in an effort to consolidate quality reporting efforts and develop one national, standardized, and reliable set of measures to assess hospital safety and quality. However, the Leapfrog Group has declined the offer. HANYS and the American Hospital Association (AHA) continue to advocate that public report cards be based on reliable and credible hospital safety and quality information. HANYS will soon release its updated Report on Report Cards, a primer for evaluating the reliability of public and private quality reports.

**Joint Commission Safety Resource:** On November 26, 2012, the Joint Commission released a free monograph, "Improving Patient and Worker Safety: Opportunities for Synergy, Collaboration and Innovation," to draw attention to the need to create a culture that focuses on both the safety of patients and health care workers who care for them. The monograph contends that high rates of injuries and illnesses among health care workers serve as a warning that the health care environment as a whole must be transformed in order to improve safety. The monograph highlights examples of health care organization practices that address patient and worker safety simultaneously and the benefits and potential cost savings attained through collaboration between employee and patient safety departments. The monograph also identifies functional management systems and processes, strategies and tools that have been used to successfully integrate health and safety activities.

### Member Hospitals

Benedictine Hospital  
Blythedale Children's Hospital  
Bon Secours Community  
Hospital  
Burke Rehabilitation Hospital  
Catskill Regional Medical  
Center  
Ellenville Regional Hospital  
Good Samaritan Hospital  
Helen Hayes Hospital  
Hudson Valley Hospital Center  
Keller Army Community  
Hospital  
The Kingston 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

**ASC Quality Reporting:** To meet the Ambulatory Surgery Center (ASC) Quality Reporting requirements and receive the full annual payment update for Calendar Year (CY) 2014, ASCs must submit quality-data codes for October 1, 2012 to December 31, 2012 services where Medicare is the primary payer. To meet requirements to receive the full annual payment update for CY 2015, ASCs must submit quality data codes on their claims beginning with January 1, 2013, services where Medicare is the primary or secondary payer and submit structural measure data using a web-based tool.

## ***Business Perspective on Affordable Care Act***

NorMet president/CEO Kevin Dahill participated in a health care reform workshop offered by the Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday, November 21, 2012 at the Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel. NorMet sponsored the regional event.

Hospitals, as major employers, are affected by both the insurance coverage provisions of the ACA, as well as the provider regulations, and share some common concerns with the region's businesses. Mainly, the state's health insurance exchange and the plans that join it may prove troublesome for both providers and purchasers. Dahill noted that reimbursement rates could fall in the low end, similar to Medicaid rates that historically under pay for care, and that some of the plans offered through the exchange may offer only minimal coverage. Further, the mandate on employers to provide coverage to their employees could result in some employers dropping coverage, paying the fine for non-compliance, and forcing their employees into state exchanges. Dahill is currently serving on two of the state's regional advisory groups that are working to develop the exchange framework.

NorMet's chief also emphasized the importance of a strong alliance between the local business chambers and the area's hospitals, especially as hospitals work to reduce regulatory burdens that could impede partnerships needed for optimal patient care. – Janine Logan, [jlogan@normet.org](mailto:jlogan@normet.org).



*At left is Kevin Dahill, President/CEO of NorMet with Charles S. North, President/CEO of the Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce.*

## **News Briefs . . .**

**Medicaid Global Spending Cap . . .** holding steady. The Department of Health's most recent report shows that expenditures are \$49 million (0.6 percent) under projections for the first six months of the state fiscal year. The state anticipates providing information about the impact of Hurricane Sandy in the next global cap report, as the storm happened subsequent to this reporting period and the full impact is unknown at this time.

**Recognition for Achievement in Patient Satisfaction . . .** was presented to Hudson Valley Hospital Center by Press Ganey Associates. The hospital won Press Ganey's prestigious "Success Story Award," which was presented at the organization's 2012 National Conference in Washington, DC. Hudson Valley is one of 13 organizations to receive this honor in 2012, and one of only nine organizations to receive the award for satisfaction performance.

**High Marks for Organ Donation Efforts . . .** went to Orange Regional Medical Center. The Donate Life Group of Orange County, a community-based volunteer group working under the auspices of the New York Organ Donor Network, recently recognized Orange Regional for its outstanding support of the group's mission. Orange Regional president/CEO Scott Batulis was presented with a plaque thanking the hospital for educating families about organ donation and helping to save lives through the gift of organ donation.

**Joint Commission Gold Seal of Approval . . .** was bestowed upon Mount Vernon Hospital's Laboratory.

**Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) . . .** announced that Helen Hayes Hospital has been accredited for another three-year period. Helen Hayes received accreditation for 13 rehabilitation programs, one of the largest number bestowed by the accrediting body to any one organization.

**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**



### **Mark Your Calendar for Dec. NorMet Events**

Dec. 3 Compliance, Internal Audit  
and Privacy Committee  
Meeting, 9 a.m.

Dec. 14 RCA Training with National  
Faculty, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
Burke Rehabilitation  
Hospital

See last page for meeting dates for  
**the NorMet Patient Safety Institute**

Meetings for NorMet members only and  
are held at NorMet offices in Newburgh  
unless **otherwise** noted. To register/info  
call: 845-562-7520.

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>



Go to [www.normet.org](http://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.

## Committee/Meeting News . . .

Several NorMet Communications Committee members attended the November 14, 2012 HANYS Annual Communication Conference for Health Care Public Relations and Marketing Professionals at the Hotel Albany. This dynamic one-day event brought members top-notch speakers on crisis communication and social media. *Pictured at right are Burke Rehabilitation Hospital and Research Institute communication staffers Jorina Fontelera, Coordinator of Public Relations and External Communications, and Richard Sgaglio, PhD, Director of Marketing.*



RCA Training Facilitated by System Medical Director and Nuclear Engineer is set for Friday, December 14, 2012 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Burke Rehabilitation Hospital, Rosedale Room, Billings Building, 785 Mamaroneck Avenue, White Plains, NY. This is a joint initiative of the NorMet Hospital Association and the NorMet Patient Safety Institute. Two nationally renowned leaders in the culture of safety and quality movement will address members. The program will focus on strategies and tools to conduct effective root cause analyses and incorporate system improvements from the findings of the RCAs. Faculty is: Gary Yates, MD, President of Healthcare Performance Improvement (HPI) and the Chief Medical Officer of Sentara Healthcare and Craig Clapper, PE, CMQ/OE, Founding Partner and Chief Knowledge Officer for HPI. To register contact: Mindi Ottavan, 845-562-7520, [mottavan@normet.org](mailto:mottavan@normet.org).

## Patient Safety Institute Committee Meetings

**Surgical Site Infection Committee**  
December 18 at 9 a.m.



*\*In order that your hospital may enjoy the confidential and privileged nature of these discussions, ONLY staff from the 23 hospitals that have fully executed their Confidentiality and Participation Agreements with the Institute will be permitted to participate in these meetings. Contact Angela Skretta for more information.*



400 Stony Brook Court  
Newburgh, New York 12550  
845-562-7520 • Fax: 845-562-0187  
[www.normet.org](http://www.normet.org)