

# Progress Notes

March 2016



*Published monthly by the **Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State LLC**, a consortium of 52 not-for-profit and public hospitals advocating for better health care policy for all those living and working in the nine counties north and east of New York City.*

## Some Seek Spending Cuts

House fiscal conservatives are pushing for a reduction in spending from the cap that was set last fall when Congress passed the Balanced Budget Act of 2015 – a two-year budget deal. Appropriations bills will direct spending levels for the upcoming federal fiscal year. Conservatives are looking for about a \$40 billion reduction in mandatory spending levels and two House committees have reviewed proposed legislation. One

committee bill would reduce Medicaid spending by \$25 billion over the next two years. Medicare and Medicaid provider cuts are always likely targets for spending reductions. The Senate has not indicated a desire to propose mandatory spending reduction bills, at the present time. The budget resolution process has months to play out and hospitals remain vulnerable to cuts and harmful policy amendments.

## State Budget Nears Finish Line

The Governor, Senate and Assembly appear to have reached agreement on some components of the 2016 – 2017 state budget. Overall, health provisions are favorable. However, the agreement still requires a final review by legislators and a vote.

The agreement includes new capital funding, rejection of the excess medical malpractice redistribution, and an adjustment of the Medicaid global spending cap to account for the impact of the rejection of the increased Medicaid share for New York City.

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It is also hopeful, at this point, that a final agreement will include a mechanism to use potential settlement funds to help offset unpaid Health Republic claims. However, nothing is final until all votes are cast.

Statewide, hospitals are owed \$200 million in unpaid claims. Hospitals in the Suburban Hospital Alliance regions of Long Island and the Hudson Valley were disproportionately affected by the Health Republic

demise, as nearly 70 percent of the health insurer's beneficiaries resided in these two regions.

The tentative agreement also includes a \$1 billion tax break for New Yorkers making less than \$300,000 annually, a phased-in minimum wage increase that recognizes fiscal challenges in different parts of the state, and an increase in school aid of about \$2 billion.

The new state fiscal year begins tomorrow April 1.

## **Governor Announces Capital Awards**

Providers in the Suburban Hospital Alliance regions of the Hudson Valley and Long Island received a combined total of \$342 million through the state's Capital Restructuring Finance Program and the Essential Health Care Provider Support Program. The awards were announced by the governor's office on March 4, 2016.

Hospitals waited a long time for these funds, which will assist them in their efforts to modify and upgrade physical facilities to make way for more outpatient-based, population health activities. The state was only able to fund a quarter of the original requests received. Earlier in the month, hospital leaders traveled to Albany and passionately spoke about the need for these capital funds.

## **Written Prescriptions Become Relics**

As of March 27, 2016, physicians in New York State are required to electronically submit prescriptions to pharmacies. The law's initial implementation was delayed one year to allow some physicians more time to prepare for the switch. However, State Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker recently issued a temporary, blanket waiver from the mandate for certain exceptional circumstances. These include oral prescriptions for patients in nursing homes and residential healthcare facilities and for compound or other drugs for which directions are long and complicated.

abuse of prescription medication throughout the state. The e-prescribing reform also promotes patient safety and quality and electronic prescribing has been shown in many studies to reduce costs and promote efficiencies.

I-STOP requires prescribers to consult the Prescription Monitoring Program Registry when dispensing prescriptions for controlled substances. At the end of 2015, the New York State Department of Health reports that I-STOP has led to a 90 percent decrease in the number of "doctor shoppers" or patients who visit multiple prescribers and pharmacies to obtain prescriptions for controlled substances within a three-month time period.

The requirement is a key component of New York's I-STOP initiative that is focused on helping curb the

# News Briefs

**Significant Improvements** – The CDC's annual update to the National and State HAI Progress Report found that New York State rates of all healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) improved compared to the prior year. The most significant gains were made in SSI: abdominal hysterectomy (24% reduction) and CLABSI (12% reduction).

**Leadership Program** – A new HANYS/Cornell collaboration, the *Advanced Executive Leadership for Physicians* program was developed to address the need for physician leadership at all levels within provider organizations. The 2016 inaugural program will be two sessions, May 2-4 and June 6-8, at the Cornell Industrial Labor Relations Conference Center in New York. CME credits [Visit the site at HANYS.org for more information and to register.](http://HANYS.org)

**\$100,000 Question** – Northwell Health is hosting a contest in which the public will decide which of three medical innovations developed by its own employees is most worthy of receiving \$100,000 in additional research support. Online voting is open through April 18, according to a press release from Northwell, which is also running local ads during the NCAA tournament encouraging people to vote, part of an overall rebranding campaign that began when the system changed its name from North Shore-LIJ.

## May 2 HANYS & AHA Federal Briefing



Healthcare Association  
of New York State

## and Multi-State Dinner in Washington, D.C.

The American Hospital Association (AHA) will hold its Annual Membership Meeting in Washington, D.C., May 1 through May 4. In conjunction, HANYS will host a federal briefing along with colleagues at the California Hospital Association, Illinois Hospital Association and Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania at the Washington Hilton on May 2, from 4 to 5 p.m. Following the briefing, HANYS will host a multi-state dinner at the Newseum at 6:30 p.m.

Senate and House of Representatives will be out of session throughout the duration of the AHA Annual Meeting. HANYS can help to arrange meetings with health staff from respective NY Delegation offices, upon request.

Please RSVP by completing [HANYS' online registration](#). Please note that [separate registration](#) is required for the AHA Annual Membership Meeting.

# News from the Long Island Region

*A Report on Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council member hospital achievements and notable activities*



**Affordable Care Act, The Patient's Perspective** – The third seminar of a three-part series on the Affordable Care Act will be held on Friday, April 15th, 8 – 10 a.m., at the McGann Conference Center, O'Connor Hall - St. Joseph's College, Long Island. The seminar, "The Affordable Care Act: The Patient's Perspective," will feature a panel of health care providers, including NSHC's Stacy Villagran, senior director of health insurance programs, four community members, and will be moderated by former congressman Tim Bishop. For more information or to RSVP, contact Kara Felton at 631.687.2402 or kfelton@sjcny.edu.

**East End** – *Southampton Hospital* has been designated by New York State Department of Health as a trauma center, making it the first one on the East End of Long Island and an alternative to Stony Brook University Hospital.

**Population Health** – Catholic Health Services of Long Island signed a multiyear contract with population health consultant xG Health Solutions to build a care management system for patients in Nassau and Suffolk counties. xG Health Solutions also partners with the PPS led by Stony Brook University Hospital for DSRIP and Medicaid initiatives.

**New Names** – Forest Hills Hospital in Queens and *Franklin Hospital in Valley Stream* will now be called Long Island Jewish Forest Hills and Long Island Jewish Valley Stream, respectively, and are becoming divisions of Long Island Jewish Medical Center, under the New Hyde Park hospital's operating license.

**Hospital Board** – Mohammad A. Bilal, MD, Director of Vascular and Interventional Radiology at John T. Mather Memorial Hospital, has been named to the Hospital's Board of Directors. Bilal has been Director of Vascular and Interventional Radiology since 2011 and has been on Mather's medical staff since 2004. He is the senior Interventional Radiologist within the Imaging Services Department.

*If you have news to share about your hospital's achievements, please send to Janine Logan at [jlogan@nshc.org](mailto:jlogan@nshc.org)*

## News from the Hudson Valley Region

*A Report on the Northern Metropolitan Hospital Association member hospital achievements and notable activities*



**Wound Excellence** – *Northern Dutchess Hospital*'s wound care center achieved "Center for Excellence" recognition for having high standards of patient care for two consecutive years from Healogics, a Jacksonville, Fla.-based company that works to treat chronic and acute wounds, including diabetic and pressure ulcers and non-healing surgical wounds.

**Award Winner** –The Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce's seventh annual Headliner Awards has recognized *MidHudson Regional Hospital* as Best Place to Work for a business with more than 50 employees from more than 40 nominations submitted by employees, customers, friends, neighbors and organization leaders.

**New York Blood Center** – Representatives from the New York Blood Center presented at the March 8, 2016 meeting of the NorMet board of directors held at the Tarrytown Hilton. The Blood Center is the supplier of hospitals' blood needs. It also conducts grand rounds for hospitals and provides other educational opportunities for professional staff. The employee blood drive is a mainstay of the group's blood collection efforts and hospitals are natural partners in this effort. "A blood drive is a chance for the hospital staff to give back," said Dan Grady, CEO, Hospice of Orange and Sullivan Counties and a NorMet board member. "I have seen lots of house keepers, security guards and other staff willingly donate." Hospitals that want to schedule a blood drive or engage other services offered by New York Blood Center should contact Andrea Cefarelli (914) 760-3173.

**Medical Village** – *HealthAlliance of the Hudson Valley* has received state support to transform its Mary's Avenue Campus in Kingston into a single, state-of-the art hospital and to redevelop its Broadway Campus into a "medical village." The new complex, which will emphasize patient comfort, privacy and efficiency, is expected to be completed two years after approvals.

**Partnerships** – The Westchester Medical Center Health Network and *HealthAlliance of the Hudson Valley* announced an important agreement that will enhance and expand healthcare for an entire region, while keeping essential services close to home for those who need them.

*If you have news to share about your hospital's achievements, please send to Janine Logan at [jlogan@normet.org](mailto:jlogan@normet.org).*

## NSHC Events & Meeting Reports

**Albany Advocacy** – Nearly 40 representatives from Long Island and the Hudson Valley participated in the Suburban Alliance and HANYS advocacy days on March 1 and 2. Suburban Alliance members met with Senate Majority Leader John Flanagan, Independent Democratic Conference Chair Jeff Klein, Health Committee Chair Kemp Hannon and Insurance Committee Chair James Seward, among others, to press the 2016 legislative agenda. Hospital leaders emphasized the need for the state to quickly address the nearly \$200 million in unpaid Health Republic claims and put in

place safeguards against future health plan failures. The group also impressed upon legislators that malpractice reforms should not be considered as part of the state budget process and must be done in a balanced way.

**Fiscal Policy Committee** – The March 9 meeting of the Fiscal Policy Committee included briefings on the rollout of the state's capital awards and the progress of state budget negotiations. HANYS staff walked the committee through institution-specific reports that aid in preparation for the Medicare comprehensive joint bundling program, and Ms. Darwell provided an update on the region's wage index improvement project and pending appeals.

**Human Resources Committee** – The committee's March 18 meeting included discussions about the implications of the proposed minimum wage increase and paid family leave benefits being debated as part of the state budget. Ms. Darwell provided updates on proposed federal overtime eligibility rules and implementation of the state Safe Patient Handling law.

**Long Island Health Collaborative** – The Collaborative met on March 17. Members discussed their ongoing activities related to data collection to inform the next round of Prevention Agenda priorities and planning and the *upcoming Are You Ready, Feet?* health promotion campaign. This campaign's official launch will coincide with the debut of the Collaborative's redesigned and interactive website in early April. A mailing to Long Island physician offices about the campaign is also scheduled. On April 6, 2016, the collaborative and the American Heart Association, a LIHC partner organization, will hold a walk at Nassau County's Eisenhower Park to celebrate National Walking Day – a celebratory day to encourage physical activity via walking. This is the American Heart Association's 10th National Walking Day. Also reported were the results of the mental health first aid training offered by the Association for Mental Health and Wellness and supported by the collaborative. This first round of training was provided to 28 collaborative members. The two Community-Based Organization Summits – one held at St. Joseph's College and the other at Adelphi University (both collaborative members) – offered rich qualitative data about the needs present in communities throughout Long Island. Analysis of this data was run through ATLAS.ti software and is nearly complete.

**PHIP Steering Committee** – The Steering Committee met on March 30 and was apprised of the ongoing and planned activities of the Long Island Population Health Improvement Program (PHIP) and that program's main initiative – the Long Island Health Collaborative. The LIPHIP is on track in meeting its grant deliverables and remains an open forum for not only community-based organizations, but for interested consumers/patients, as well. All meeting agendas continue to be posted on the website along with meeting minutes, data reports, and other planning documents that drive the work of the LIPHIP. Steering Committee members discussed the possibility of establishing a Youth Advisory Board. This demographic is not currently represented on the collaborative, but is a key group as the youth are the future.

## NSHC 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 – The Heart Center
- St. Joseph Hospital

Eastern Long Island Hospital

John T. Mather Memorial Hospital

Nassau University Medical Center

Northwell Health

- Franklin Hospital
- Glen Cove Hospital
- Huntington Hospital
- North Shore University Hospital
- Peconic Bay Medical Center
- Plainview Hospital
- Southside Hospital
- Syosset Hospital

Stony Brook University Hospital

Southampton Hospital

South Nassau Communities Hospital

Veterans Affairs Medical Center

Winthrop-University Hospital

## NorMet Member Hospitals

Blythedale Children's Hospital

Bon Secours Charity Health System

- Bon Secours Community Hospital
- Good Samaritan Hospital
- St. Anthony Community Hospital

Burke Rehabilitation Hospital

Catskill Regional Medical Center

Ellenville Regional Hospital

HealthAlliance Hospital

- Broadway Campus
- Mary's Avenue Campus

Helen Hayes Hospital

Keller Army Community Hospital

Montefiore Health System

- Mt. Vernon Hospital
- New Rochelle Hospital

The New York Presbyterian Hospitals

- Lawrence Hospital Center
- Hudson Valley Hospital
- Westchester Division

Northern Westchester Hospital

Orange Regional Medical Center

Phelps Memorial Hospital Center

Putnam Hospital Center

St. Joseph's Medical Center/St. Vincent's Hospital

St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital

St. Vincent's Westchester (Division of St. Joseph's Medical Center)

Vassar Brothers Medical Center

VA Hudson Valley Health Care System

Westchester Medical Center Health Network

- Westchester Medical Center
- MidHudson Regional Hospital

White Plains Hospital