



Progress Notes

October, 2017

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Upcoming Events

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Insurance Enrollment Begins Amid other Legislative Uncertainties

As open enrollment for individuals wishing to purchase health insurance under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) exchanges gets underway November 1, 2017, key health insurance issues remain unresolved, including re-authorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) funding and legislation to continue cost sharing reduction payments (CSR). And Congress' recent passage of a 2018 budget resolution leaves the door open to more Medicaid and Medicare cuts as the legislative body works to overhaul the nation's tax code through the fast-tracked reconciliation process. While Congress is focused on tax reform and tax cuts, the Medicare and Medicaid programs remain likely targets as funding mechanisms for these tax cuts.

CHIP Legislation

There is progress, however, on re-authorization of CHIP, with the House expected to vote by early November on legislation to extend the program for five years. Funding for CHIP expired September 30, 2017. New York State can fund the program through the end of the year. Without re-authorization, nearly 300,000 children in the state could lose insurance, including 99,119 children in the nine counties located throughout the Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State regions.

The House CHIP legislation includes a provision to lift \$5 billion in total Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) cuts in federal fiscal years 2018 and 2019. The previously ACA-legislated DSH cuts took effect October 1, 2017, and will drain nearly \$330 million from New York's hospitals during the 2018 federal fiscal year if Congress does not delay the cuts. The House two-year deal would be paid for by deepening the current law's DSH reductions for 2021 through 2023 by \$6 billion. This House bill is an improvement over an earlier one that would have provided only one year of relief and \$16 billion in new cuts in later years. The Senate's package is similar to the House's most recent CHIP legislation.

CSR Payments

The Trump administration halted the cost sharing reduction payments made to insurers selling on the health insurance exchanges on October 12, 2017. These payments help low-income Americans afford their co-payments and deductibles. The permanent loss of CSR payments means New York would lose \$900 million in funding for the state's Essential Health Plan. The Essential Plan is available to low-income New Yorkers who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid, but not enough to afford commercial insurance product sold on the exchange. Last year, 136,324 individuals in the nine Suburban Hospital Alliance counties purchased an Essential Plan from New York's marketplace, with about 60 percent of enrollees residing in Nassau and Suffolk counties.

Bi-partisan insurance market stabilization legislation that was introduced by Senators Lamar Alexander and Patty Murray would guarantee cost sharing reduction payments for two years, in addition to other changes aimed at stabilizing the insurance markets. The Trump administration's wavering support of the legislation makes its future uncertain.

However, many insurers factored premium increases into their silver plan offerings for 2018 to guard against the financial impact of lost CSR payments. Advance premium tax credits, which are paid to low-income Americans to help them afford their monthly premiums, rise dollar-for-dollar with silver premium rates and should protect low-income Americans from steep premium rate hikes. Middle and higher-income Americans would feel the brunt of the premium increases because the tax credits phase out at higher income levels. Ironically, the federal government could find itself spending more on advance premium tax credits than it saves by eliminating CSR payments. According to a Kaiser Family Foundation study, 84 percent of marketplace enrollees received premium tax credits in 2017.

It is important for [legislators](#) to hear directly from their constituents regarding the above legislative priorities, as patients' lives and hospital employees' lives are affected.

Insurance Marketplace Opens for Business

Enrollment begins Nov. 1st and runs through Jan. 31, 2018

Enrollment for year five of the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) marketplace-based insurance exchanges begins November 1, 2017, for first-time enrollees. Those renewing their insurance enroll beginning November 15, 2017. Enrollment remains open until January 31, 2018, on the New York State of Health marketplace.

Enroll online, by phone, or in-person with the assistance of a certified navigator.

Visit www.coverage4healthcare.org listing of enrollment sites throughout Nassau and Suffolk counties, or call 631656-9783.

You can also visit the New State of Health's Official Health Plan Marketplace at www.nystateofhealth.ny.gov or call the state's toll free number, 855-355-5777.

On Long Island, the Suburban Hospital Alliance regional affiliate the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council is one of three stateappointed navigator agencies for the region. The Hospital Council maintains a user-friendly, bilingual website – www.coverage4healthcare.org - that lists enrollment sites and dates and other helpful information.

In the Westchester and Hudson Valley area, state certified navigator agencies are: Community Service Society of New York, Maternal Infant Services Network of Orange, Sullivan and Ulster Counties and the Westchester County and the Rockland County Departments of Health.

New York's health insurance marketplace continues to offer a competitive array of health plans for the individual market in the Nassau and Suffolk regions, as well as in counties in the Hudson Valley region. New York State, in general, has not been plagued by a paucity of insurers in any particular county, as has occurred in other parts of the country.

Healthcare Voices

Healthcare Voices is a campaign spearheaded by the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council to highlight the stories about New Yorkers' experiences with the health insurance marketplace, coverage issues, and healthcare access. The Hospital Council is also a statecertified navigator agency and is in a unique position to interact with New Yorkers who are seeking health insurance coverage. The campaign is bringing attention to these otherwise unheard voices through social media, traditional media channels, and through conversations with legislators.

Recently widowed, Ruth Zaporta, who is now raising her school-aged children by herself, learned she had breast cancer soon after obtaining affordable coverage through the Affordable Care Act. Zaporta says without the coverage, she would never have seen the doctor who diagnosed her cancer. According to Zaporta, the insurance saved her life. Read more about Ruth's story and other stories at [Healthcare Voices](#).



Hospitals Helping Hospitals – The Healthcare Association of New York State and Greater New York Hospital Association have established New York Healthcare's Puerto Rico Hurricane Relief Fund to assist hospitals (including their healthcare workers) in Puerto Rico that were impacted by Hurricane Maria. The Fund is a vehicle for New York's hospital community to show its support for frontline caregivers and their families who have suffered significant losses. The goal of the Fund is to raise at least \$10 million. The American Hospital Association has established a similar, national fund.

How to Make a Donation

Checks can be made out to *New York Healthcare's Puerto Rico Hurricane Relief Fund* and sent to:
Greater New York Hospital Association
555 West 57th Street, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10019
ATTN: Lisa Krieger

Donations can also be wired to:
Greater New York Hospital Foundation, Inc.
DBA New York Healthcare's Puerto Rico Hurricane Relief Fund
Account number: 4346185815
ABA routing number: 026013673

Please contact GNYHA's [Lee Perlman](#) if you have any questions about the Fund.

Healthcare Cost Transparency Website – A new, interactive healthcare cost transparency website by FAIR Health, recently launched. It will empower New Yorkers from across the state to plan for and manage their medical and dental expenses. The New York State Health Foundation provided funding. Consumers can compare out-of-network and in-network costs on a range of procedures or episodes of care. For common procedures, consumers will be able to view information on healthcare providers' practices and prices. Go to www.youcanplanforthis.org.



News from the
Hudson Valley

[Click here for Northern Metropolitan Hospital Association member listing](#)

Meeting the Triple Aim – Highlighted this month in the HANYS Innovation Spotlight for meeting the Triple Aim was *Putnam Hospital Center*, for enhancing the use of its electronic medical record (EMR) to screen patients at point of entry to determine if they are smokers, triggering smoking cessation education. Putnam created an interface with the New York State Quitline to facilitate transmission of patient information on discharge if they opted into the program.

American College of Surgeons Accreditation– *Orange Regional Medical Center's* Spagnoli Family Cancer Center has received accreditation from the Commission on Cancer, a quality program of the American College of Surgeons (ACS). To earn voluntary CoC accreditation, a cancer program must meet or exceed the CoC quality care standards, be evaluated every three years through a survey process, and maintain levels of excellence in the delivery of comprehensive patient-centered care.

Get with the Guidelines – This month, *Catskill Regional Medical Center* received the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Get With The Guidelines®-Stroke Silver Plus Quality Achievement Award. The award recognizes the hospital's commitment and success in ensuring stroke patients receive the most appropriate treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines based on the latest scientific evidence.

New Accreditation – *Northern Dutchess Hospital* earned accreditation from The Joint Commission, "Hip and Knee Joint Replacement Gold Seal of Approval Certification" from The Joint Commission, and "Wound Care Center Accreditation" from the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society, for overall services, orthopedics and wound care.

If you have news to share about your hospital's achievements, please send to Janine Logan at jlogan@normet.org.

Meeting the Triple Aim – Highlighted this month in the HANYS Innovation Spotlight for meeting the Triple Aim were,



News from

Long Island

[Click here for Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council member listing](#)

- o *South Nassau Communities Hospital* for improved communication among clinicians as the patient moves from one care setting to another, follow-up phone calls to ensure the successful transition of care and that standards are being applied, and sponsored, regular guest lectures on topics that enhance elderly care.
- o *St. Joseph Hospital of Catholic Health Services of Long Island*, for adopting concepts from LEAN and the Stanford Operating System (SOS) to improve patient satisfaction, decrease wait times, improve clinical care, and decrease lost revenue from patients leaving without treatment.
- o *Northwell Health*, for their *Healthy on the Hill* initiative, a population health initiative addressing two Prevention Agenda priorities – prevent chronic diseases, and promote a healthy, safe environment – by promoting healthy eating, active living, and community transformation around health using a collective impact model of public health.
- o *Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center*, for the institution of the Geriatric Fracture Program (GFP) to focus on the care of those in this age group who have sustained a fragility fracture, designed to reduce patient readmissions, length of stay, and mortality, and improve patient satisfaction.
- o Read more about these stories at www.hanys.org/tripleaim.

Leapfrog Rating – *John T. Mather Memorial Hospital* has been recognized for its patient safety record with The Leapfrog Group's top "A" Hospital Safety Score – the only Long Island or metropolitan area hospital to achieve that distinction in the latest scoring period. Less than 5 percent of all New York State hospitals received an A grade, and Mather was one of only 832 hospitals nationwide that achieved the top score.

Society Accreditation – *Nassau University Medical Center* has been awarded accreditation for two years from the Continuing Medical Education (CME) Committee of the Medical Society of the State of New York (MSSNY) based on the organization's self-study report, evidence of performance-in-practice activity files and the accreditation interview. Provisional accreditation is only awarded to initial accreditation applicants that demonstrate compliance with the committee's requirements.

OpenNotes – Northwell Health has been selected by the New York State Health Foundation as a recipient of a grant driving the adoption and optimization of OpenNotes. OpenNotes is a national movement that gives patients and their caregivers access to the clinical notes written by health care providers. When patients have access to their own health information, they become equal partners with providers in managing their own care and are better able to develop stronger relationships with their health care team--all of which results in improved patient care and experience.

If you have news to share about your hospital's achievements, please send to Janine Logan at jlogan@nshc.org

Committee Updates

Fiscal Policy Committee: At the October 11 meeting of the Fiscal Policy Committee, members were provided an update on the latest Affordable Care Act repeal package. Ms. Darwell also discussed congressional efforts to complete tax reform by the end of the calendar year and potential funding cuts that could have a significant impact on member hospitals. Members discussed the new S-10 worksheet instructions and were encouraged to review their data before the October 31 deadline. Ms. Graham and Ms. Darwell discussed Medicare Targeted Probe and Educate reviews and OIG Credit Balance audits with the group.

Revenue Cycle Committee: At their October 20th meeting, members of the Revenue Cycle Committee were briefed on the most recent ACA repeal efforts as well as regulatory changes impacting their facilities including Medicaid DSH cuts, the elimination of cost-sharing reduction payments, Association Health Plans and Medicare payment bundling. The group discussed the outlook for the 2018 Insurance exchange and recent audit activity from Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) and the Office of the Inspector General.

Long Island Health Collaborative: The Collaborative held a special event on September 29, convening stakeholders for a Collective Impact Think Tank. The Population Health Improvement Program's grant workplan will be submitted for the 2018-2019 grant period in November of this year.

Upcoming Events

Advocacy Day on March 7, 2018: Save the Date

Please save the date

Your participation is critical! We will provide more details as we get closer to the date.

Additionally, on March 6—the day before Advocacy Day—HANYS will host an executive orientation program at our offices for member chief executive officers and other executives who are either newer to their current role or simply interested in learning more about HANYS and our resources. The program is an opportunity to meet with HANYS' executive team, as well as our policy and business leaders. HANYS will also host an association cocktail reception that evening. More details on the March 6 executive orientation program and cocktail reception will follow in the coming months.