Progress Notes

September 2014

Washington Offers IT Relief and Short-Term Funding

Before leaving for their home districts to campaign, members of Congress passed a short-term continuing resolution that will fund the government through December 11, 2014. The continued funding of government operations more than likely will be the first order of business when Congress returns in November. Meanwhile, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a final rule right before the Labor Day Holiday that provides hospitals and other eligible healthcare providers with some flexibility in meeting "meaningful use" criteria.

Providers have been pressured to illustrate "meaningful use" of health information technology according to a timetable set forth by the Medicare and Medicaid Electronic Health Record Incentive Programs. The final CMS rule offers some flexibility to providers in meeting the "meaningful use" criteria in fiscal year 2014. Providers must show that they have successfully

adopted different stages of Electronic Health Record (EHR) use and certification of EHR vendor-supported technology by certain deadlines. There are payment incentives and penalties tied to the implementation of "meaningful use."

Inside this Issue . . .

Open Payments Website Debuts

September 30, 2014 marked the launch of CMS' open payments database , which reports on payments made to physicians and teaching hospitals. The database is the product of the Physician Payments Sunshine Act, which was included as a provision in the Affordable Care Act. It requires pharmaceutical companies and medical device manufacturers to report any payments made to physicians and academic medical centers. Any item of value more than $10, or an aggregate of $100 per year, is reportable. Cash, stock options, travel, entertainment, and grants are all reportable. This first public data release covers items of value given between August 1 and December 31, 2013. The 2015 reports will cover calendar year 2014. Hospitals are encouraged to review their conflict of interest and disclosure policies that pertain to their employed and community physicians.

The final rule offers 10 different pathways for eligible hospitals and professionals to meet "meaningful use" requirements for fiscal year 2014. To take advantage of the ruling's flexibility, hospitals and other providers must attest that they could not fully implement 2014 certified EHRs due to delays in availability of technology, specifically challenges installing software patches, completing training, and implementing workflow changes. However, for reporting for fiscal year 2015, all hospitals will be required to use the 2014 edition of EHR technology and report performance for a full 365 days. The hospital industry had advocated for a more reasonable 90-day reporting period.

Robust use of health IT is key to reducing healthcare costs, improving quality, and enhancing care coordination. "Meaningful use" stems from the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act enacted as part of the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).-

Janine Logan, jlogan@nshc.org;jlogan@normet.org.

Hep C Testing Legislation Earns Governor's Signature

Governor Cuomo has signed 350 bills and vetoed none since the close of New York State's 2014 legislative session in June. Several hundred still await action by the governor. Most recently the governor signed the **Standing Orders for Hep C Virus Testing** legislation. This law authorizes registered nurses to administer Hepatitis C virus (HCV) tests pursuant to a standing order from a physician or nurse practitioner. The law takes effect December 15, 2014. Since January, a new state law requires HCV screening tests to be offered to patients born between 1945 and 1965.

Significant healthcare-related bills awaiting delivery to and action by the governor include:

Insurance Coverage for Telemedicine and Telehealth; Non-profit Revitalization Act; and Physical Therapy Assistants in Home Care Settings. Access HANYS' comprehensive legislation chart for more details about all pending legislation.

> ## *Medicaid Waiver Update . . .*
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> Public comments on the state's draft DSRIP Project Plan application end October 29. The department expects to release the final DSRIP Project Plan application November 14, with Project Plan applications due December 16.
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> The DSRIP dashboard on the state's website includes Medicaid data, which can assist applicants with their project plan applications, community needs assessments, prioritizing clinical projects, and understanding network utilization patterns.
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> HANYS' Medicaid Waiver website is also another very useful resource.

News Briefs . . . .

CMS Appeals . . . The extensive backlog of currently pending Medicare appeals for short stays has been a huge financial problem for hospitals and a policy headache for CMS. The appeals backlog stretches for more than two years, members report, with some estimates noting 800,000 cases are awaiting review by an administrative law judge. The situation prompted CMS to offer a partial payment deal to hospitals willing to withdraw their pending inpatient Medicare appeals. The partial payment would cover a little more than two-thirds of the net allowable amount for pending inpatient claims. In order to participate, hospitals must agree to settle all eligible claims. Settlement requests must be sent to CMS by October 31, 2014. Go to the CMS website for more information and details.

Who Are the Hospital Heroes . . . is a new online initiative sponsored by the Coalition to Protect America's Health Care and the American Hospital Association. The program showcases hospital caregivers and many others, from administrative staff and nurses, to physicians and other allied health professionals, maintenance and security, who go above and beyond in their work to help patients in their communities. Visit the Hospital Heroes website to view featured heroes and to nominate a hospital hero.

48th Institute for Health Care Auxiliaries and Volunteer Leaders . . . takes place October 6 and 7 at the Albany Marriott. The Institute aims to provide valuable information about today's complex health care environment and help auxilians and volunteer leaders learn useful new skills to help them in their roles. More details to follow.

Population Health Era . . . and how to communicate this approach to care is the focus of the Healthcare Association of New York State's Communications Conference happening October 8, 2014 at the Desmond Hotel in Albany. For more information and to register go to www.hanys.org.

Hospitals Adhere to the Triple Aim . . . and varied stories about how New York's hospitals are doing so are highlighted on the HANYS website through its "NYS Triple Aim' campaign. The campaign captures the widespread efforts of hospitals that are pursuing the Triple Aim approach of improving population health, enhancing the quality of patient care, and reducing the cost of healthcare. New York's hospitals are actively engaged in implementing new and innovative approaches to healthcare delivery despite fiscal constraints. Go to www.HANYS.org/tripleaim. Feel free to re-tweet and post the outstanding work performed by hospitals. To submit a story for the campaign, contact Steve Kroll at skroll@hanys.org or Michael Pauley at mpauley@hanys.org.

Quest for Quality Prize® . . . applications are due October 12, 2014. The American Hospital Association's

Commerce Bank Offers Members Financial Flexibility

Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State, LLC is pleased to announce the endorsement of Commerce Bank for automated accounts payable (AP) solutions. Commerce Bank's revolutionary AP solution, ControlPay® *Advanced*, enables Suburban Hospital Alliance member hospitals to simplify, automate, and control payment processes while generating a steady revenue stream.

ControlPay® *Advanced* allows hospitals to save time and expenses by paying invoices electronically through the Visa® network. Participating Suburban Hospital Alliance member hospitals will earn monthly revenue share based on their spend level and the aggregated volume of all hospitals who participate in this Suburban Hospital Alliance program.

For additional information, contact Maureen Kalmbach at the Suburban Hospital Alliance at 845-562-7520 or mkalmbach@normet.org.

Marla Freeman is the Commerce Bank Account Executive who will be servicing participating NorMet member hospitals. For your hospital specific proposal, contact Marla Freeman at (973) 467-5578 or Marla.Freeman@commercebank.com.

John Kounelias is the Commerce Bank Account Executive who will be servicing participating Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council member hospitals. For your hospital specific proposal, contact John Kounelias at (732) 722-7014 or John.Kounelias@commercebank.com.

(AHA) McKesson Quest for Quality Prize® is presented annually to hospitals pursuing excellence through hospital leadership and innovation in quality improvement and safety. All U.S. hospitals are eligible for the 2015 AHA-McKesson Quest for Quality Prize®. To download an application go to: www.aha.org/questforquality.

Educational Discount . . . is being offered to employees of Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State, LLC, hospital members. Mercy College and the Suburban Hospital Alliance entered into a partnership that will allow employees of member hospitals a 15 percent discount on all undergraduate and graduate classes at Mercy College in Dobbs Ferry, NY. The Suburban Hospital Alliance includes all member hospitals of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council and the Northern Metropolitan Hospital Association. For more information contact Mercy College at: 1-877-MERCY-GO.

Regional Finance Meeting . . . takes place on Wednesday, October 15, 2014 at the Marriott Long Island Hotel and Conference Center in Uniondale, NY. This is the Metropolitan New York Chapter of the Healthcare Financial Management Association's annual Fall Academy. Keynote speaker is Paul Keckely PhD, managing director, Navigant Consulting, who will share observations on Health Care Exchanges and key data points to consider. Attendees will receive 8.0 hours of CPE. Registration form available at the HFMA website.

Engage the Tools of High Reliability . . . to help your organization improve patient safety and enhance performance at a FREE conference being offered by HANYS on October 29, 2014 at the Academy of Medicine in Manhattan. Positioning for Organizational Excellence and Efficiency: How to Achieve High Reliability in Healthcare will feature national experts on high reliability in healthcare who will cover Just Culture, human factors, and the patient perspective.   Visit the HANYS website to register.

Relief from Statutes and Regulations . . . during emergencies is explained in a new guide developed by HANYS and the Iroquois Healthcare Association, with input from the Department of Health. *Guide for Healthcare Providers: Temporary Suspension and Modification of Statutes and Regulations During Emergencies* provides a brief overview of the process to request statutory and regulatory relief in New York State, including contact information. HANYS and partnering organizations, including the Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State, will host a webinar on November 3, 2014 from 10 to 11 a.m., during which the Department of Health will be present to answer questions.

Emergency Preparedness Activities . . . are ramping up at hospitals, as threats caused by Ebola, EV-68 (Enterovirus 68), and MERS-Cov (Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome) are in the news. These activities include triage and isolation drills at hospitals and review of infectious disease protocols and treatment to thwart the spread of disease. In addition, flu season begins in October, although there is currently no widespread prevalence of flu in New York State.

News from the Long Island Region . . .

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

Mental Health Awareness Efforts . . . on Long Island will kick into high gear when National Mental Illness Awareness Week takes place October 5 through October 12. The Association for Mental Health and Wellness and the Mental Health Association of Nassau are partnering this year to bring a more unified voice about mental illness issues to all communities on Long Island. These organizations invite hospitals to visit www.miaweek.org for information about the national campaign and for local cooperative opportunities connect with Ruth McDade rmcdade@mhaw.org.

A FREE five-week Saturday morning fall walk series . . . at Heritage Park in Mt. Sinai, NY begins October 4, 2014.
The walk series is a homegrown effort organized by several Long
Island Health Collaborative members. All are welcome. No
registration required. Just show up with your feet and sneakers at
10 a.m.

Catholic Health Services of Long Island Former Trustee . . . receives statewide honor. Former vice chair of Catholic
Health Services board of directors, Sister Elaine Callahan, was recently presented with the 2014 Trustee Leadership and
Advocacy Award by the Healthcare Trustees of New York State. (HTNYS) Sr. Elaine received the honor from HTNYS
in recognition of her extraordinary contributions as a member of the CHS system board where she served for 16 years.
If you have news to share about your hospital's achievements, please send to Janine Logan at jlogan@nshc.org.

News from the Hudson Valley Region. . .

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

Excellence in Stroke Care . . . was awarded to Catskill Regional Medical Center's Harris Campus. It was named a
designated Stroke Center by the New York State Department of Health. Catskill's expert Stroke Team is comprised of
highly-trained physicians, nurses, and technicians who can treat stroke quickly and effectively, using the latest medicines
and techniques to minimize brain damage.
If you have news to share about your hospital's achievements, please send to Janine Logan at jlogan@normet.org.

NSHC Events/Meetings Report. . .

The Long Island Health Collaborative (LIHC): Members met September 18, 2014 and LICH is continuing its focus of
caring for the community. LIHC is a multi-stakeholder group of hospitals, the two local county health departments and
other local government entities, academic institutions, and dozens of community-based organizations.   LIHC is focused
on chronic disease management and prevention, with an emphasis on obesity-related conditions, as well as substance
abuse/mental health treatment and prevention activities. The website provides links and resources, http://nshc.org/long-
island-health-collaborative/. The collaborative' s other plans include chronic disease surveillance and assessment to gain a
collective view of Long Islanders' health and the promotion of walking, as a simple and inexpensive way to engage in
physical activity to improve/manage one's health.

Communications Committee/LIHC Education Subgroup: This small group met following the larger LIHC meeting to
develop a strategy for a communications campaign centered around LIHC's Rx for Walking program and other initiatives
related to nutrition and physical activity.

Finance Committee: The September meeting agenda included briefings on the final Medicare inpatient rule for FY2015,
the progress of the Medicaid Waiver applications and regulatory guidance, and updates on Medicare audit initiatives,

among other topics. Mark Bogen, chief financial officer for South Nassau Communities Hospital, assumed the chairmanship from Robert Shapiro of the North Shore/LIJ Health System.

Human Resources Committee: On September 19, the committee reviewed a presentation by guest speaker Henry Petrie of Benefits Optimization on its employee wellness programs. The committee also discussed recent Title 18 surveys in the region and flu vaccination campaign.

NSHC October Events/Meetings

Oct. 2	NSHC Board Meeting, 8 a.m.
Oct. 8	Finance Committee Meeting, 8 a.m.
Oct. 14	Nurse Managers Committee Meeting, 12:30 pm.
Oct. 15	Nurse Executives Committee Meeting, 8:30 a.m.
Oct. 17	Revenue Cycle Committee Meeting, 12:30 p.m.
Oct. 22	Long Island Health Collaborative Meeting, 10 a.m.
Oct. 22	Communications Committee/LIHC Public Education Subgroup, 11:30 a.m.

All meetings take place at NSHC offices in Hauppauge unless otherwise noted.   Call 631-963-4153.

NorMet 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 Broadway Campus
HealthAlliance Hospital Mary's Avenue Campus
Helen Hayes Hospital
Hudson Valley Hospital Center
Keller Army Community Hospital
Lawrence Hospital Center
Montefiore Mt. Vernon Hospital
Montefiore New Rochelle 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)
Vassar Brothers Medical Center
VA Hudson Valley Health Care   System
Westchester Medical Center
White Plains Hospital

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
- St. Joseph Hospital

Eastern Long Island 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
Peconic Bay Medical Center
Southampton Hospital
Stony Brook University Hospital
Veterans Affairs Medical Center – Northport
South Nassau Communities Hospital
Winthrop-University Hospital