

# Progress Notes

September 2015



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.

## Congress Returns to Work and Faces Key Deadlines

The imminent deadline facing members of Congress happens today September 30, 2015. This is the day the current federal fiscal year ends and with it the funding to operate the federal government. It appears that a continuing resolution to fund the government at existing spending levels through mid-December will avert a government shutdown. However, it only resolves the issue in the short term.

Added to the mix in mid-December will be a debate about lifting the debt ceiling. That debate will complicate matters pertaining to Congress' discussion of funding the operations of the federal government.

Finally, automatic, across-the-board sequestration spending cuts are set to resume on October 1, 2015, as well. These automatic two-percent Medicare cuts were

legislated in 2011 as part of a debt/deficit reduction agreement. That agreement also authorized a bi-partisan congressional "super committee" to find \$1.2 trillion in debt reduction savings by November 23, 2011. If the committee failed or Congress did not approve the committee's recommendations, then sequester – an automatic cut – would kick in in 2013. That is exactly what happened. The original nine-year, annual sequester cuts to defense, Medicare, and other domestic programs began in 2013, but were partially repealed in fiscal years 2014 and 2015. Other subsequent congressional actions extended the cuts through 2024. Unless Congress acts, sequestration takes full effect October 1, 2015.

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## Set a Foundation for Your Future

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# Governor Signs Healthcare Bills

*A variety of healthcare-related bills were signed into law by Governor Cuomo*

Many have been delivered to the executive office and are awaiting a decision. Other bills remain in committee. Here is a summary and recap of signed bills:

**Immunizer Expansion and Reform:** Authorizes a pharmacist, upon a patient-specific or non-patient-specific order from a physician or nurse practitioner (NP), to administer immunizations to prevent tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, and shingles and makes permanent a pharmacist's authority to administer immunizations for influenza, acute herpes zoster, and meningococcal infection. The bill includes additional requirements for pharmacists when administering immunizations

**“Wage Theft” Annual Notice Requirement Repeal:** Repeals the provision of the Wage Theft Prevention Act of 2010 that requires employers to annually provide employees with a written notice regarding wage information. This bill also increases the maximum penalties associated with violating other provisions of the act. One of the provisions in the chapter amendment makes the repeal of the annual notice requirement effective immediately.

**Hospice Decisions:** Authorizes an attending physician to make decisions regarding hospice care for incapacitated adults who are hospice-eligible and do not have a surrogate.

**Telehealth:** The chapter amendment includes a number of changes from the original version of the legislation

(A.9129-A, Russell)/ S.7852, Young). It clarifies that private insurers and Medicaid provide coverage for services delivered through telehealth when the services are otherwise covered; clarifies the definition of telehealth services to include telemedicine, store and forward technology, and remote patient monitoring; and makes the effective date January 1, 2016.

**E-Prescribe Mandate Delay:** Delays implementation of New York State's e-prescribing mandate by one year, until March 27, 2016.

**Sepsis Data Collection:** Requires the initial phase of data collection for severe sepsis and septic shock to be considered a pilot phase to ensure accuracy before making data available to the public.

**Collaborative Drug Therapy Extension:** Extends the collaborative drug therapy law, enacted in 2011, for an additional three years, to September 14, 2017, and expands to include all hospitals, as well as certain nursing homes that have an onsite pharmacy staffed by a licensed pharmacist. The 2011 law authorized collaborative drug therapy management in teaching hospitals only.

For more information about these and other bills either delivered to the governor, awaiting delivery, or committee action, please go to [HANYS Legislative Summary Chart](#).

# News Briefs . . .

**North Shore becomes Northwell** – North Shore-LIJ Health System, the state’s largest private employer and health care provider, is changing its name to Northwell Health. The name change will be the centerpiece of a broad rebranding and marketing campaign, launching January 2016.

**Co-Op Program from Hofstra University** - Hofstra’s School of Engineering and Applied Sciences is offering a program available to all hospitals and healthcare facilities. Biomedical engineering and computer science students are available to work co-op positions, full-time for eight months starting in January of 2016. Find more info [here](#), or contact Philip Coniglio, 516-463-5548.

**HANYS Auxilian Institute** – HANYS' 49th Annual Institute for Healthcare Auxiliaries and Volunteer Leaders will be held October 26 and 27 at the Albany Marriott at 189 Wolf Road. Learn more and register [here](#). Contact Sue Ellen Wagner at (518) 431-7837 or at [swagner@hanys.org](mailto:swagner@hanys.org).

**Micro Grant for Walking Program** – America Walks and the Every Body Walk! Collaborative are pleased to announce a new micro grant program designed to assist local walking advocates build on the momentum of the newly released Surgeon General's Call to Action, “Step It Up!” The program will fund 10-15 community groups for activities designed to increase local walking programming and stimulate community demand for infrastructure improvements that provide accessible, safe walkable places for the entire community. [Applications](#) are due by 5:00pm EDT on October 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Information Needed for Physician Advocacy** – In order to advocate effectively on the behalf of hospitals and physician workforce issues, HANYS requests that members download and complete the [2015 HANYS and Allied Associations Physician Recruitment and Retention Survey](#) by **Friday, October 16**.

**PHIP Underway** – The New York State Department of Health’s Population Health Improvement Program (PHIP) is underway in 11 regions throughout New York State. This grant-funded initiative is designed to advance population health activities in each of these regions. Funding for the grant program was included in the 2014 – 2015 state budget, which was approved by the state legislature in March. A total of \$13 million statewide was approved for the two-year program to support local regions in their multi-sectoral efforts to transform healthcare delivery to make it more patient-centered and coordinated.

The Long Island region PHIP contractor is the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council (NSHC), the membership association for all Long Island hospitals, and the PHIP contractor in the Hudson Valley region is Taconic Health Information Network Community (THINC.)

**Surgeon General’s Call to Action** – Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy announced on September 9<sup>th</sup> a call to action: “Step It Up! The Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities.” This program directly aligns with the work of the Health Collaborative and Long Island PHIP, as mentioned above, in highlighting healthy, accessible activities in the fight against chronic diseases. A follow-up webinar on October 15<sup>th</sup> America Walks and the Every Body Walk! Collaborative will present the ideas and practices of regional and federal agencies on how to connect with offices that have invaluable resources for localized walking projects in your region. [Register for the webinar today.](#)

## Claims Data Assistance

**Managed Care Advisory Group:** The Hospital Council has expanded its business relationship with the Managed Care Advisory Group to offer to members its Contract Payment Review (CPR) product. The focus is ensuring that insurers are complying with negotiated reimbursement rates and payment policies. MCAG will analyze claims data to assess where underpayments have occurred, identify reimbursement trends, implement recovery efforts, and make recommendations on contractual changes.

Contact Wendy Darwell at [wdarwell@nshc.org](mailto:wdarwell@nshc.org)

## News from the Long Island Region . . .

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



***NSHC Auxilian Convention*** – The Nassau-Suffolk Council of Hospital Auxiliaries’ 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Regional Convention will be held at the Crest Hollow Country Club on November 5, 2015. Hospital Auxilians play a vital role in the delivery of compassionate care at each of their facilities and are major fund raisers for their respective institutions. Collectively, Long Island’s volunteer Auxilians raise millions through gift shop and thrift shop sales, fashion shows and boutiques, and other events.

***Doctor Ratings*** – In September, the **North Shore-LIJ** health system began posting its own system of doctor ratings online, combating commercial sites such as ZocDoc, Yelp, Vitals and Healthgrades, that help consumers choose their care providers. On North Shore-LIJ’s site, patients rate doctors on a scale of one to five stars, and a rating is only automatically displayed if a doctor opts in or has been rated at least 30 times.

***NUMC Department Chair*** – Paul Mustacchia, MD, FACP, MBA, has been appointed to assume the responsibilities of chairman of the department of medicine at the **Nassau University Medical Center**. Previously, Dr. Mustacchia served as acting chair of the department of medicine and chief of gastroenterology at NUMC. Dr. Mustacchia is a graduate of the SUNY Buffalo School of Medicine, completing his residency and fellowship training at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City.

***Trustee Awards on LI*** – Healthcare Trustees of New York State recognized Neboysa R. Brashich of **Eastern Long Island Hospital** and Frederick C. Braun, III, of **Brookhaven Memorial Hospital Medical Center** with the HTNYS’ Trustee Leadership and Advocacy Awards, which were presented at HTNYS’ 35th Annual Trustee Conference on September 18. These awards honor trustees who demonstrate leadership, commitment, and decision-making abilities to best position their organization in today’s evolving healthcare environment, as our trustees most certainly do.

***New Grant Program for the Aged, Blind and Disabled*** – Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council has a new application assistance program for the aged, certified blind, and certified disabled populations. Partnering with the Suffolk County Department of Social Services in a grant with the NYS Department of Health, the program targets these special populations on Long Island. These sites are different from the Navigator program, which helps people apply for Medicaid based on MAGI rules through the online NY State of Health insurance marketplace. The ABD Program is designed to help those who are eligible for Medicaid based on non-MAGI rules to complete the paper Access NY and Supplemental A applications that are submitted directly to their local districts.

***If you have news to share about your hospital’s achievements, please send to Kim Whitehead at [kwhite@nshc.org](mailto:kwhite@nshc.org).***

## News from the Hudson Valley Region. . .

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



**Night in the Orient - Putnam Hospital Center** celebrates their 51<sup>st</sup> annual gala Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>. The orient themed event includes a silent auction and a presentation by the Chinese Language School principal at Chuang Yen Monastery in Kent. For reservations and/or more information, please call Putnam Hospital Center Foundation's Executive Director Anita Minella at 845-230-4763.

**Compassionate Caregiver Recognition – Orange Regional Medical Center's** Lung, Head and Neck Cancer Patient Navigator, Jayne O'Malley, has been selected as a finalist by the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare for its 2015 National Compassionate Caregiver of the Year Award. The 2015 award recipient will be announced on Nov. 18, 2015 at the 20th Annual Kenneth B. Schwartz Compassionate Healthcare Dinner in Boston, and the award recipient will receive a \$5,000 monetary prize.

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



### Register Now for HANYS' 2015 Communications Conference: Be Everywhere (Almost)

Learn strategies to connect with your community, future patients, and internal stakeholders at HANYS' Annual Conference for Healthcare Communications Professionals.

Join us Tuesday, October 20 in Albany and learn how to:

- Spark conversations through your content
- Form relationships with your community members
- Engage your internal audiences to build your brand

Click here for registration information, speaker biographies, agenda, and hotel information.

## NSHC Events & Meeting Reports

**Fiscal Policy Committee** – At its September 9 meeting, the Fiscal Policy Committee received a guest presentation from Gloria Kupferman and Kelly Price of HANYS’ DataGen division on the Medicare payment bundling initiative for comprehensive joint replacements. Hospitals on Long Island and in the Hudson Valley will be required to participate in this pilot project. Ms. Darwell briefed the group on the final Medicare inpatient payment rule, proposed changes to the “Two-Midnight” rule, and explained the state’s Basic Health Plan offering for individuals with modest incomes who do not qualify for Medicaid.

**Human Resources Committee** – At the September 18<sup>th</sup> committee meeting, NSHC arranged for an education session on employers’ obligations and reporting requirements for the provision of employee health insurance. Attorney Karlee Bolaños with Harris Beach gave a comprehensive presentation on those sections of the Affordable Care Act. Ms. Darwell provided updates on state legislation requiring workplace violence prevention programs, an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC,) proposed rule on employee wellness programs, and National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) activity.

### 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  
John T. Mather Memorial Hospital  
Nassau University Medical Center  
North Shore - LIJ

- 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

### NorMet Member Hospitals

Blythedale Children’s 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 Hospital

- 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

- Bon Secours Community Hospital
- Good Samaritan Hospital
- MidHudson Regional Hospital
- St. Anthony Community Hospital
- Westchester Medical Center

White Plains Hospital