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Nassau-Suffolk  
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## Hospital Council Joins Sen. Schumer to Protest CMS' 75% Rule

New York's Senator Charles Schumer, joined by Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council president/CEO Kevin Dahill, spoke on behalf of Long Island's inpatient rehabilitation patients at a press conference on September 4, 2007. He organized the media event held at Nassau-University Medical Center (East Meadow, New York) to call attention to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services "75% rule" that will prevent thousands of Long Islanders from accessing inpatient rehab services at hospitals on Long Island.

Sen. Schumer, who is a member of the Senate Finance Committee, hopes to introduce an amendment to the State's Children's Health Insurance Plan re-authorization, which Congress is currently debating. His amendment seeks to return the patient quota threshold for IRF facilities to 60%. The CMS rule will increase that threshold to 75% next year.

"If you don't get the good rehab that you get here at Long Island's hospitals, then you'll likely end up sicker and in the hospital again. That's costly in the short term," he said. "Under CMS' rule, inpatient rehab for hip and knee replacements would be out. CMS wants to stick to the rule to save money," said Senator Schumer.

"This rule is about dollars and sense," said Kevin Dahill. "It's a budget issue. CMS is blind to patients' needs. Rehab is about getting people better and back to a level of functioning they deserve."

Six hospitals on Long Island have inpatient rehabilitation units: Long Beach Medical Center, Glen Cove Hospital, Southside Hospital, Nassau University Medical Center, St. Charles Hospital, and Mercy Medical Center. Long Island's 18 other hospitals regularly transfer patients to these hospitals for inpatient rehab needs. So this rule effectively affects patient care quality at all hospitals.

The loss in Medicare revenue to Long Island's six hospitals with inpatient rehab units would be about \$35 to 40 million annually.

"CMS' rules ought to reflect our technology," said Arthur Gianelli, CEO of Nassau University Medical Center. "Rehab isn't what it was 20 years ago. Technology is there to help people."

Nassau University Medical Center rehab patient Joseph Mayo joined the Senator, Dahill, and Gianelli at the press conference. His feeling that CMS disregards the patient's needs echoes the thoughts of similar patients, rehab medicine specialists, and hospital administrators. "I am glad the Senator is here to straighten this out," said Mayo.



Kevin Dahill, (at podium) president/CEO of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council joins Senator Charles Schumer (left of podium) and Nassau-University Medical Center CEO Arthur Gianelli (far right) at a press conference organized by the Senator to protest CMS' 75% inpatient rehab rule. At left are NUMC rehab patient Joseph Mayo and his daughter Gail. Dr. Perry Stein, director of physical medicine and rehabilitation at Mercy Medical Center, is behind Kevin Dahill.

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