

eProgress Notes . . . June 2009

A Monthly Publication of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council, Inc.

eProgress Notes publication is a summary of regulatory and legislative news, advocacy messages, and other relevant issues affecting the delivery of hospital and health care on Long Island.

Long Island Nurses Recognized for Excellence

Good Samaritan Hospital nurse takes top honor at Hospital Council regional recognition ceremony

Nurse leaders from Long Island's not-for-profit and public hospitals gathered Wednesday, May 20, 2009 at the Woodbury Country Club to bestow recognition upon their nurse peers at the Nurse of Excellence Award Ceremony hosted by the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council (NSHC). One nurse from each of the Hospital Council's member hospitals was nominated for this award, which recognizes outstanding leadership and clinical practice. Deans of area nursing schools also submitted nominations recognizing nursing excellence in education. Molloy College and Suffolk County Community College presented nominees.

It was Eileen Roberto RN, Nurse Manager Breast Health and Palliative Care Services, Good Samaritan Hospital, however, who took the top honor as Long Island's "Nurse of Excellence."

"Nurses bring extraordinary expertise and talent, compassion and dedication to our hospitals day in and day out," said Charles Bove, chief administrative officer for Good Samaritan Hospital. "Eileen is certainly no exception and we congratulate her on today's honor."

Roberto was the driving force behind the formation of Good Sam's Palliative Care Unit, working with administrators, nursing staff, physicians, social workers, care managers, pastoral care givers, and volunteers to bring the unit to life. Her colleagues describe her passion for evidence-based practice and patient advocacy as contagious. Her overarching goal is to ensure quality of life for patients and families facing life-altering diagnoses.

"I have always maintained a philosophy of care based on competence, compassion, and clinical excellence to improve care for patients facing these illnesses," said Roberto. "I share this award with the collective voices who allowed me to build on my passion."

The Hospital Council's annual salute to nurses is fashioned after the New York State Legislature's Nurse of Distinction Program that ended in 1995. NSHC is one of the few hospital associations in the state to continue this program voluntarily. It is now in its 14th year. The NSHC represents Long Island's not-for-profit and public hospitals.

For more information about this program and a full listing of nominees, visit www.nshc.org – Janine Logan, jlogan@nshc.org.



From left: Gara Edelstein, Chairperson, Nurse Excellence Subcommittee and Senior VP Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer, St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center; Charles Bove, Chief Administrative Officer, Good Samaritan Hospital; 2009 Nurse of Excellence Winner Eileen Roberto from Good Samaritan Hospital; Pat Hogan, Senior VP and Chief Nursing Officer, Good Samaritan Hospital; Patricia Darcy, Chairperson, NSHC Nurse Executive Committee and Chief Nursing Officer and VP Patient Care Services, Southampton Hospital.

State Legislative Session Enters Final Days

The Hospital Council continues to focus on two key legislative priorities: the expansion of transitional care unit (TCUs) demonstration sites and managed care reforms. TCU legislation sponsored by Assemblywoman Eddington has already passed through that chamber; the companion bill, introduced by Senator Foley at the Council's request, has passed the Senate Health Committee and Senate Finance Committee. It has since moved to the Rules Committee where it is now sitting pending the outcome of the upheaval in the legislative Senate leadership. Mr. Dahill traveled several times to Albany to lobby for the bill. The Council also initiated grassroots advocacy for the TCU legislation to combat an opposition campaign mounted by the long-term care industry.

The progress of managed care reform legislation has been complicated by a package introduced by the governor that calls for both a return to Insurance Department approval of premium increases, and an increase from 75 percent to 85 percent in the required medical loss ratio. The governor's package also includes many of the common-sense reforms for which the Council has advocated -- requiring insurers to pay electronically submitted claims within 15 days, giving hospitals an explicit right to an external appeals process, and requiring that insurers treat services provided at a participating hospital as an in-network visit, regardless of whether the treating physician is covered by the patient's plan -- but the controversial market conduct provisions have slowed down consideration of any reform legislation.

Other key issues that the Council is monitoring closely: the Family Health Care Decisions Act, which would empower family members to make health decisions for an incapacitated loved one; bills that would mandate the ratio of nurses to patients or, alternately, require reporting of hospitals' nursing ratios; and legislation to reauthorize low-cost IDA financing. – *Wendy Darwell, wdarwell@nshc.org.*

Federal Activity: Focus on Reform

Momentum continues to build for health care reform legislation. The goal is to send health care legislation to the floor by August and pass a bill by October.

Key committees working on reform legislation – the Senate Finance Committee and the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pension Committee - seek common priorities of providing quality, affordable care, health insurance for all, promoting prevention and wellness, and calling for shared responsibility to pay for reform.

As the details unfold, the Hospital Council will ensure that reform financing options steer clear of Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement reductions and other funding mechanisms, such as value based purchasing, that exist first and foremost as savings vehicles rather than as true barometers for quality improvement. – *Janine Logan, jlogan@nshc.org.*

Region's Hospital Auxilian Group Appoints New President

Bernadette Nee, a Good Samaritan Hospital volunteer, was elected to a one-year term as president of the Nassau- Suffolk Council of Hospital Auxiliaries at the group's annual luncheon held June 1, 2009.



2010 Nassau-Suffolk Council of Hospital Auxiliaries executive board. From left: Bernadette Nee, President (Good Samaritan Hospital); Eleanor Watson, 2nd Vice President (St. Charles Hospital); Uta Dee, Treasurer (Stony Brook Medical Center); Therese Weber, Recording Secretary (Good Samaritan Hospital); Ileen Cargill, Corresponding Secretary (Southside Hospital). Missing: Vickie DeFrist, 1st Vice President (Eastern Long Island Hospital).

Her term expires June 2010.

Nee joined Good Samaritan's auxiliary in 1974 and throughout her years of service has been president of the Good Samaritan Guild and president of the Guild's Central Council. While she has spent most of her time at Good Sam in the volunteer office, Nee says working with the junior volunteers, serving as their mentor and friend, has been most rewarding.

"I am looking forward to bringing the hospitals together and injecting enthusiasm during my year as president," said Nee.

In her role as Nassau-Suffolk Council of Hospital Auxiliaries president, Nee will continue to lead this organization of hospital volunteers that is aligned with the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council, the organization that represents Long Island's not-for profit and public hospitals.

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 auxiliaries raise millions through gift shop and thrift shop sales, fashion shows and boutiques, and other events.

In addition, they are actively involved in advocating on federal, state, and local levels on behalf of their hospitals and the thousands of patients that these institutions serve each day. – *Janine Logan, jlogan@nshc.org*

NSHC Committee News . . .

Finance Committee . . . met on May 13 and covered the impact of the proposed federal inpatient and post-acute rules for the 2010 fiscal year. The meeting was followed by a special joint briefing with chief medical officers about the three critical quality-related reimbursement reforms proposed as part of federal health care reform: value-based purchasing, reduced payments for readmissions, and bundling of acute and post-acute care payments.

Revenue Cycle Committee. . . at the May 8 meeting, the committee discussed the DOH's revised billing policy for ancillary lab and radiology services connected to a clinic visit, hospitals' implementation of a "Red Flags" identity theft prevention policy, and the Council's ongoing advocacy with the Nassau and Suffolk county social service commissioners regarding hospitals' pending Medicaid applications.

Human Resources Committee. . . met on May 15 and received a detailed briefing from Cynthia Levernois, Senior Director for workforce at HANYS regarding workforce legislation under consideration in the state legislature – including bills on mandated staffing ratios, increased educational requirements for nurses, and access to personnel records. The committee reviewed and suggested changes to the nursing and allied health vacancy survey under development by the Council.

Communications Committee . . . met on June 5 for the annual Ann Marie Brown Scholarship Luncheon and a workshop on the applicability of social media to the hospital marketing mix. Award-winning blogger and social media expert Hilary Topper, president and founder of HJMT Communications, led the workshop. Smithtown resident Marygrace Apostoli, a junior at the University of Richmond, received the 2009 Ann Marie Brown Scholarship. Honor student Apostoli hopes for a career in global health care administration.

News Briefs . . .

Wage and Salary Survey . . . hospital human resources officers have received the 2009 Association of Healthcare Human Resources Administrators (AHHRA) of Greater New York executive compensation, wage and salary surveys, developed in consultation with the Council's Human Resources Committee. Member hospitals that complete the survey will receive the results of the survey in September for free. Completed surveys were due on June 3.

Member Hospitals

Brookhaven Memorial Hospital
Medical Center

Catholic Health Services of Long
Island

- Good Samaritan Hospital
Medical Center
- St. Catherine of Siena Medical
Center
- St. Charles Hospital

East End Health Alliance

- Eastern Long Island Hospital
- Peconic Bay Medical Center
- Southampton Hospital

Long Beach Medical Center

John T. Mather Memorial Hospital

Nassau University Medical Center

New Island Hospital

North Shore-Long Island Jewish
Health System

- Franklin Hospital
- Glen Cove Hospital
- Huntington Hospital
- North Shore University Hospital
- Plainview Hospital
- Southside Hospital
- Syosset Hospital

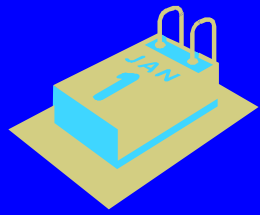
Stony Brook University Hospital

Veterans Affairs Medical Center –
Northport

Winthrop South Nassau University
Health System

- South Nassau Communities
Hospital
- Winthrop-University Hospital

Accessing Health Insurance . . . the Hospital Council's Facilitated Enrollment Program, which provides application assistance for the Child Health Plus, Family Health Plus and Medicaid programs, hosts open houses across Long Island, including in most member hospitals. Uninsured patients and community members can be directed to the program's website at <http://www.nshc.org/chpfhp.cfm> for information on the documents needed to apply for coverage and the calendar of open house events.



Mark Your Calendar for NSHC Events in July

- July 2, Board of Directors Meeting, 8 am.
- July 8, Finance Committee Meeting, 8 a.m. (via conference call)
- July 10, Revenue Cycle Committee, 12:30 p.m.
- July 17, Nurse Executives Committee, 2 p.m.
- July 28, Corporate Compliance Committee, 9:30 a.m.

Still time to register for:
****HANYS Annual Meeting**
June 24 – 26
Sagamore Hotel and
Resort in Lake George, NY
Go to www.HANYS.org

Of Special Note . . .

The Life Safety Committee is hosting an educational seminar on June 16 at Stony Brook University from 8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m. The morning session will feature presentations on fire pumps, controllers, and flow testing presented by Bert Stipe of Quimby Equipment Company and Nestor Escribano of Metron, Inc. The afternoon presentations, by Jeffrey Sheridan of Absolute Clean Environment, will be on management of environmental health concerns during renovations and facility management. The seminar will offer attendees AIA and New York State Department of State continuing education credits.

The New York State Department of Health has agreed to the request by **New York Senator Craig Johnson and the Hospital Council** to provide a regional briefing on changes to financial reporting and reimbursement policy and procedural changes that result from this year's state budget. The briefing will be held on June 18 at 12 noon at the LaGuardia Marriott.

On June 22, the Hospital Council has scheduled a briefing for emergency planners, facilities, and engineering staff on the challenges of a hospital evacuation. Presenting will be Dr. Kevin Chason, director of emergency management at Mount Sinai Hospital, to discuss the hospital's evacuation of 600 patients during a fire in January.

NASSAU-SUFFOLK HOSPITAL COUNCIL
1383 Veterans Memorial Highway, Suite 26
Hauppauge, NY 11788 • (631) 435-3000
www.nshc.org
*The collective voice of Long Island's
not-for-profit and public hospitals.*