

# eProgress Notes . . . August 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.*

## Representatives Bishop and Israel Talk Health Care Reform

U.S. Representatives Tim Bishop and Steve Israel met with a room full of hospital administrators Monday, August 17, 2009 to hear first hand how developing reform legislation in Washington would affect the Long Island hospital community and the patients it serves. As part of the broader reform effort, these concerns include the necessity for physician integration, evidence-based medicine rooted in scientific studies, health information technology, and further administrative simplification of insurance claims processing. The Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council (NSHC) hosted the congressional briefing. NSHC is the organization that represents Long Island's hospitals.

"If we don't reform health care, we can't sustain it, because it is such a large part of our federal budget," said Congressman Bishop. "In order to have a sustainable budget, we simply can't maintain the status quo and carry forward."

"I want reform that protects people from insurance company abuses and bases medical care on quality instead of volume," said Congressman Israel.

This approach touches on an area of reform that would align payment for care with proven evidence-based medicine for diseases and disorders. While the current proposals in Washington, such as a proposal to penalize hospitals whose patients are readmitted within 30 days of treatment, would cast a uniform net over all providers, such an approach will not work, say hospital administrators, because not all providers are the same, and more importantly, not all patients are the same.

"Penalizing hospitals across the country for preventable readmissions doesn't make sense," said Aaron Glatt, MD, president/CMO of New Island Hospital (Bethpage NY), "because it isn't scientific. It doesn't adjust for variables." Such variables, including family members living in close proximity to the patient or the availability of 24-hour home care, will make a difference in a patient's recovery and potential readmission to the hospital, say hospital administrators.

"The issue of readmission can't even be discussed without the issue of our payment system," said Jeff Kraut, senior VP, strategic planning, and marketing, North Shore-LIJ Health System. "Health information technology is a precursor to evidence-based medicine."

Universal adoption of health information technology continues to be problematic because of the lack of standardization on a national level and the high costs to implement the technology, especially for independent physician practices. Yet, health information technology will be crucial to health system reform, say hospital leaders.

Difficulty in implementing health information technology follows on the heels of barriers now in place that impede physician integration between hospitals and practicing physicians in the community. Federal and state anti-trust laws and other legal measures block the ease with which physicians and hospitals can work together.

"Engaging doctors is key," said Brian Currie, president/CEO of the Long Island Health Network. "You need to have doctors and hospitals working closely together."

"The Long Island hospital community has always supported health reform," said Kevin Dahill, president/CEO of NSHC. "In order to achieve it, there must be shared sacrifice on the part of all those involved." – *Janine Logan, jlogan@nshc.org.*



*From left: Congressman Tim Bishop; Jeff Kraut, Sr. VP of Strategic Planning and Marketing, North Shore-LIJ Health System (Manhasset), Congressman Steve Israel; Aaron Glatt MD, President/CMO of New Island Hospital (Bethpage).*

## NSHC Committee News . . .

**Finance . . .** met via conference call on July 8 and received NSHC updates on federal health reform negotiations, the HUD section 242 hospital mortgage refinancing program, and Medicaid rate rebasing.

**Nurse Executives . . .** met July 17 and were briefed on health care reform, the staff ratio reporting legislation and the Department of Labor's emergency regulations to implement the mandatory overtime prohibition law. The committee discussed vacancy rates, the placement of new graduates, and participation of hospital staff in the Nurse Managers Committee.

**Corporate Compliance . . .** met on July 28 and received briefings on the Office of Medicaid Inspector General's provider compliance program regulations, mandatory overtime law, and the attorney general's request for information on hospital confidentiality policies.

## News Briefs . . .

**Long Island Hospitals . . .** were recognized for their achievements with the American Heart Association's *Get with the Guidelines*, a quality improvement program. Gold Level Performance Achievement Awards went to **North Shore University Hospital (Stroke)**, **South Nassau Communities Hospital (Coronary Artery Disease)**, **Winthrop-University Hospital (Stroke and Coronary**

### 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

Artery Disease). Silver Level Performance Achievement Awards went to **Huntington Hospital, Southside Hospital and St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center** (all for efforts with Stroke). The hospitals were also recognized in an advertorial that appeared in the August issue of *US News and World Report's* 100 Best Hospitals in America edition.

**HANYS Pinnacle Award** . . . for Quality and Patient Safety (large hospital category) went to Winthrop-University Hospital. The Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS) recognized Winthrop for its implementation of a Computerized Provider Order Entry (CPOE) system that dramatically enhanced patient safety and improved the quality of patient care. The award was presented in June at HANYS Annual Meeting in Lake George, NY.

**The American Hospital Association (AHA)**. . . board committee on health professions selected Stony Brook University Hospital CEO Steven Strongwater MD to chair that committee. This specialty committee provides a forum for discussion and policy development related to Graduate Medical Education (GME) and the supply and training of other clinical providers.

**Quality Improvement** . . . and identifying preventable readmissions was the focus of a daylong workshop held earlier this month by the Healthcare Association of New York State and the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council. Participants had the chance to become familiar with and comment on the 3M PPR Software that evaluates for readmissions. In New York State, the Department of Health's Patient Safety Center has been working with the 3M system to develop hospital-specific readmissions reports. North Shore-LIJ Health System hosted the meeting.

**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.

**How Hospitals Serve their Communities** . . . is the focus of the Community Service Plan that hospitals are required to file with the Department of Health. Comprehensive three-year plans are **due September 15**. This year hospitals will also report on their collaborative planning efforts with local health departments and community partners. The state health department has asked these groups to work together in forwarding the department's health priorities identified in the *Prevention Agenda toward the Healthiest State* by selecting two to three priorities. Annual report submissions for 2010 and 2011 will ask for updates on the progress toward the groups' stated goals.



## Mark Your Calendar for NSHC Events in September

- Sept. 3, NSHC Board Meeting, 8 a.m.
- Sept. 8 Nurse Managers Committee meeting, 12:30 p.m.
- Sept. 9 Finance Committee meeting, 8 a.m.
- Sept. 11 Revenue Cycle Committee meeting, 12:30 p.m.
- Sept. 18 Nurse Executives Committee meeting, 1 p.m.

### Upcoming for October

- Oct. 1 Briefing on Translation Regs and Changes, 10:30 a.m.
- Oct. 29 Hospital Trustee Briefing/Reception, 4 p.m., Windwatch Hotel in Islandia

\*Meetings for NSHC members only and are held at the Hospital Council office in Hauppauge unless otherwise noted. To register/info call: 631-963-4153.



Nassau-Suffolk  
Hospital Council, Inc.

## NASSAU-SUFFOLK HOSPITAL COUNCIL

1383 Veterans Memorial Highway, Suite 26  
Hauppauge, NY 11788 • (631) 435-3000  
[www.nshc.org](http://www.nshc.org)

*The collective voice of Long Island's  
not-for-profit and public hospitals.*