

Healthcare Quality Watch

JUNE/JULY 2012

**NEWS BRIEFS FOR
MANAGERS AND
OPINION LEADERS**


Improving Healthcare
for the Common Good®

IPRO Honors New York Providers, Professionals

Four leading healthcare providers and one community organization have been named recipients of the 2012 IPRO Quality Awards. The awards, given annually by IPRO, recognize providers and professionals who demonstrate a high-level of commitment to improving the quality of care provided to New York's Medicare beneficiaries and Medicaid recipients. The awards were presented during IPRO's 28th Annual Meeting, June 5th at the New York LaGuardia Airport Marriott Hotel. "These awardees represent leaders of New York State's healthcare community," says Clare B. Bradley MD, MPH, Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer at IPRO. "What unites them is their commitment to quality. We applaud them for their achievements." Awards were given for accomplishments on a range of quality-related topics:

- **Elizabeth Eagleson, MD** (Penn Yan, NY) In recognition of Dr. Eagleson's commitment to improving access, care coordination, patient communications, and to providing the highest quality of care to patients, as demonstrated by her leadership in the achievement of NCQA Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home Recognition for two Finger Lakes Community health centers.
- **Ellis Medicine** (Schenectady, NY) In recognition of Ellis Medicine's system-wide commitment to improving transitions of care for patients and their caregivers
- **Institute for the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Elderly** (New York, NY) In recognition of the Institute's longstanding commitment to empowering Medicare beneficiaries to take an active role in managing their own health.
- **Settlement Health and Human Services** (New York, NY) In recognition of Settlement Health's system-wide commitment to quality improvement and sharing of best practices; the valuable insights provided to the New York

State healthcare community regarding the challenges in caring for a medically indigent population; and for achievement of NCQA Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home Recognition.

- **Emmanuel St. Louis, MD, PC** (Uniondale, NY) In recognition of Dr. St. Louis's commitment to providing high quality care to his patients, as demonstrated by achievement of NCQA Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home Recognition and successful attestation for meaningful use.

As the federally-designated QIO for New York State, IPRO's activities target the quality of healthcare provided to more than 3 million Medicare beneficiaries across the state. IPRO supports providers with evidence-based clinical interventions and technical assistance to improve healthcare processes and patient care across the continuum of care. Quality Award recipients demonstrate extraordinary commitment to implementing best practices. In addition to the awards ceremony, New York State's Commissioner of Health, Nirav R. Shah, MD, MPH who delivered the keynote address, spoke about a series of leading-edge initiatives aimed at improving the delivery of healthcare across the state of New York. Janet Wright, MD, Executive Director of the *Million Hearts*[™] campaign, presented information on this important national initiative launched by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services with the explicit goal of preventing a million heart attacks and strokes by 2017.

IPRO Joins National Payment Project

IPRO has been chosen to work on an important new federal project that could have major ramifications for how healthcare services are paid for in the future. Currently, most services are reimbursed individually, on a unit-by-unit basis that is often criticized as costly and inefficient. Under a

national contract won by a multi-state team put together by Massachusetts-based Brandeis University, experts will organize services into larger episodes of care—with the goal of recognizing and rewarding those providers who can deliver high value services. IPRO was chosen by the Brandeis team to help translate clinical logic into a functioning Patient Centered Episode of Care System (PACES), as well as to work on important software documentation activities. While this four-year contract from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services will initially focus on its use to power the CMS physician value modifier, bundled payment demos, and physician resource use reporting, experts believe that PACES could have a major affect on how other public and private payers reimburse a wide range of healthcare services.

IPRO Affiliates with Leading CA Firm

IPRO has entered into an affiliation agreement with Lumetra Healthcare Solutions, a San Francisco-based not-for-profit organization with a long history of innovation in quality improvement and cost-containment. The affiliation enables Lumetra Healthcare Solutions to remain a separate company, focused primarily on West Coast and national clients, while realizing the administrative efficiencies of consolidating financial, human resources and information technology resources with IPRO's infrastructure. "Lumetra has grown into a well-diversified organization with a dedicated and highly-energetic work force," says IPRO Chief Executive Officer Theodore O. Will. "We're excited by the opportunity to collaborate in a way that strengthens the nationwide reach of both organizations." Lumetra Healthcare Solutions solves healthcare business problems with an integrated clinical, analytical, and technological approach that reduces complexity and costs while improving patient outcomes. For more information, visit www.lumetrasolutions.com.

Feds Announce Dementia Care Initiative

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has announced a national *Partnership to Improve Dementia Care*, with a goal of reducing the use of antipsychotic drugs among nursing home residents by 15 percent by the end of the calendar year. Currently, the agency estimates that as many as 40 percent of patients with signs of dementia receive antipsychotic drugs, despite the absence of a diagnoses of psychosis. The agency is emphasizing non-pharmacological alternatives, including more consistent staff assignments, more exercise for patients, better management of chronic pain and individualized activity planning. CMS has developed a "Hand in Hand" training program for nursing home staff, emphasizing abuse prevention and patient-centered care. State and federal nursing home surveyors are receiving increased training in behavioral health. In addition, beginning this month CMS is including facility-specific rates of antipsychotic drug use on the Medicare Nursing Home Compare website located at www.medicare.gov/nhcompare. According to CMS Acting Administrator Marilyn Tavenner: "We want our loved ones with dementia to receive the best care and the highest quality of life possible."

IPRO Author Analyzes Effective Care Transitions

IPRO is currently offering technical assistance to communities across New York in an effort to address preventable readmissions of Medicare beneficiaries to acute care hospitals. According to national data, 17.6 percent of Medicare beneficiaries are re-hospitalized within 30 days of discharge from an acute care hospital—with three out of four re-admissions viewed as potentially preventable. Under the three-year Medicare Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) contract that began last summer, IPRO educates providers and communities on key issues affecting re-hospitalization rates. Program experts have identified five essential elements of community-based campaigns to reduce preventable readmissions. These include: (1) assessing patient/caregiver understanding of medications and instructions via the Teach-Back Method; (2) identification and referral of high-risk readmission patients for follow-up care; (3) cross setting medication reconciliation; (4) streamlined, standardized information transfer across settings; and (5) support for patient/caregiver self-care. For more information on IPRO's activities, read "Integrating Health Care Across the Continuum: Strategies to Support the Move from Silos to Partnerships," by IPRO Senior Director Sara Butterfield, RN, BSN, CPHQ, which appears in the June 2012 edition of the Home Care Association of New York State's newsletter, *The Educator*, now available at: www.hca-nys.org/documents/EducatorVolume3Edition3June2012.pdf.

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We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please forward them to the Editor, Spencer Vibbert, at svibbert@ipro.org.

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IPRO is a national organization providing a full spectrum of healthcare assessment and improvement services that foster more efficient use of resources and enhance healthcare quality to achieve better patient outcomes. For more than 25 years, IPRO has been highly regarded for the independence of its approach, the depth of its knowledge and experience, and the integrity of its programs. IPRO holds contracts with federal, state and local government agencies and corporate clients, in more than 33 states and the District of Columbia. A not-for-profit organization, IPRO is headquartered in Lake Success, NY.