



Experts in Defining and Improving the Quality of Health Care

# Health Care Quality Watch

MONTHLY NEWS BRIEFS FOR MANAGERS AND OPINION LEADERS



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**The New York State Health Accountability Foundation, a partnership between IPRO and the New York Business Group on Health, plans to release its 10th annual Healthcare Report Card this fall.** Having originated as a print publication addressing the performance of New York-based HMOs only, the Report Card is now a fully interactive, online tool addressing both cost and quality for hospitals and

HMOs in New York and New Jersey. The new edition of the Report Card will include for the first time patient satisfaction data derived from surveys of hospitalized Medicare patients (H-CAHPs surveys) as well as hospital-specific payment and volume data for elective DRGs and other high-utilization DRGs. For additional information on the Report Card, visit [www.abouthealthquality.org](http://www.abouthealthquality.org).

**IPRO has received a grant through Google's AdWords program.** The donated advertising on Google will link users with IPRO's consumer-directed sites. Google has worked with IPRO to come up with a number of sponsored ads that appear at the top side of search pages when New York-based users type in certain terms. For example, an IPRO ad appears at the top of the screen after typing "hospital report card" during a Google search.

**Fifteen health care practitioners and providers from across New York State are the recipients of this year's IPRO Quality Awards.** The awards are given annually by IPRO to members of New York's health care community that have demonstrated outstanding performance in the area of quality improvement. This year's awards were conferred during IPRO's 24th Annual Meeting, which also featured a keynote address by Jo Ivey Boufford, MD, President, and

New York Academy of Medicine. "We're proud to recognize this group of hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies, physician offices and health care professionals for their efforts in quality improvement," said Theodore O. Will, Chief Executive Officer, IPRO. "Each has shown an outstanding commitment to the health of New Yorkers."

Awardees were acknowledged for quality improvement in one or more areas,

including: organization-wide commitment to quality improvement, performance improvement and patient safety; sharing of best practices; reducing unnecessary hospitalizations and use of restraints; adoption of electronic health records and bar coding; improving care for patients with diabetes; decreasing use of anticholinergic drugs in the elderly; reducing unnecessary acute care hospitalizations; and pain management.

Awardees include:

GLEN COVE HOSPITAL  
Glen Cove, New York

UHS/DELAWARE VALLEY HOSPITAL  
Walton, New York

LONG ISLAND JEWISH  
MEDICAL CENTER  
New Hyde Park, New York

ELLIS HOSPITAL  
Schenectady, New York

HCR HOME HEALTH AGENCY  
Rochester, New York

TWIN TIER  
HOME HEALTH AGENCY, INC.  
Vestal, New York

JOSE S. LEON, JR., MD,  
MEDICAL DIRECTOR,  
DOLAN FAMILY HEALTH CENTER,  
HUNTINGTON HOSPITAL  
Greenlawn, New York

NATHANIEL BROWNLOW, MD  
New York, New York

RIVER VALLEY  
FAMILY MEDICAL SERVICES  
Barryville, New York

HIP HEALTH PLAN OF NEW YORK  
New York, New York

INDEPENDENT HEALTH  
Buffalo, New York

CATSKILL REGIONAL  
MEDICAL CENTER  
Harris, New York

CLOVE LAKES HEALTH CARE AND  
REHABILITATION CENTER, INC.  
Staten Island, New York

SEA VIEW HOSPITAL  
REHABILITATION  
CENTER AND HOME\*  
Staten Island, New York

WOODMERE REHABILITATION AND  
HEALTH CARE CENTER, INC.  
Woodmere, New York

\*For more information regarding Sea View Hospital Rehabilitation Center and Home, see item on page 2.

Clicking on the [www.ipro.org](http://www.ipro.org) link takes users to a page on IPRO's site that includes links to six publicly available report cards on hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies and health plans. By typing in "quality of care complaints," users see an IPRO ad that takes them to a site featuring information on how to file Medicare quality of care complaints. As part of its grant to IPRO, Google will donate up to \$10,000 a month in ads. The Google Grants program supports organizations sharing Google's philosophy of community service to help the world in areas such as science and technology, education, global public health, the environment, youth advocacy, and the arts. Designed for 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations, Google Grants is a unique in-kind advertising program harnessing the power of the Google AdWords advertising product. Google Grants has awarded AdWords advertising to hundreds of non-profit groups whose missions range from animal welfare to literacy, from supporting homeless children to promoting HIV education.

**New York Governor David A. Paterson and legislative leaders in Albany have reached agreement on a series of reforms aimed at improving access to information on disciplinary actions involving physicians, physician assistants and specialist assistants.** Under the agreement, the State Board for Professional Misconduct has five business days to make public charges against a practitioner when there is unanimous agreement on the need for a hearing and the initiation of formal proceedings against that individual. Physicians will be required to update their practice profiles (which reside at [www.nydoctoprofile.com](http://www.nydoctoprofile.com)) on a timely basis, including providing information on legal actions taken against them. The legislation will also permit the New York State Department of Health to overrule confidentiality safeguards and

disclose possible threats to public health that may be uncovered during the course of a disciplinary review. In addition, the legislative package extends infection control training requirements beyond practitioners, to include medical students, residents and physician assistant students. For more information, visit the Governor's website and [www.ny.gov/governor](http://www.ny.gov/governor).

**At press time, the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) was planning to award new, three-year Medicare Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) contracts in all fifty states in time for an August 1 start date.** The QIOs' 9th Scope of Work, which IPRO expects to begin this summer, features core activities addressing beneficiary protection, patient safety and prevention. QIOs must bid competitively, amongst themselves, for additional "sub national" work involving transitions of care, diabetes disparities and chronic kidney disease. CMS is asking all QIOs to focus on what it views as essential cross-cutting themes. These include: (1) addressing persistent disparities in care experienced by racial and ethnic minorities, as well as beneficiaries residing in rural areas; (2) expanding practitioners' use of health information technology in every day medical practice; and (3) focusing on a more transparent, performance-based, healthcare system. For additional information on the 9th Scope of Work, *visit [www.cms.gov](http://www.cms.gov).*

**Efforts by a Staten Island nursing home to dramatically improve its performance on pain management have been recognized in an article by the managing editor of the New York/New Jersey division of Nursing Spectrum.** Sea View Hospital Rehabilitation Center and Home reduced the incidence of chronic pain among its residents from 5.1% to 0.8% over a four-year period, according to Janice Petrella Lynch, RN, MSN, in an online article appearing at

*Nurse.com*. Lynch credits the facility with developing pain assessment tools to be used upon admission, readmission or at any time a resident experiences pain. Tools assess pain experienced by non-verbal as well as verbal patients. Interdisciplinary pain management teams design individualized intervention plans, with an emphasis on non-pharmaceutical interventions, whenever possible. IPRO is purchasing reprints of the article, which it is now distributing to providers and consumers across New York, free-of-charge. For a copy, contact Sylvia Toufexis at 516-326-7767, ext. 262.

**IPRO Graphic Designer Veronica S. Byrne has won three awards from Graphic Design USA.** The awards recognize her work on behalf of the Health Accountability Foundation (co-sponsored by IPRO and the New York Business Group on Health), in creating the IPRO Hospital Compliance Department's *Resident Times* newsletter and in support of IPRO's recent Empire State Silver Award. A New Hyde Park native, Byrne has held her position at IPRO since 2004.

*Health Care Quality Watch* is published by the Department of Communications & Corporate Development at IPRO. An electronic version of *Quality Watch* is available; subscribe at <http://ipro.org/ipro-qw>.

We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please forward them to the Editor, Spencer Vibbert, at [svibbert@ipro.org](mailto:svibbert@ipro.org).

#### IPRO

1979 Marcus Avenue, Suite 105  
Lake Success, NY 11042  
[www.ipro.org](http://www.ipro.org)

#### JENY

(IPRO's online community of practice)  
<http://jeny.ipro.org>

New York State Healthcare  
Report Card  
[www.abouthalthquality.org/hcrr](http://www.abouthalthquality.org/hcrr)

New York State  
Health Accountability Foundation  
[www.abouthalthquality.org](http://www.abouthalthquality.org)