



# Health Care Quality Watch

MONTHLY NEWS BRIEFS FOR MANAGERS AND OPINION LEADERS



**Visitors to the IPRO Web site can download audio from five recent public meetings convened to advise the federal government on measures to consider for future public reporting of hospital performance.** Convened by IPRO on behalf of the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the “listening sessions” offered policy experts, provider leaders and government and private-sector managers the opportunity to offer public testimony on the best measures available for measuring hospital quality going forward. The audio downloads (available in Real Audio Stream and MP3 formats) are from meetings that took place in Boston (April 27, 2004), Orlando (May 17), Dallas (June 8) San Francisco (June 14) and the Chicago area (June 28). To listen to them, visit [www.ipro.org](http://www.ipro.org) and click on the “Professionals Home Page.”

**Carol Raphael, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Visiting Nurse Service of New York, and Katherine Dunphy, Assistant Vice President of Empire Medicare Services, will be honored at Women in Health Management’s 2004 Leadership Event.** This year’s event is scheduled for October 13 from 5:30-8:00 p.m. at the Citigroup Center, located at 153

East 53rd Street, 14th floor. Ms. Raphael will receive the President’s Award, while Ms. Dunphy will be honored with a Distinguished Service Award. The evening’s introductory speaker is Joan M. Leiman, Ph.D, Chief of Staff to the President of New York Presbyterian Hospital. For additional information contact Rosemarie Sharpe at 212-545-1885 or visit the organization’s Web site at [www.whmny.org](http://www.whmny.org).

**Plans are set for IPRO’s 20th Anniversary Health Policy Conference, to be held November 30, 2004 at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in Manhattan.** Topics to be addressed include Medicare’s hospital-specific performance reporting initiative, the new quality oversight provisions of the Medicare Modernization Act, and managed care and fee-for-service quality improvement strategies at the state level. Registration is available online at [www.ipro.org](http://www.ipro.org). For additional information, contact Claudette Steele at 516-326-7767, ext. 588.

**IPRO has been awarded special funding from the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to assist in promoting a four-part public television series entitled “Remaking American**

**Medicine” (RAM), which is scheduled to air on PBS stations in 2005-2006.** Led by Lumetra, the Quality Improvement Organization for the state of California, the project is aimed at building local coalitions to support the broadcast as well as showcasing innovative work QIOs are doing in reaching out to underserved populations in their communities. IPRO will develop a video highlighting “train the trainer” teaching techniques it is using to promote diabetes self-management among African-Americans in New York. IPRO will also work to assemble panels of experts who would be available for in-studio presentations at PBS outlets during RAM broadcasts. For further information regarding the project, contact Sheila McCullagh or Martha Carney at IPRO, 516-326-7767, ext. 217.

**While disputing a recent report critical of its hospital oversight, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) is supporting legislation that would give the federal government more direct authority over JCAHO operations.** The report released this summer by the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) compared JCAHO-conducted hospital accreditation

surveys to onsite inspections conducted by state survey teams. GAO claims that in a sample of 500 JCAHO-accredited hospitals, the Commission missed Medicare deficiencies in 123 of 157 institutions cited by state inspectors. The legislation introduced by Senate Finance Committee Chairman Charles E. Grassley (R-IA) and House Ways and Means Health Subcommittee Ranking Minority Member Fortney “Pete” Stark (D-CA) would revise existing JCAHO “deeming” authority for Medicare, permitting the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to replace JCAHO if it so desired. Lawmakers say their bill has the support of hospitals, JCAHO and CMS. JCAHO faults GAO for assuming that all state survey deficiency findings are accurate and for failing to report problems that state teams missed. For a copy of the GAO report, visit [www.gao.gov/new.items/d04850.pdf](http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d04850.pdf).

**The National Health Information Awards program, a showcase for high quality consumer information from across the United States, has given a Silver Award to IPRO Medical Officer Charles Stimler, MD.** The award recognizes his article entitled “The Danger of Depression,” a story about heart disease and depression. The judges for this program are independent health information experts from across the nation who evaluate entries on the basis of content, format, success in reaching

the targeted audience and overall quality. For additional information regarding the article, contact Dr. Stimler at 516-326-7767, ext. 514.

**Beginning January 1, 2005, all newly enrolled Medicare beneficiaries will be covered for comprehensive physical exams that will include education on all Medicare-covered preventive services.** Cardiovascular screening blood tests will also be covered, including tests for total cholesterol, high density lipoproteins and triglycerides. In addition, Medicare plans to cover diabetes screening, including fasting plasma tests and post-glucose challenges. These new coverages are included in a proposed rule from the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued in late July. The proposed rule implements sections of the Medicare Modernization Act. For more information, visit [www.cms.gov](http://www.cms.gov) and click on “Public Affairs” for the Medicare Fact Sheet dated July 27, 2004.

**North Shore University Hospital Center for Extended Care & Rehabilitation (NSUH CECR), a part of the North Shore-Long Island Jewish (NS-LIJ) Health System, is representing New York State in the CMS-sponsored National Nursing Home Improvement Collaborative (NNHIC) focusing on Pressure Ulcer Prevention and Management.** The Center for Extended Care and Rehabilitation prioritizes pressure

injury as a performance improvement opportunity, monitoring the incidence of pressure injury and benchmarking internally, across the North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System, as well as with information available from Nursing Home Compare at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov). However, CECR’s participation in the NNHIC has enhanced this process, and helped CECR to identify additional opportunities for improvement — among them, adherence to facility policies and procedures regarding completion of the Braden Scale upon admission; improved monitoring of assignment of appropriate bed surfaces to residents identified as being at risk for developing pressure ulcers; communication of new nosocomial pressure injuries; and more efficacious weekly pressure injury rounds on all units. For more information regarding this and other leading nursing home quality improvement strategies, read IPRO’s *Nursing Home Quality Initiative* newsletter (issue no. 5, summer 2004), available at [www.ipro.org](http://www.ipro.org).

*Health Care Quality Watch* is produced by IPRO’s Department of Communications & Corporate Development. IPRO is a not-for-profit organization that works with public and private sector clients to analyze and improve the quality of health care. For further information, contact:

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