



1199SEIU FAMILY OF FUNDS

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

This issue of *1199SEIU Greater New York Employer News* highlights some of the ways that the 1199SEIU Greater New York Funds are helping to enhance our nursing homes and resident care – and how our joint programs are even helping to improve care in nursing homes around the country.

Inside, you will read about the Electronic Medical Record (EMR) project taking place within 20 of our 1199SEIU nursing homes, which is being supported by the Training and Employment Funds. This project will not only help improve the quality of care to our patients, but may also be used as a national model for other nursing homes.

You will also read about the Greater New York Benefit Fund's Wellness Programs, and why they have been so effective at helping your 1199SEIU employees stay healthy. And finally, you'll read about how the Child Care Fund's Child Care Resource and Referral Services are taking the guesswork out of child care options for your employees, so that they can focus at work with the knowledge that their children are safe and happy.

We hope you find this newsletter informative, and as always, we welcome your feedback. We're looking forward to continuing our successful partnership with you to strengthen the workforce, our nursing homes and the quality of resident care.

Sincerely,

Mitra Behroozi
Executive Director
Benefit and Pension Funds

Deborah King
Executive Director
Training and Employment Funds

Vivian Fox
Executive Director
Child Care Funds

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Greater New York Benefit Fund's Relationship With Members Is Key to Helping Industry's Employees Take Control of Their Health

Did you know that a recent survey by Hewitt Associates shows that many employers have trouble persuading their employees to participate in wellness programs for a variety of reasons? Whether they are not comfortable with their employers initiating the subject or they get overwhelmed with too much information, workers often don't follow through on employer-generated wellness recommendations. That's where the 1199SEIU Greater New York Benefit Fund plays a key role as your partner.

To make our wellness programs as effective as possible, we polled our members first to discern what types of programs they wanted and what type of information they needed. Our members were quick to tell us, and poll results also showed that 1199SEIU healthcare workers wanted and trusted advice from their Greater New York Benefit Fund – a source rated second only to their doctors.

Since then, we've been listening intently to 1199SEIU members and provided them with the wellness programs they asked for, including tools and support to manage chronic conditions and lose weight. Today, more than 15,000 members have participated in a range of programs tailored specifically to their health concerns and needs, including our Protecting *Our* Health programs, and thousands more have used our 24-Hour Nurse Helpline and health coaching services.

Your employees, through their benefits, have access to free screenings and health fairs; nutrition, fitness and wellness workshops; one-on-one support to help manage chronic conditions like diabetes, high cholesterol and hypertension; discounted fitness memberships and the 24-Hour



Nurse Helpline and health coaching service by phone.

As healthcare workers, we all understand the importance of keeping the healthcare workforce healthy and are committed to that endeavor. Let's keep our unique partnership working. Contact your Outreach Coordinator or call our Outreach Department at (646) 473-6930 today to set up a wellness event at your nursing home.

Greater New York Education Fund Improves Resident Care by Connecting Nursing Homes to Technology

This spring, the 1199SEIU Greater New York Education Fund hosted the “Connecting Nursing Homes to Technology” conference, where 300 staff – including both frontline caregivers and management – from 20 Greater New York nursing homes gathered to share their experiences as participants in the Electronic Medical Record (EMR) Demonstration Project, funded by the New York State Department of Health.

The study, running since January 2007, is tracking the quality indicator improvements produced by EMRs in the 20 participating homes, with plans to use the results to strengthen patient care throughout the industry as a whole. Initial study results already indicate that there is currently a 99% rate of staff documenting patient care and a 99% rate of medications being administered on time by using EMRs.

Electronic Medical Records provide staff with a point-of-care system that allows staff and management to retrieve and input live information regarding a patient’s care and medications, making critical patient information instantly available and drastically reducing the amount of time spent on paperwork. Staff accesses the information on computers and Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs).

Caroline Rich, an administrator at Four Seasons Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Brooklyn and a conference attendee, knows first-hand the benefits that EMRs have to offer. Four Seasons was the first nursing home to go live with the project and since then, she says, they have experienced nothing but positive changes.

“Our staff has adapted to the EMRs in record-breaking time and has drastically improved our level

of resident care here, which was the main goal,” Rich says. “With this streamlined, easy-to-use system, it allows our staff to be more mobile and informed at all times throughout their shift. Because it is in real-time, management can have a clear understanding of the status of both patient care and of the caregivers. The computer devices free up paperwork time, and that translates into more meaningful time spent with residents.”

“With the support of the Greater New York Education Fund, this project gave us the chance for labor to work directly with management, bringing us closer together as a team.”

Since management understood that many staff members were unfamiliar with and intimidated by computers, they went out of their way to get them excited for the launch by hosting a kickoff party where staff members were given the opportunity to see, touch and familiarize themselves with the computer equipment. This introduction to technology has also added valuable skills to the nursing home staff. Rich adds, “Now, staff members who may not have known how to use a computer are proficient with them and it’s offered them a sense of confidence.”

Overall, the benefits of the EMR study to nursing homes seem unlimited, and Rich stresses the significance of the Labor-Management relationship. “With the support of the Greater New York Education Fund, this project gave us the chance for labor to work directly with management, bringing us closer together as a team.”

Child Care Resource and Referral Services Help Strengthen Workforce

Finding affordable and dependable child care is one of the greatest concerns of working parents, and a lack of quality care can contribute considerably to high absenteeism. Since many 1199SEIU healthcare workers do not work a typical 9 to 5 shift and are busy balancing work and family, the Child Care Fund offers many resources that help parents make informed child care decisions without having to do the extensive research on their own. Through the Fund's Child Care Resource and Referral Services, working 1199SEIU parents have access to information, support and seminars regarding the wide variety of child care options available through the Fund, government agencies and community-based organizations.

The diverse parenting seminars conducted so far this year have helped parents with children at various stages of development, including parents seeking summer employment or mentoring opportunities for their children, as well as parents in search of resources for children with special needs. The Camp and Summer Events seminar helped members seeking

low-cost or free camps within the five boroughs for children and teens. Another seminar, Preparing Your Teen for College, offered insight into the college admissions process as it relates to both parents and youth. Finally, the Family Budget seminar provided parents with the necessary tools for financial planning.

Patient Care Associate Debra McClanahan, whose children have been enrolled in the Child Care Fund's WorkForce 2000, Summer Day Camp, and day care programs, has also found the Child Care Resource and Referral Services to be extremely beneficial and has recommended it to her 1199SEIU coworkers. "The less I worry about my children and how they are utilizing their time, the more I am able to concentrate on work. It takes a lot off my shoulders," she said.

When your employees know that their children will be safe and well-cared for, and have the tools they need, they are free to focus on their jobs. At the end of the day, this translates into better patient care.



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