



1199SEIU FAMILY OF FUNDS

EmployerNEWS

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

This issue of *1199SEIU Employer News* highlights some of the ways that the Family of Funds are helping to enhance our institutions and patient care – and how our joint work with our employer partners is even serving as a model on a national level.

You'll read about a recent conference by the Partnership for Quality Care that showcased successful chronic care management programs around the country, including the Benefit Fund's program, and about one of many labor-management projects at North Shore-LIJ's Forest Hills Hospital that is showing substantial, and rapid, improvements in quality care indicators. 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 institutions and the quality of patient care.

Sincerely,

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Benefit and Pension Funds

Deborah King
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Vivian Fox
Executive Director
Child Care Funds

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Labor Management Project Helps Hospital Quickly Improve Patient Turnaround

The Labor Management Project has worked with many 1199SEIU hospitals and nursing homes on long-term initiatives, which have produced significant results. However, the Labor Management Project can also help institutions resolve issues quickly through short-term process improvement efforts, including the Fast Track program.

Fast Track is similar to a triage operation, where participants must solve an important workplace issue quickly by collaborating and acting fast. In fact, a Fast Track program can take as little as eight to twelve weeks from start to finish, from the time staff identify a problem, apply solutions and get back out on the floor to begin producing results.

North Shore-LIJ's Forest Hills Hospital has been working with the Labor Management Project since 2004 on a number of projects that have built capacity and improved teamwork between staff and management. Most recently, General Surgery, Orthopedic Surgery, and Gynecological Surgery teams in the Operating Room – sponsored by a unit-based labor and management council – worked together to reduce the time it takes to turn around the Operating Room between patients.

Working with a Labor Management facilitator, the teams collaborated to eliminate unnecessary steps and make sure each staff member was aware of and invested in their roles and responsibilities, as well as enforcing existing standards and policies. They also recognized that turnaround time was often slowed down when workers couldn't locate the equipment and supplies they needed. The teams resolved the issue by creating a "toolbox" of standard equipment like bed parts and extension cords, and implementing a software tracking system that records the status of all supplies and instruments – whether they are currently in use, being sterilized or are put away. As a result, the OR staff can now easily ensure and monitor the correct, complete equipment tray for each patient, each time.

The teams also addressed staffing issues. Together, they reviewed the Operating Room staff schedule to identify heavier times when more staff was needed. And they created a new "Turnover Technician" position – similar to a position already used at Long



Island Jewish Medical Center – who has the specific responsibility of cleaning and preparing the Operating Room.

With these solutions in place, all four of the OR teams were able to achieve their goal of reducing turnaround time to only 28 minutes between patients in Orthopedic Service within weeks, less than half the national average. This amounts to an average of a 2-minute reduction in each operation. Given that the Forest Hills Hospital operating rooms perform 35 to 40 operations per day, this allows at least one more short procedure to be added to the roster and creates a shorter surgery day for the surgeon.

"The 1199SEIU members and delegates have shown strong leadership by changing their work environment in the Forest Hills Hospital OR," said Denise Allegretti, 1199SEIU Vice President for the North Shore-LIJ Health System. "Labor and management have worked together to reap significant, measurable results."

"In addition to the turnaround time improvements, the project enhanced the teamwork between departments, and really created a sense of staff ownership of the whole process," agreed Robert T. Hettenbach, Forest Hills' Executive Director, who first began working with the Training and Employment Funds in the early 1990s. "Our staff educated each other about their specific roles, responsibilities, and accountability. Management and staff collaborated on the assessment, plan and goals that made the project successful."

For more information on the Labor Management Project, call (212) 894-4302.

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 National 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 National 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 professionals, 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 institution.

Benefit Funds Participate in Partnership for Quality Care's National Summit for Healthcare Solutions

1199SEIU and the League of Voluntary Hospitals and Homes, with its employer members, have for years joined in a successful labor-management partnership through the Healthcare Education Project – a project of the Training and Employment Funds' Labor Management Initiative. Together, they have worked to protect and preserve quality care in our hospitals and nursing homes, battled budget cuts on both the state and federal level, and fought for and won expanded healthcare coverage for low-income working New Yorkers. In fact, the success of the Healthcare Education Project now serves as a model for the new Partnership for Quality Care, a nationwide initiative.

Chaired by former 1199SEIU President Dennis Rivera, the Partnership for Quality Care (PQC) is a national coalition of healthcare employees and providers working toward comprehensive healthcare reform and affordable, quality care for all Americans. As part of that mission, the PQC recently held a summit to explore how best to manage the costs and quality of chronic care. At the summit, the Benefit Funds' Executive Director moderated a panel on an issue central to the Funds' cost-savings programs – engaging participants in protecting their benefits and their health by managing and preventing chronic conditions.

In fact, the National Benefit Fund has learned that the right "messenger" is often critical to getting members on track to lead healthier lives. Our polling has revealed time and again that 1199SEIU members trust their Benefit Fund to give them the tools they need to manage and protect their health.

The National Benefit Fund took advantage of its relationship with the members by creating the Protecting *Our* Health program and more recently, by expanding our Wellness Program to include a targeted health coaching service and 24-Hour Nurse Helpline. Both programs focus on early intervention and ongoing care and are helping members achieve better health outcomes.

Other summit speakers included the President of SEIU, Andrew Stern; President of the Greater New York Hospital Association, Ken Raske; Chair of the PQC and of SEIU Healthcare, Dennis Rivera; and other CEOs and presidents in the healthcare industry nationwide as well as healthcare providers and other industry leaders and SEIU locals.

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 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 about the wide variety of child care options available through both the Fund and government agencies and community-based organizations.

The diverse seminars in 2008 so far have helped parents with children at various stages of development, including parents looking for summer job skills or mentoring programs, and parents of children with special needs. The Camp and Summer Events seminar helped members seeking low-cost or free

camp 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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