



Nassau Queens Performing Provider System



*An Alliance for a Healthy Community*

2201 Hempstead Turnpike, East Meadow, NY 11554

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NQP to improve health outcomes in Rockaways through  
St. John's Episcopal Hospital, NYAPRS Peer Bridger partnership**

FAR ROCKAWAY, NY – St. John's Episcopal Hospital—a partner of the Nassau Queens Performing Provider System (NQP) through Catholic Health Services of Long Island—and the New York Association of Psychiatric Services (NYAPRS) announce a partnership to improve behavioral health patient outcomes in the Rockaways through the Peer Bridger Program. The program is set to reduce emergency department visits and re-hospitalizations, and contributes to NQP's mission of improving the health of residents in the medically underserved communities of the Rockaways.

Through the program, individuals with behavioral health conditions who are admitted to St. John's and have histories of frequent emergency department visits and hospital readmissions will be matched with a trained and New York State certified NYAPRS Peer Bridger who is stationed on-site at the hospital. The Peer Bridger is someone who has personally gone through a recovery process and draws from shared experience to offer personalized support to individuals and guide them on a path to wellness and recovery.

The Bridger is an expert at forming trusted relationships that are based on promoting hope and support for an effective recovery. These alliances begin at the point of hospital admission and continue for an average of six months, throughout an individual's hospital stay and after discharge into their community.

"Among other benefits, the Peer Bridger Program helps us ensure that people are making follow-up appointments and going to them once they are discharged," says Mary Emerton, LCSW, DSRIP project manager, behavioral health, Catholic Health Services of Long Island. "We need to be sure that individuals are staying on top of their health so that they remain in the community and do not need to go back to the hospital for readmission."

It is expected that the Peer Bridger will work with 70 St. John's patients per year.

"In the past, people were told that mental health and addiction related relapses were inevitable and that they would never be able to live and work independently," said Harvey Rosenthal, NYAPRS executive director. "Our approach seeks to raise the bar for what people can expect from themselves and their mental health and addiction recovery services. Since 1995, NYAPRS' model has helped thousands of people develop the hope, knowledge, skills and support to succeed in their home communities."

The program is made possible through the NYSDOH Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) program—a program designed with the primary goal of reducing avoidable hospital use by 25% by the year 2020.

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**About NQP**

*The Nassau Queens Performing Provider System (NQP) is one of 25 Performing Provider Systems in New York State. NQP is led by NuHealth/Nassau University Medical Center, in alliance with Northwell Health's Long Island Jewish Medical Center and Catholic Health Services of Long Island, and consists of more than 8,400 partner organizations that have come together to better serve the health needs of the community through the DSRIP program. Our goal is to redesign the way health care is delivered to people with Medicaid in our community by closing critical gaps in the continuum of care and reducing avoidable hospital use by 25% by 2020.*

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