

## Four RI hospitals to receive additional \$5.75 million in Medicare payments

WARWICK – U.S. Senators Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse and U.S. Representatives James Langevin and David Cicilline announced in August that Kent, Newport, South County, and Westerly Hospitals will receive an additional \$5.75 million in Medicare payments as a result of the renewal of a “wage index” adjustment by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) that accounts for different labor costs across the country.

The new wage index is estimated to increase the Medicare reimbursements made to each of these four hospitals by the following amounts:

**NEWPORT HOSPITAL** is estimated to receive an additional \$968,000 in Medicare reimbursement in FY14.

**KENT HOSPITAL** is estimated to receive an additional \$2.7 million in Medicare reimbursement in FY14.

**SOUTH COUNTY HOSPITAL** is estimated to receive an additional \$1.09 million in Medicare reimbursement in FY14.

**WESTERLY HOSPITAL** is estimated to receive an additional \$990,000 in Medicare reimbursement in FY14. ❖

## CPAP reduces risk of death in people with COPD and sleep apnea

*More time on CPAP was associated with reduced mortality after controlling for common risk factors*

DARIEN, IL – A new study suggests that continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) therapy reduces the mortality rate in people who have both chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and obstructive sleep apnea (OSA), which the authors refer to as “the overlap syndrome.”

“This study adds to the growing body of literature regarding the combined impact of OSA in patients with COPD,” said lead author and principal investigator **MICHAEL L. STANCHINA, MD**, clinical assistant professor of medicine at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University and physician at Rhode Island Hospital. “We have shown that more time on CPAP in patients with the overlap syndrome was associated with a reduced risk of death, after controlling for common risk factors.”

The study is in the Aug. 15 issue of the *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*, which is published by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine. It involved a post hoc analysis of 10,272 outpatients. Dr. Stanchina’s team identified a study sample of 3,396 patients from 2007-2010 who had COPD or OSA. This sample included 227 overlap syndrome patients who had both COPD and OSA. All patients in the overlap group were treated with CPAP therapy, and objective treatment compliance data were collected for the first one to three months of use. Seventeen patients with the overlap syndrome died.

Multivariate analysis revealed that hours of CPAP use at night is an independent predictor of mortality (hazard ratio = 0.71) in patients with COPD and OSA. Results show that overlap syndrome patients who use CPAP have a significantly higher survival than those who do not. Even minimal use of CPAP was associated with some reduction in the risk of death, and this benefit increased with more nightly hours of CPAP therapy.

“We were most surprised to find that any level of CPAP use in this cohort, over no use, was associated with some mortality benefit,” said Dr. Stanchina.

To request a copy of the study, email [lcclmer@aasmnet.org](mailto:lcclmer@aasmnet.org). ❖



Kate Lally, MD

## Kent Hospital’s Palliative Care Program featured on news with Diane Sawyer

NEW YORK – ABC World News Tonight with Diane Sawyer featured Kent Hospital’s Palliative Care Program along with Kent Hospital resident physicians, in a segment focused on The Conversation Project, a national initiative dedicated to helping people talk about their wishes for end-of-life care.

The segment focused on residents being taught how to interact with their patients preparing for end-of-life care. **DR. KATE LALLY**, the director of palliative care at Kent, introduced a program to the residents to teach them how to talk to patients about their options, at any stage of illness.

This effort is all part of a bigger national initiative, The Conversation Project, which is dedicated to helping people talk about their wishes for end-of-life care. Care New England Health System has joined a national Initiative with other pioneering organizations to support a new effort by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI). The initiative is to better prepare health care providers to receive and respect patients’ wishes about end-of-life care and is a critical companion to The Conversation Project. ❖

ABC’s article on Kent Hospital: <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/health/2013/08/09/young-doctors-pave-way-for-end-of-life-conversations/>