



NEWS RELEASE

WESTERN NEW YORK HEALTHCARE SYSTEM UPDATE

BUFFALO, N.Y. (Wednesday, January 23, 2008) – The Erie County Medical Center Corporation and the Western New York Healthcare System continue to negotiate in good faith, with a common goal of ECMCC joining under the new governing board along with Kaleida Health.

That news was announced today after the Western New York Healthcare System’s (WNYHS) Board of Directors bi-monthly meeting.

“The parties hope to reach an agreement soon on matters of concern to each,” said Robert Gioia, chair of the WNYHS board. Gioia also clarified the recent perception in the media and the community of the “merger” concept.

“We are attempting to put together an integrated governing structure to coordinate the provision of health care in Western New York,” he said. “We are not looking at a full-blown merger at this time. We are trying to begin a process where we can work together to eliminate costly duplication of services and make health care a destination in our community. Neither organization is going out of business at this time and neither will be assuming assets or liabilities of their respective partner. They will remain intact and become part of and under the control of an integrated newly formed healthcare system.”

The *Commission on Health Care Facilities for the 21st Century* law, also known as the Berger Commission, calls for “the facilities controlled by the Erie County Medical Center Corporation and Kaleida Health be joined under a single unified governance structure under the control of an entity other than Erie County Medical Center Corporation, Kaleida Health, or any other public benefit corporation.”

The law goes on to say, “It is further recommended that this entity have unified management with powers sufficient to compel the service mix provided at any of the individual institutions under its control. It is further recommended that the joined entity utilize existing infrastructure to the extent possible to consolidate all necessary services into clinical centers of excellence, including tertiary, quaternary, psychiatric, and long-term care services. It is further recommended that the joined entity develop new infrastructure in which to locate comprehensive heart and vascular services.”

Regarding the comprehensive heart and vascular services issue, Gioia said the board has sent out request for proposals (RFPs) to national firms who specialize in developing this state of the art infrastructure.

Gioia concluded by saying, “As the board continues to make progress with the respective organizations and we develop a strategic plan for this new entity – such as key decisions around heart and vascular services - we will be calling on the community to have a voice in the process.”

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