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Through the fall, the Cross Funds Steering Committee – which includes Union and Management Trustees as well as the Executive Directors of the three umbrella Funds – examined ways to combine and manage common administrative functions. By the end of the year, the Funds will also share Accounting and Finance, Audit, Facilities, Fraud and Security, Human Resources, and Information Technology departments, dramatically improving the ways the Funds operate and provide services to members and employers.
Benefit Fund’s Protecting Our Health Program Reaches More Than 10,000 Members

Throughout the fall, more than 10,000 1199SEIU members took part in the Benefit Fund’s Protecting Our Health meetings, nutritional workshops and health fairs. These events are teaching 1199SEIU members to adopt healthier lifestyles through diet, exercise, ongoing relationships with their doctors, and regular preventive screenings and will hopefully go a long way toward reducing healthcare costs associated with treating chronic conditions.

Due to popular demand, more Protecting Our Health programs are being scheduled for January and later dates.

For more information on Protecting Our Health, speak to your Outreach Coordinator or contact the Outreach Department at (646) 473-6930.
As we all know, one of the greatest dangers and challenges the industry faces is the spread of infections in healthcare facilities. As payment schedules become increasingly linked to clinical outcomes, hospitals and nursing homes are struggling to overcome staffing and funding challenges to put more patient safety systems in place.

Around the country, facilities have been introducing programs aimed at improving patient safety and reducing infection risks. And in hospitals in New York, the Benefit Fund, Union and GNYHA are partnering for a second year on a “Protecting Our Patients” campaign to do just that.

The campaign is a team approach. Employers are grappling with the issue of increasing staff awareness and compliance, and since recent focus groups showed that members appreciate receiving information from their Union and their Benefit Fund, it makes sense for the Union, the Fund and employers to work together to reinforce the message about patient safety.

This wall-to-wall campaign is aimed at reaching every worker involved in patient care – from transport workers to nurses. The three-tiered campaign addresses some of the simplest ways that healthcare workers can help to reduce infections: flu vaccinations, hand hygiene, and maintaining a clean, sterile environment.

The first initiative, encouraging healthcare workers to get vaccinated against the flu, began in October. To complement hospitals’ and nursing homes’ own vaccination programs, the Fund reached out to 1199SEIU members through direct mail pieces sent to their homes, and provided institutions with posters and buttons to distribute to staff. A similar program for hand hygiene is now underway and will be followed by the third piece, maintaining a clean work environment.

For more information on the upcoming “Protecting Our Patients” campaign or to request materials for your institution, contact the Outreach Department at (646) 473-6930.
RN Job Retention Study to Quantify Impact of Training and Upgrading Fund Programs

The last issue of 1199SEIU Family of Funds Employer News reported that participants in Training and Upgrading Fund nursing programs are completing their degrees and passing the N-CLEX nurse licensing exam at significantly higher rates than others statewide and nationally. The Fund has now begun a study of the job retention rates of these program graduates once they begin working as Registered Nurses.

The study will ascertain retention rates for Fund graduates who are employed at 1199SEIU institutions. As an initial pilot, 15 institutions with the largest number of placements will be studied. The Fund also intends to do an analysis of how retention compares with non-Fund participants and a cost/benefit analysis of the same.

“Training and Upgrading Fund program goals are designed to help hospitals and nursing homes face increasing economic pressures that are often compounded by the high cost of recruiting and retaining qualified Registered Nurses,” says Elaine Brennan, COO, Montefiore Medical Center. “I am so proud to see the use of the Fund as a vehicle for our staff to improve their lives and address a important need for Montefiore. Since 2000, we have graduated 42 RNs and 41 were upgraded and are currently working at Montefiore.”

The Fund expects over 1,100 Fund participants who graduated from 2000 to 2006 to be working in 1199SEIU institutions by the early part of 2007.

Child Care Gala Is Meeting Fundraising Goals With Support of Hospitals and Community and Business Leaders

In June 2007, the Child Care Subsidy/TANF Grant, which has provided over $22 million to help low-income 1199SEIU parents and communities access affordable and quality child care, will end. The loss of this funding will leave many low-income 1199SEIU and other parents without dependable, affordable child care.

To make sure that these parents have access to the services they need, the Child Care Fund, through the non-profit Child Care Corporation, is sponsoring the first annual “Care For Kids” awards gala and fundraiser on December 5. The gala will celebrate the Fund’s 15 years of service to working families and raise money to continue programs for low-income parents.

While the final total is not yet available, early pledges and contributions suggest that the event will exceed its fundraising goal of $500,000, largely due to the healthcare industry, business and community leaders who have showed their support for the Fund’s programs. Michelle Miller Morial, CBS Senior News Correspondent and former First Lady of New Orleans, will serve as Mistress of Ceremonies. Vernon Hill, Founder, President, and CEO of Commerce Bank, will chair the event, and 1199SEIU President Dennis Rivera and League of Voluntary Hospitals and Homes of NY President Bruce McIver will serve as Honorary Co-Chairs.

In addition to raising dollars for affordable child care programs, the event will honor three individuals who have dedicated themselves to educating and advocating for children with the first annual “Care For Kids” award. The recipients of the inaugural awards are: Geoffrey Canada, Founding President of the Harlem Children’s Zone and author; Linda Dunham, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Ronald McDonald House of Charities; and Maria Elena Girone, President and CEO, Puerto Rican Family Institute.

For more information about the Child Care Fund’s programs, call (212) 564-2220 or visit www.1199ccf.org.

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Record Number of Members Register for Child Care Benefits

During the two-month fall registration process, Child Care Fund staff interviewed and registered a record number of 1199SEIU children for programs beginning in 2007 – an estimated increase of 7%.

Affordable child care is just one of the many benefits the Child Care Fund offers 1199SEIU parents and their children. The Fund also provides educational, recreational and special needs programs, learning centers, professional development training and summer day and sleepaway camps, cultural arts programs, workshops and resource and referral services, with the goal of giving the next generation and their parents the support they need to succeed at school and in the workplace.

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For more information on the upcoming “Protecting Our Patients” campaign or to request materials for your institution, contact the Outreach Department at (646) 473-6930.
Dear [Name],

We’re all aware of the challenges facing the healthcare industry. As the Berger Commission prepares to make recommendations for restructuring and the closing of hospitals and nursing homes, we know that institutions are making extra efforts to use their resources as effectively as possible. The Family of Funds is no exception.

In this edition, you’ll read about how the Funds are streamlining common administrative functions across the Benefit and Pension, Training and Employment and Child Care Funds to provide more services more efficiently to 1199SEIU members and employers. You’ll also read about the Training and Employment Funds’ study that is helping to quantify the impact of the Fund’s programs on nurse retention rates.

We’re also addressing another area that is receiving a good deal of attention lately — the increased focus on treating chronic conditions. In response to this issue, the Benefit Fund, Union and GNYHA are partnering on a “Protecting Our Patients” campaign designed to reduce the rates of hospital infections.

Finally, you’ll read about how the Child Care Fund is supporting 1199SEIU families and about programs 1199SEIU parents can take advantage of now for the coming year.

We’re all in the business of caring. By giving healthcare workers the support they need, we’re ultimately improving the level of patient care together.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

EMPLOYER NEWS
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