



Today's News Monday, November 08, 2010

Aptium: Oxford Owes \$8 Million

Aptium W. New York Inc., the operator of the cancer center at St. Vincent's Hospital prior to the hospital's closing, is pursuing Oxford Health Plans for \$8 million. Aptium's lawyers say the company believes that Oxford underpaid for certain high-cost pharmaceuticals administered to patients at the Cancer Center during a 2006-2010 period. The claim is made in court documents connected to Saint Vincent's Catholic Medical Centers' bankruptcy. Aptium had acquired the drugs at its sole expense and then billed Oxford. To resolve the dispute, Aptium pursued the claims "informally" with Oxford but said attempts to resolve the claims with Oxford were unsuccessful and formal legal action was the appropriate response. In March, Aptium sent SVCMC a joint interest agreement to address, among other things, the sharing of information, confidentiality and the engagement of counsel. After some legal wrangling, SVCMC agreed last week to sign the agreement. An Oxford spokesman says the insurer has not received any notice of a lawsuit and could not comment.

VillageCare Center Opens

The VillageCare Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, the first geriatric skilled nursing facility built from the ground up in Manhattan in half a century, is slated to open to patients in the days before Thanksgiving. The total project cost was \$60 million, including \$40 million on construction. The facility specializes in rehabilitation, with 84 of its 105 beds designated as short-stay. The remainder will be for long-stay residents needing palliative care and end-of-life care. The new facility is about half the size of the old Village Nursing Home, which it replaced. The downsizing was geared to offering a wide range of community-based services; VillageCare was a part of a three-year long-term care reform demonstration project from New York state.

NY Scores in U.S. Biotech Grants

New York's biotech companies have been awarded more than \$48 million in federal grants and tax credits. The funds are part of the Therapeutic Discovery Tax Credit Program that was established within the federal health care reform act. There are 142 companies and 219 individual research projects getting the awards. The largest amount is going to ChemBio, which is getting \$1.5 million for six projects. Other big winners getting around \$1 million each are PsychoGenics, AngioBlast, and IRX Therapeutics. New Jersey also did well, snaring more than \$52 million through the program.

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New simulation center in the city

The City University of New York and NYU Langone Medical Center are partnering to create one of the country's largest urban health science simulation training facilities. The New York Simulation Center for Health Sciences will train medical, emergency, nursing and other health care personnel, including students, staff and residents from the NYU schools of medicine, dentistry and nursing, and CUNY's nursing, allied health professionals and emergency medical technician programs. The center also will be open to other groups.

The Borough of Manhattan Community College got \$21 million in state and city capital funds to build the facility. CUNY graduates about 1,200 registered nurses annually, or about 50% of all new RNs from New York City nursing programs.

NYU Langone will coordinate design and construction—set for completion next September—and will manage operations. The 25,000-square-foot center will have eight simulation rooms, including operating rooms, a wet room/disaster training room, ICU/trauma rooms, 14 patient examination rooms, and conference and classroom space. It is located on the third floor of Bellevue Hospital.

The new center joins others in the area: a \$10 million medical training center at HHC's Jacobi hospital in the Bronx, and a 20,000-square-foot sim center at North Shore-LIJ.

At A Glance

WHO'S NEWS: Dr. Darren Schneider, a physician with training in both vascular surgery and interventional radiology, was appointed chief of vascular and endovascular surgery and director of the Center for Vascular and Endovascular Surgery at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center. He also was named associate professor of surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College. Dr. Schneider previously was associate professor of surgery and associate professor of radiology at the University of California, San Francisco.

Robert Dubicki joins Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center today as executive vice president and chief operating officer. Previously, he was senior vice president of ambulatory network development at North Shore-LIJ. Prior to that post, he served as president of St. Vincent's and Bayley Seton Hospitals on Staten Island.

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