

# Hospital Readout

## ERH: A New Beginning

*Ellenville Regional Hospital* has achieved approval of its reorganization plan and begins anew. After seventeen months of reorganization under bankruptcy protection, Judge Robert E. Littlefield, Jr., of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Northern District of New York, with the stroke of his pen, confirmed *ERH*'s reorganization plan.

*ERH*'s reorganization plan was difficult and complicated. Each step had to be linked to other steps, each agency involved had to accept and adopt mutual interests, compromising in areas of self-interest. The key ingredients for success included strong community support and a determination by community leaders that *ERH* was critical to the long-term health and prosperity of the area.

An agreement by parent Westchester Medical Center to allow full local leadership by the *ERH* Board of Directors allowed decisions regarding the hospital's future to be made by community members. In addition, Westchester Medical Center agreed to transfer ownership of *ERH*'s campus to Ulster County, allowing it to become collateral for a cash infusion by the County. Other Westchester measures included the transfer of ownership of the hospital operating entity and facilitating the approval of the bankruptcy plan as *ERH*'s largest creditor.

Critical assistance provided by Ulster County included the acceptance of the hospital campus from Westchester and the related cash infusion, support from the Ellenville Hospital Committee chaired by Majority Leader Michael Stock, critical support from Chairman Richard Gerentine, Minority Leader David Donaldson, District 1 Legislators Susan Cummings, Gerald Depuy, Theresa Hyatt, and Joseph Stoeckeler Jr., and support from the Ulster County Legislators at large to support the plan.


Further cooperation from the Kingston area included acceptance into the Kingston Regional Health Care System family of companies, plus the long-term management stability that The Kingston Hospital has provided to *ERH* since September 2003.

A major step in *ERH*'s recovery plan has been the transformation to a Critical Access Hospital, a Federal designation which provides improved Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement to the hospital in the amount of approximately \$2 million per year. In concert with the transformation, *ERH* has instituted new programs to generate revenue and improve patient service, including the Swing Bed/Transitional Care program for patients who have been discharged from acute care (whether at *ERH* or another hospital) but still need skilled nursing, physical therapy, or occupational therapy services.

A strong expense management program has also helped to assure long term financial stability to *ERH*.

Key support has been given to *Ellenville Regional Hospital* through grants secured by legislators serving the Ellenville/Wawarsing area. Thanks to a grant secured by Congressman Maurice Hinchey, funding for new emergency department equipment was secured. A new, state-of-the-art ultrasound unit was purchased with grant funds acquired by Senator John Bonacic. Senator Bonacic also secured funding to replace the hospital's aging and deteriorating roof. Most recently, Assemblyman Kevin Cahill secured funding to assist in the recruitment and retention of employees. The funding for these major projects has been of inestimable importance in helping the hospital to provide quality healthcare to meet the need of the people

who live, work, or visit Ellenville, the town of Wawarsing, and surrounding communities.

"We owe our deepest gratitude to all those who have remained committed to supporting *Ellenville Regional Hospital*," said Steven L. Kelley, *ERH*'s President and CEO. "Together, we have seen the hospital through critical times. *ERH* looks forward to your continued support as we together embark on a new beginning." 

## Mammography Services Open at Ellenville Regional Hospital

*Ellenville Regional Hospital* is happy to announce that its mammography unit is up and running!


Screening mammography services are now available at *Ellenville Regional Hospital*. The hospital also works in concert with the Healthy Women's Partnership to provide mammographies for underinsured women, with no cost to the patient.

Although the hospital is equipped with state of the art mammography technology, the high demand for qualified mammography technologists has made it almost impossible for *Ellenville Regional Hospital* to recruit qualified technicians. As a result of a grant application and funding provided by the Catskill Hudson Area Health Education Center, the hospital sent two of their staff radiology technicians to a four-day Achieving Quality Imaging-Mammography Training Course in Boston, Massachusetts. Having these services back in the hospital will enhance the use of hospital resources and improve the quality of the health of the community.

*Ellenville Regional Hospital* is grateful to the Catskill Hudson Area Health Education Center for helping to bring back this vital service to the community.

"I am so happy to be able to provide a much needed service to our patients," said Michel Bonnin, Radiology Department Manager. "I thank the Catskill Hudson Area Health Education Center for funding this project. I appreciate the patience of the community and their continued support in using the healthcare services provide by *Ellenville Regional Hospital*."

Catskill Hudson Area Health Education Center, a partner of the New York State Area Health Education Center System, was established in July 2003 and represents an 11-county area, including Ulster, Orange, Dutchess, Delaware, Sullivan, Columbia, Greene, Otsego, Schoharie, Putnam and Rockland counties. Area Health Education Centers (AHECs) are locally-directed federal and state-supported programs to help improve health care by establishing partnerships between the institutions that train health professionals and the communities that need them the most.

Mammography services are available by appointment. Please call **647-6400 ext. 271**, for an appointment. 

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