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CRAIN'S HEALTH PULSE

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Outpatient job gains keep city's health care workforce on growth trajectory

Plus:

- Stony Brook WTC health program gets \$147M in fed funding
- Weill Cornell receives \$8M federal grant to study lupus in children
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 REPRINTS

The city's health care workforce is leaving pre-pandemic levels in the dust as it continued its steady growth through last month, buoyed largely by gains in health care services

outside of hospitals, new state data shows.

There were 630,600 people working for the city's health care employers, including hospitals, nursing and residential facilities, physician's offices, outpatient care centers and home health care services, in September, according to a monthly jobs report released last week by the New York state Department of Labor.

That marks a 7.6% increase since the same time last year and 6.7% growth from September 2019, when just under 591,000 New Yorkers worked in the sector.

Ambulatory health care services saw a 10.7% rise in jobs between September 2021 and last month, outpacing hospitals' job growth rate of just 2.4% in the same time frame.

Robert Martiniano, senior program manager at the SUNY Albany School of Public Health's Center for Health Workforce Studies, attributed that to rising demand for home health care services that is fueled by an aging population and the growing popularity of aging in the community rather than in a residential facility.

Home care, which is categorized under ambulatory services in the state's data, tallied nearly 247,000 workers in September—a 13.6% jump year over year.

Also within ambulatory services, jobs in physician's offices rose 6.7% from 60,000 in September 2021 to 64,000 last month. Outpatient care centers reported about 24,000 workers, up 6.3% from a year ago.

During the same time frame, hospital employment grew just 2.4%, from 167,200 to 172,400. It is unclear, however, how many employees of hospital-owned outpatient facilities are included in that category and how many are counted under ambulatory health care services. The Department of Labor said it depends how each hospital reports its data.

Martiniano characterized the growth as the health care workforce playing catchup after pandemic job losses and a sign of more turnover, not the creation of jobs. Turnover rates are higher among younger health care workers than they have been in older generations, and many of those older employees retired during the pandemic, he said.

Indeed, hospitals and other health care organizations still face [workforce shortages](#).

The Department of Labor report does not break down increases by job title, but Martiniano said much of the growth in the health care workforce has been concentrated at the lower

end of the pay scale. For example, he said many employers have increased hiring of lower-paid licensed practical nurses because registered nurses have proved hard to come by.

“Especially in home care, you’re not talking about a lot of high-paying jobs,” he said.

A statewide \$2 minimum wage increase for home care workers went into effect Oct. 1.

Unlike the city economy as a whole, the health care sector has recovered all jobs lost in March 2020. Health care surpassed its pre-pandemic jobs number late last year.

The U.S. jobs picture has been much rosier than the city’s, but it took the country until the summer to regain all lost jobs in the health care sector.

“It’s a good sign, showing that New York is at the forefront of taking care of its residents,” said Barbara Denham, senior economist at Oxford Economics. “While other localities haven’t recovered staff or aren’t beefing up in a post-Covid world, it’s reassuring that New York is.” —Maya Kaufman and Cara Eisenpress

Stony Brook WTC health program gets \$147M in fed funding

Stony Brook’s World Trade Center Health Program Clinical Center of Excellence has been awarded \$147 million in federal funding to continue caring for 9/11 responders for the next eight years, it announced Thursday.

The funds from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health will enable the program to expand its clinical offerings and integrate such services as respiratory and psychiatric care, said Dr. Benjamin Luft, the program’s director.

It will also use the funding to implement technologies to diagnose, manage and monitor individual cases.

Stony Brook’s program monitors and treats more than 13,000 World Trade Center responders at its main facility in Commack and satellite clinic in Mineola. Many patients are dealing with multiple health issues simultaneously—from cancers and respiratory illnesses to post-traumatic stress disorder—and many of them are chronic.

“As time moves on, the medical cases of WTC responders become more complex and challenging to treat,” Luft said in a statement.

The program is part of Stony Brook Medicine, which encompasses the university’s schools of dental medicine, health professions, medicine, nursing and social welfare, four hospitals

and more than 200 community-based health care settings in Suffolk County.

Stony Brook University is a public research university in Stony Brook, Long Island. —M.K.

Weill Cornell receives \$8M federal grant to study lupus in children

Scientists from several institutions, including Weill Cornell Medicine, have been awarded just over \$8 million from the National Institute of Health to study lupus in children.

Scientists at Weill Cornell's Gale and Ira Drukier Institute for Children's Health will lead two projects over five years and continue research that's been in progress for years, said Dr. Virginia Pascual, the director of children's health research at the institute and the principal investigator for one of the projects. The goal is to better tailor lupus treatment to children.

Pascual performed research in Dallas before joining Weill Cornell, having established a cohort of children with lupus to study there more than 15 years ago. Collaborators in Dallas will send samples to the Weill Cornell team to use in this new study, and researchers will follow the cohort as their illnesses progress, she said.

The first project in this new study will build on findings about how red blood cells in children with lupus behave abnormally and cause inflammation. The second project will allow researchers to identify biomarkers in the children that will help scientists understand why certain patients are resistant to therapies, Pascual said.

The Hospital for Special Surgery, which is affiliated with Weill Cornell, and the Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus will provide patient samples so researchers have a credible sample size.

The bulk of the patient population will be from Dallas, Pascual said.

Lupus, which is an autoimmune disease, tends to be more aggressive in children than in adults, according to Weill Cornell. —Jacqueline Neber

Meet more *Crain's* Notable HR Leaders who work in health care

This year, *Crain's* recognized 62 Human Resources leaders across industries who helped their companies navigate shifts in work at this stage in the pandemic. Many work in health care, and these five bring their talent to city agencies and the life science sector, which just got an injection of capital for a new talent-cultivating campus to be built in Kips Bay. Read the full list of HR leaders [here](#).

Naveen Bhateja - Executive vice president, chief people officer, Medidata Solutions
Medidata Solutions is aiding the digital transformation of life sciences by generating insights for pharmaceutical, biotech, medical device and diagnostic companies. As its executive vice president and chief people officer, Naveen Bhateja leads the global employee function. He is responsible for the recruitment and retention of talent, employee programs related to leadership and development, diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, and corporate social responsibility. During the pandemic, Bhateja found innovative ways to attract talent through virtual processes, hiring and onboarding more than 2,000 professionals. He led Medidata's Social Innovation Lab, an internal think tank and volunteer program that pairs employees with nonprofit partners to advance key issues.

Mark Neal - Chief people officer, New York City Department of Social Services
At the New York Department of Social Services, Mark Neal provides human resources oversight for the Office of Human Resources Solutions, the Office of Labor Relations and the Office of Emergency Management. Neal led a team of human resources and labor relations professionals in championing a compressed workweek program for DSS staff, leading the agency to become one of the city's first to successfully negotiate a policy of that sort with a municipal union. In addition, he guided the creation of the agency's first diversity, equity and inclusion council, coordinated the recruitment of diverse staff to sit on the council and provided guidance on agency efforts.

Dina Simon-Leroy - Senior adviser of human resources, New York City Department of Social Services

Dina Simon-Leroy advises commissioners and senior executives regarding daily operations, strategic policy initiatives and change management at the New York Department of Social Services. Simon-Leroy has created equitable recruitment and workforce sustainability processes and developed accountability systems for pay equity across city government agencies. She has guided conversation around diversity, equity and inclusion in city government. She previously was appointed chief executive of the U.S. Virgin Islands Hurricane Recovery and Resilience Task Force. In that role she produced a report on the impact of hurricanes and provided related recommendations. Simon-Leroy is on the board of directors at the Haitian American Foundation for Democracy. —*Crain's* staff