



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 6, 2014

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No. 507

MAYOR DE BLASIO, SENATOR SCHUMER ANNOUNCE FEMA COMMITMENT OF AT LEAST \$1.6 BILLION TO REPAIR AND PROTECT SANDY-DAMAGED PUBLIC HOSPITALS

FEMA grant advances City's comprehensive resiliency plan, ensuring critical protections at four HHC hospitals: Coney Island, Bellevue, Metropolitan, and Coler

NEW YORK—Today, Mayor Bill de Blasio and U.S. Senator Charles Schumer announced that the City has secured a commitment of at least \$1.6 billion in funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to repair and protect the City's public hospitals damaged during Hurricane Sandy.

The allocation—the second largest FEMA award ever and the largest award under FEMA's 428 program—will advance the City's comprehensive, five-borough resiliency plan and fund improvements at four New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) facilities: Coney Island Hospital in Brooklyn, Bellevue Hospital Center in Manhattan, Metropolitan Hospital Center in Manhattan, and Coler Specialty Hospital on Roosevelt Island.

The at least \$1.6 billion package will include reimbursement for repairs to HHC facilities for damage incurred during Hurricane Sandy, and funds for mitigation projects that will protect the hospitals from the impact of future extreme weather. It is in addition to the \$142 million HHC already received from FEMA for emergency stabilization measures, partial repairs, and temporary flood barriers.

"Few services are as critical as our hospitals during extreme weather. This unprecedented investment will make four key public hospitals much more resilient next time they need to be," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "Thanks to FEMA's \$1.6 billion commitment, we're taking a major step forward in advancing our comprehensive resiliency plan and ensuring that doctors, nurses, and health care workers will be able to do what they do best—serve their patients. We're grateful for Senator Schumer's continued partnership in securing these—and so many other—funds as we build a stronger and more resilient New York City."

"This historic, over \$1.6 billion federal investment will provide a massive shot of adrenaline for New York City's public hospitals, and their physical and financial recovery from Superstorm Sandy," said **Senator Charles Schumer**. "The largest of its kind, this FEMA Public Assistance award will help ensure that our public hospitals have the necessary safeguards in place to operate continuously during a storm, mitigate damage and power loss, and, if evacuation is necessary, quickly return to normalcy. Smart recovery and resiliency work at New York's great public hospitals, which serve millions each day, is exactly what we had in mind when crafting the Sandy relief bill, and I'm thrilled to have helped deliver this federal funding."

"Superstorm Sandy brought tremendous damage down on New York City's hospitals—but today, we're building them back better and stronger than ever before," **Governor Andrew Cuomo** said. "By getting these four hospitals the resources they need to recover and become more resilient, we're laying the groundwork for a safer and more prepared health network in the future. This is another step forward in our work to build a stronger New York State, and I want to thank all of our federal, local and community partners for helping to make this progress a reality."

"New York City's public hospitals serve a very vulnerable patient population and must not be allowed to remain susceptible to future storms," said **HHC President Dr. Ram Raju**. "The local communities look to HHC

hospitals for more than just health care, and the cost of shutting them down is human suffering. HHC hospitals returned to service quickly after Sandy thanks to the extraordinary efforts of their dedicated staffs, but they remain at risk. I'd like to thank FEMA for an aid package that recognizes the need for public hospital resiliency. And, of course, Mayor de Blasio and Senator Charles Schumer, for their efforts in helping the City's public hospital system."

The at least \$1.6 billion in FEMA funds will cover:

- **\$923 million for Coney Island Hospital**, including reimbursement for repairs already made to the hospital's basement, first floor, and electrical systems. It also includes construction of a new resilient critical services building that will house an Emergency Department on the second floor, plus critical medical services such as x-ray, CAT scan, MRI, pharmacy, and labs. Vital mechanical services, such as emergency power generators, heating and cooling systems, and water pumps will also be installed in the new building. The hospital will also build a new 1,720-foot flood wall that will protect critical services on the current part of the campus to the level of a 500-year flood.

Coney Island Hospital was forced to close on October 30, 2012, after Sandy's floodwaters inundated its basement and also entered its first floor, severely damaging its emergency department, imaging services, and numerous public and administrative areas. Two days after the storm, the hospital opened a 24/7 urgent care center and a pharmacy distribution center, where patients could fill their maintenance prescriptions. By the end of January, they re-opened all primary care and most specialty clinics in their original space, re-opened some med-surgical beds and began receiving ambulances again through the City's 911 service. By February, the hospital's Tower Building had re-opened, along with most of its inpatient beds and imaging and laboratory services.

Coney Island has undergone intensive renovations to its basement and first floor, repairing walls, replacing equipment, and, where possible, relocating vital electrical systems to higher elevations and out of flood areas. The hospital has also acquired temporary flood barrier systems that can be erected in advance of a storm around its emergency department, main entrances, and around its generator facility, which is located in a separate building in the hospital's parking lot.

- **\$376 million for Bellevue Hospital Center in Manhattan**. Intensive restoration work has already repaired or replaced equipment damaged by the storm. In many cases, equipment such as electrical switching gear has been relocated out of the hospital's basement to higher elevation areas on the first floor. Bellevue has also installed removable flood barriers at its two loading dock entrances facing the East River, and raised its drinking water and fuel pumps to higher elevations.

FEMA funds will reimburse HHC for repairs and mitigation work partially completed. It will also fund a new 2,350-foot flood wall that will protect critical parts of the campus to the 500-year flood level, new storm and sanitary drainage pumps, and new flood proof elevators for the hospital's main tower.

Bellevue Hospital was evacuated for the first time in its history on October 31, 2012, when its basement, which contained over 250 pieces of equipment critical to running the facility, was flooded by millions of gallons of water pushed ashore by Hurricane Sandy. On November 19, 2012, Bellevue was able to re-open several primary care clinics, 24-hour walk-in urgent care, and outpatient pharmacy services. On December 10, 2012, the hospital re-opened its emergency department in a limited capacity and, two weeks later, began receiving ambulances for non-critical cases. Additional outpatient clinics were re-opened as well. Finally, on February 7, 2013, Bellevue fully restored all services, resuming its Level 1 Trauma Center status and opening all 828 inpatient beds.

- **\$120 million for Metropolitan Hospital Center in Manhattan**, including almost \$7 million for electrical repairs and \$109 million for a flood wall that will protect critical infrastructure on the campus to the 500-year flood level.
- **\$181 million for Coler Specialty Hospital on Roosevelt Island**, including replacement of a generator that was destroyed, reimbursement for repairs already completed to the electrical system, and a flood wall that will protect critical parts of the campus to the 500-year flood level.

"Hurricane Sandy highlighted the vulnerabilities of our health care system all over the city. Preparing our public hospitals for future storms and disruptions is a vital part of the City's comprehensive climate resiliency plan," said **Daniel Zarrilli**,

Director of the Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency. "It is imperative to continue making investments like this to ensure that critical health care services are not jeopardized for our most vulnerable populations. We look forward to implementing these projects in partnership with FEMA and HHC."

"As dean of the New York congressional delegation, I'm proud of great work of the Mayor and Senator Schumer, who worked especially hard to secure these additional funds from FEMA. We are strongly committed to ensuring that these central hospitals are fully equipped and rehabilitated to provide the best of care to our constituents," said **Congressman Charles Rangel**.

"These federal funds will help ensure that our hospitals continue functioning without interruption when the next big storm hits," said **Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney**. "The entire New York Congressional Delegation came together to fight for these funds, and wisely sought resources not just for repairs, but also for mitigation. The \$1.6 billion package announced today will pay for resiliency efforts at Bellevue Hospital Center, Metropolitan Hospital Center, Coler Specialty Hospital on Roosevelt Island, and Coney Island Hospital."

"The prognosis for Coney Island Hospital's future has never looked better, thanks to the efforts of Mayor de Blasio, Senator Schumer, and New York's Congressional delegation in securing \$923 million in needed recovery and resiliency funds. Quality health care is critical for our communities, and this funding will ensure that our City can continue to deliver these services to southern Brooklyn, regardless of what Mother Nature throws our way. I will continue to work with these leaders to tackle the health and wellness challenges facing our borough," said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams**.

"I'm extremely grateful to Mayor de Blasio, Senator Schumer, and FEMA for securing this major investment in our public hospital system for repairs and improvements related to Superstorm Sandy. In my Senate district, Sandy forced Bellevue Hospital to evacuate 500 patients and shut down one of the busiest emergency rooms in the city. As recent events have shown, Bellevue is back, better than ever, and the \$376 million from FEMA announced today will help fund the long-term plan to strengthen Bellevue further against storms that may strike in the future," said **Senator Brad Hoylman**.

"These repairs and upgrades to our most critical infrastructure will enhance resiliency, and allow these hospitals to provide essential services in the event of the most serious emergencies. I'd like to commend Senator Schumer and Mayor de Blasio for their continual efforts in preparing New York City for future storms and other climate change impacts," said **Assembly Member Robert Rodriguez**.

"As a representative of Bellevue, I was there to witness the valiant effort of HHC staff to keep the hospital operating in spite of Sandy's floodwaters. That effort was ultimately unsuccessful, and we lost an essential institution at a critical time, because the physical infrastructure to protect the hospital simply wasn't adequate. I thank Mayor de Blasio, Senator Schumer, and FEMA for ensuring that we have the funds to act on the lessons of Sandy, before the waters rise again," said **Assembly Member Brian Kavanagh**.

"Not only must we repair damages from the storm, we must do all that we can to minimize future impacts to public health facilities like this vital southern Brooklyn institution that serves thousands of people. We can't afford having Coney Island Hospital and others lose power and shut down emergency room access, when so many in our vulnerable residents rely on our public hospitals for critical and life-saving services. I appreciate the Mayor, Senator and Congressman for their leadership and partnership in ensuring our City hospitals get what they rightfully deserve to rebuild stronger than ever," said **Council Member Mark Treyger, Chair of the Committee on Recovery & Resiliency**.

"These hospitals did extraordinary work in protecting their patients during Superstorm Sandy, while their buildings endured enormous damage in the process," said **Council Member Dan Garodnick**. "These supplemental funds help to fix ongoing problems, while also protecting them from the next extreme weather event."

"Rebuilding and resiliency for HHC hospitals are essential investments for a City prepared to take on the next Sandy," said **Council Member Ben Kallos, who represents Coler Specialty Hospital on Roosevelt Island**. "Senator Schumer and Mayor de Blasio merit recognition for their leadership in securing FEMA federal funding and investing it in our public hospitals."

“In the crucial months following Hurricane Sandy, residents were transported and referred to nearby hospitals. In a medical emergency, seconds can mean the difference between life and death,” said **Council Member Chaim Deutsch**. “I thank Mayor de Blasio and Senator Schumer for securing this substantial allocation that will strengthen Coney Island Hospital’s infrastructure, making the hospital more resilient to future extreme weather, improving our health care system, and safeguarding vital patient care.”

“Improving the resiliency of our public hospitals is critical to ensuring the health and safety of all New Yorkers. We applaud all levels of government in working together to secure these resources,” said **Susannah Dyen, coordinator of the Alliance for a Just Rebuilding**.

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