



## NEWS FROM NEW YORK STATE SENATOR SHIRLEY L. HUNTLEY

*10<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District*

**For Immediate Release:** April 19, 2012

### **Phase 2: My Prescription for Change, “Road Map to Recovery”**

In Queens, the debate over disparities in health care services and addressing chronic illnesses and diseases starts with simply having access to a quality healthcare delivery services. Currently, 27% of New York City’s residents call the borough of Queens home. However, when St. Joseph’s, Parkway, St. John’s and Mary Immaculate Hospitals closed during 2006 – 2009 the citizens of Queens lost 32.5% of its bed capacity. Now in 2012, our community faces yet another imminent hospital closure that will further decrease access to quality healthcare. The closure of Peninsula Hospital would increase the number of lost bed capacity in Queens, as well as leaving the Far Rockaway section with only one hospital. What this means, is that our communities, which were already in need of quality driven accessible care, now have the lowest hospital bed ratio for citizens in New York City.

We also have an alarming decrease in primary care doctors with a ratio of 45 primary care physicians per 100,000 population. These statistics combined with the loss of the supporting healthcare services and the drastic estimated 7,000 healthcare workers laid off in Queens has not only compromised our healthcare system, but also our economy.

As I roll out "Phase 2" of my "Prescription for Change," my primary objective is to drastically improve the health care delivery system in Queens and continue to address the disparities and lack of resources which have adversely affected our community’s medical needs and health and welfare.

I will also concurrently seek ways to create healthcare employment opportunities for our citizens. I have partnered with several grassroots organizations including Dr. Robert Evans, CEO/President of Community Wellness Centers of America, LLC. to implement measures intended to mitigate the lack of focused preventable health care services in Queens.

My initiative will continue to address access to care, state health initiatives, and require that we secure grants and capital funds to elevate the health and welfare of children, seniors, and families within our community.

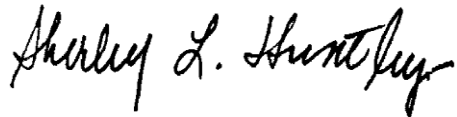
My immediate and long term goals will be the following:

- Increasing hospital bed capacity by building a new hospital or reopening closed facilities, strategically locating primary care wellness centers that ensure easily accessible preventative care, support mobile home technologies for monitoring patients in their home, and provide the necessary medical screening programs and healthcare information technologies that will assure quality care to the community.

➤ Recruiting clinicians into the community and training community members to be employed in meaningful healthcare occupations are equally critical. The development of a community wide Healthcare Information system supporting evidence based medical care will facilitate accurate up-to-date personal information at the time of receiving medical care. We will engage local hospitals and medical schools in support of clinician staffing. Research and Development will be a priority in developing a comprehensive collaborative integrated delivery system. We will also address securing appropriate grants to off-set community based clinician costs in securing Electronic Health Record Technologies and continue to push for financial support from local government, federal government and the private business sector to support this healthcare initiative.

My heart goes out to the many families who have been affected during this economic down turn. I will continue to work with my colleagues and my constituents to help our community recover together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shirley L. Huntley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Shirley L. Huntley  
10<sup>th</sup> District, Queens