

**RESOLUTION NO. 351 -2013, ADVANCING AND IMPROVING
PATIENT ADVOCACY SERVICES IN THE COUNTY OF
SUFFOLK**

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 859-2012 amended the 2012 Operating Budget to create a Patient Advocate Unit in the Department of Social Services, to assist vulnerable populations in accessing skilled nursing care, nursing home care, public health nursing care, ambulatory care, long-term care, mental health care and custodial care; and

WHEREAS, the adopted 2013 Operating Budget authorizes three (3) positions to staff the Patient Advocate Unit; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 859-2012 directed the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services to coordinate the activities of the new unit via an agreement with the Department of Health Services, but only after the sale of the John J. Foley Skilled Nursing Facility closes; and

WHEREAS, the Patient Advocate Unit should begin its work as soon as possible and its implementation should not be delayed; and

WHEREAS, the membership of the Patient Protection Oversight Committee created by Resolution No. 859-2012 should be expanded to include representatives of the Office for the Aging, the Office for People with Disabilities and the Veterans Service Agency; and

WHEREAS, the Patient Advocate Unit should, in addition to its other responsibilities established by Resolution No. 859-2012, assist Suffolk County residents who are seeking long-term pediatric care, victims of traumatic brain injury and veterans in need of long-term care; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Health Services and the Department of Social Services should post their departmental contact information, for residents seeking assistance for long-term care services, at all County health centers and other facilities it operates and to the fullest extent practicable, make such information available to the County's private hospitals, clinics and medical offices; and

WHEREAS, Suffolk County should implement the recommendation made by the Healthcare Task Force in 2008 and create a database that tracks all inquiries they receive for information on long-term care services and establish a shared database to aid in tracking of such inquiries; now, therefore be it

1st RESOLVED, that the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services is hereby authorized, empowered and directed to implement the Patient Advocate Unit authorized by Resolution No. 859-2012 within forty-five (45) days of the effective date of this resolution; and be it further

2nd RESOLVED, that the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services is hereby directed to coordinate the activities of the Patient Advocate Unit by an agreement with

the Commissioner of the Department of Health Services, this agreement shall maximize reimbursement to the County; will be fully executed by the departments within forty-five (45) days of the effective date of this resolution; and be it further

3rd **RESOLVED**, that the Director of the Office for the Aging, or his or her designee, and the Director of the Office for People with Disabilities, or his or her designee, and the Director of the Veterans Services Agency, or his or her designee, shall be members of the Patient Protection Oversight Committee established by Resolution No. 859-2012; and be it further

4th **RESOLVED**, that the Patient Advocate Unit, in addition to its other responsibilities established by Resolution No. 859-2012, shall assist Suffolk County residents who are seeking long-term pediatric care, victims of traumatic brain injury and veterans in need of long-term care; and be it further

5th **RESOLVED**, that the Department of Health Services and the Department of Social Services is hereby authorized, empowered and directed to post its departmental contact information, for residents specifically seeking long-term care services, at all County health centers and facilities run by the Department of Social Services and to the fullest extent practicable, make such information available to the County's private hospitals, clinics and medical offices; and be it further

6th **RESOLVED**, that the Department of Health Services, the Department of Social Services, the Office for the Aging, the Office for Persons with Disabilities and the Veterans Services Agency are directed to track all inquiries made to their offices for information on long-term care services; and be it further

7th **RESOLVED**, that the Department of Health Services, the Department of Social Services, the Office for the Aging, the Office for Persons with Disabilities and the Veterans Services Agency are further authorized, empowered and directed to, in consultation with the Department of Information Technology, establish a shared database to aid in the tracking of such inquiries; and be it further

8th **RESOLVED**, that the information in the shared database will be shared to the extent permitted by applicable confidentiality laws; and be it further

9th **RESOLVED**, that this Legislature, being the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) lead agency, hereby finds and determines that this resolution constitutes a Type II action pursuant to Section 617.5(c)(20), (21) and (27) of Title 6 of the NEW YORK CODE OF RULES AND REGULATIONS (6 NYCRR) and within the meaning of Section 8-0109(2) of the NEW YORK ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION LAW as a promulgation of regulations, rules, policies, procedures, and legislative decisions in connection with continuing agency administration, management and information collection, and the Suffolk County Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) is hereby directed to circulate any appropriate SEQRA notices of determination of non-applicability or non-significance in accordance with this resolution.

DATED: May 7, 2013

APPROVED BY:

/s/ Steven Bellone
County Executive of Suffolk County

Date: May 15, 2013