

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Justin Chin
Assistant Director, External Affairs
718.334.5919
Chinj6@nychhc.org

Elmhurst Hospital Center Hosts Third Annual Pedestrian Injury Summit
Hospital releases study showing traffic accidents as leading cause of blunt trauma injuries seen in ER.

Physicians, government officials, and community activists discuss ways to alleviate problem

Elmhurst, NY -- On Thursday, December 12th, physicians, hospital administrators, transportation and traffic safety experts and community activists gathered at Elmhurst Hospital Center (EHC) for the Third New York City Pedestrian Injury Summit. The one-day symposium, part of a public education and outreach campaign developed by Elmhurst Hospital Center's Trauma and Neurosurgery Departments, examined pedestrian injuries and their impact on public health.

"Neighborhoods in western and central Queens, (the catchment area for Elmhurst Hospital Center), have seen an increasing rise in the number of traffic accidents involving pedestrians," said Dr. Jaime Ullman, Elmhurst Hospital Center's Director of Neurosurgery and one of the chief organizers of the summit. "We've noticed that in 2012 that we actually reached an all-time high, once again, of pedestrian injuries. It's a very significant problem, because it's still the second most common reason for being admitted in trauma."

Ullman noted that that statistic is frighteningly high. "Pedestrian injuries typically make up 5% to 21% of injuries seen at hospitals in other parts of the city."

By analyzing EHC's admissions data, Ullman and her investigative team also discovered that pedestrian injuries were one of the leading causes of individuals having to actually be hospitalized, sometimes for long periods, due to suffering serious neurological damage. Other summit participants included representatives from the New York State and New York City Departments of Transportation, NYPD, EMS, NYU School of Medicine, New York Hospital of Queens, and Staten Island University Hospital, who discussed the challenges faced by municipal governments, healthcare institutions, and community-based organizations seeking to raise public awareness regarding pedestrian injuries. Daniel Dromm, District 25, New York City Councilman, a very prominent proponent of traffic safety in Jackson Heights expressed his concerns with pedestrian and motor vehicle safety. Jennifer So Godzeno of Transportation Alternatives, a grass-roots non-profit organization that advocates for the increased use of bicycles and pedestrian walkways, presented ways of increasing awareness for pedestrians and motor vehicles throughout the community.

One of the speakers, a victim and former nurse at Elmhurst Hospital Center, presented a very emotional and endearing story of how life was before and after a traumatic experience with a head injury from a school bus driver that was texting while driving. In addition, Dr. Ullman received two notifications about trauma incidents during the event, further expressing the need to increase awareness and safety for pedestrian.

“We had wonderful panel discussion and members from the audience were involved in talking. We concluded from the summit that the Department of Transportation that they were glad to see hospitals are collecting important data and this type of information can greatly aid them and New York City to target the really problematic areas and felt that it would be a great idea for centers to collaborating and collecting the data for department and other agencies,” said Dr. Ullman when asked what additional steps she thought should be taken to help reduce the number of pedestrian injury victims. For more about Elmhurst Hospital Center’s Pedestrian Injury Prevention Campaign, please contact Justin Chin, Assistant Director of External Affairs, at 718.334.5919 or by e-mail at

About Elmhurst Hospital Center

Elmhurst Hospital Center (EHC) is the major tertiary care provider in the borough of Queens. The hospital is comprised of 545 beds and is a Level I Trauma Center, an Emergency Heart Care Station and a 911 receiving Hospital. It is the premiere health care organization for key areas such as Surgery, Cardiology, Women’s Health, Pediatrics, Rehabilitation Medicine, Renal and Mental Health Services.

Elmhurst Hospital Center serves an area of approximately one million people. This community is recognized as the most ethnically diverse in the world. Last year, EHC received 693,600 ambulatory care visits as well as receiving 130,042 Emergency Room visits making it one of the busiest ERs in New York City. Almost 3,500 delivered at Elmhurst last year alone-the most in this region. Ensuring accessible health care is our priority.