



Crain's Health Pulse

Friday, March 22, 2013

Commish Has Last Word on LICH

Members of the Public Health and Health Planning Council asked for clarification yesterday on whether the council will get to weigh in on any closure plan for Long Island College Hospital. The group makes recommendations and approvals on a wide range of certificate of need applications. But it has no role in vetting a hospital closure plan, a task that lies with the state Department of Health. The PHHPC is charged with regional planning and "is not typically involved in the closing of a hospital," said Karen Lipson, director of the division of policy for the DOH's Office of Health Systems Management, in response to questions from PHHPC members. If the council wanted to change its role, it could make a suggestion as part of the ongoing overhaul of the CON process, she added. Council member Dr. John Rugge said PHHPC is "involved in a strange way, but not in the decision. If we are not to have a hospital because it is not sustainable, that does not mean there is not a need for care." The council could focus on what new services should be approved for LICH's catchment area. There were hints at yesterday's PHHPC committee meeting that LICH will be discussed at the April 11 full council meeting.