

# The SHIP Newsletter

In Memory of Peter Szollosi

Spring, 2009



After Peter Szollosi passed away in 2007, his friends and family approached Dr. Lyle Berkowitz about founding The Szollosi Healthcare Innovation Program. This charitable endeavor launched in January 2008 and adopted Szollosi's mantra-

**"I don't care what you can't do"**

with the goal of using innovative thinking to improve the healthcare experience for us all.

Dear Friends:

It is my privilege to update you on the exciting and productive work that has been accomplished this past year in memory of our good friend, Peter Szollosi. It was Peter's vision and spirit that has helped create what is his legacy – The Szollosi Healthcare Innovation Program (SHIP).

Based on his personal experiences and channeling his signature unconventional thinking, we took Peter's lead to frame SHIP's mission: "Use creative thinking and diverse technologies to produce a better healthcare experience for patients, physicians and others associated with their care." We believe Peter would be proud that in just one year's time, we have established ourselves as an internationally known healthcare innovation program with a solid foundation for continued evolution and growth.

This newsletter provides a summary of the work that we have done in the past year, as well as a glimpse into what we are planning for 2009.

I would also like to take this opportunity to very gratefully acknowledge Gerry Spector, Bill Bartolotta and SHIP's Project Manager, Amy Tourne. Our formation and success would not be possible without the support of these wonderful people.

And finally, thank you for your continued interest in Peter's legacy and best wishes to each of you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink, appearing to read "Lyle Berkowitz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Lyle Berkowitz, MD  
Program Director, SHIP  
Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine  
Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University

## 2008 Highlights

*With pride, we point to the highlights of SHIP's inaugural year:*

- The design and deployment of "**ExpectED**", a web-based tool that allows for improved communication between a Primary Care Physician and the Emergency Department at Northwestern Memorial Hospital.
- Becoming a member of the **Innovation Learning Network** (ILN), comprising the most innovative healthcare organizations in the country working together "to share the joys and pains of innovation".
- Speaking about Peter and the Szollosi Healthcare Innovation Program as a Keynote Presenter at the Annual Conference of the **Health Informatics Society of Australia** in Melbourne.
- Heightening awareness of SHIP in *Healthcare's Most Wired Magazine* with a two-part interview series entitled "**Fixing Health Care from the Inside**".
- The selection of SHIP's Program Director as one of "**Twenty Individuals Who Make Healthcare Better**", in the December issue of HealthLeaders magazine. Their profile of Dr. Berkowitz highlights his relationship with Peter and the creation of the Szollosi Healthcare Innovation Program.

**To read more about these highlights, including transcripts from the articles and presentations, please visit us online at: <http://www.theshiphome.org>**

## 2009

In 2008, the Szollosi Healthcare Innovation Program created a strategic model to identify problems and develop real-world solutions that meet our mission of improving patient and physician experiences. In 2009, we will continue to think creatively about a variety of complex and critical medical issues, particularly in the outpatient environment. We specifically plan to explore new workflows and tools to enable better communication and coordination between patients and physicians. The following paragraphs describe two of our exciting new projects currently underway.

### *The “Inflection Navigator” System*

“Intensive caring for the outpatient”. Imagine you were just told you had a serious disorder such as Cancer - you do not need to be admitted to the hospital, but you will need to set up three tests, meet with two specialists and read about your new diagnosis on an unfamiliar website - all in the next ten days. You probably didn't hear anything after “Cancer”. This is all too often the typical scenario when a patient encounters an “Inflection Point” in their health - a new diagnosis or worsening of their current condition that requires a significant amount of effort and coordination from both patients and their providers.

BUT WHAT IF... your primary care physician told you a team of people (your “Navigators”) would contact you in the next 24 hours to help you navigate this process. This team would have access to specific protocols for your situation and thus know who you have to see, what tests you need done, and what resources are available to you. Furthermore, your Navigators would make sure everything is done in a timely, efficient and complete manner - all at no cost to you.

Well, that is what we have done! SHIP has now officially launched the “Inflection Navigator System”, which combines the concept of using care coordinators with a web-based tool that contains protocols derived from national guidelines and experts at Northwestern Memorial Hospital. We believe this solution will take immeasurable pressure off of patients and allow them to better concentrate on the proper steps toward their recovery. We further believe this will support physicians by saving them time and ensuring a consistently high standard of care for their patients. To help validate its success, we have teamed up with a nationally known Northwestern University researcher to study how this system works for the inflection points associated with the new diagnosis of three important and unique problems: Cancer, Atrial Fibrillation and Hematuria. If successful, we hope to expand both the process and the scope of the Inflection Navigator System.

### *Evolving the Electronic Medical Record*

One of the main complaints about electronic medical record (EMR) systems is that they are not easy or intuitive for physicians to use - often resulting in decreased efficiency and sometimes even compromising quality of care. The Szollosi Healthcare Innovation Program intends to think way outside the traditional EMR box and come up with prototypes for a wide range of user interfaces to better support the real world needs of care providers and patients. SHIP's Program Director will be presenting some of these findings at the Annual Conference of the Healthcare Information Management Systems Society (HIMSS) in April of 2009.

### **During these tough financial times, innovation is more imperative than ever.**

With that in mind, we hope that you are able to support Peter's legacy as we look to grow and expand. Our web site, [www.theshiphome.org](http://www.theshiphome.org), has more information about SHIP as well as details about making a tax-deductible donation online.

Feel free to contact SHIP's Program Director directly with any comments or ideas – we welcome your input!

Email for Dr. Berkowitz: [LBerkowi@NMH.org](mailto:LBerkowi@NMH.org)

For correspondence by mail (including donations):

The Szollosi Healthcare Innovation Program

c/o Lyle Berkowitz, MD

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