

## **Area Nonprofits and Hospitals to host Central Asian Doctor**

*Locals assist in development of foreign healthcare policies*

Delhi, NY - November 20, 2005 - O'Connor Hospital in Delhi and Delaware Valley Hospitals in Walton will host Dr. Taalaigul Sabyrbekova on November 21-22, a physician from the Republic of Kyrgyzstan who is studying hospital practices in rural America as part of a healthcare development project for Central Asia. Dr. Sabyrbekova's visit to the area is coordinated by The Resource & Policy Exchange of Delhi and CitiHope International of Andes, two nonprofit organizations that manage government funded international development programs.

Dr. Sabyrbekova noted that hospital practices in Delaware County are seen as relevant to the development of the healthcare system in Kyrgyzstan, a mountainous and agriculturally-dependent country with limited financial resources. Dr. Sabyrbekova also suggested that rural Americans and citizens of Kyrgyzstan face a common problem regarding healthcare costs.

"Like 40 million Americans, many of Kyrgyzstan's citizens are without health insurance and unable to afford medical treatment", said Dr. Sabyrbekova.

Despite positive political reform, the Kyrgyzstan's economy remains poorly developed, with 40 percent of the population officially living below the poverty level. Experienced doctors receive a government salary of \$200 per month, while nurses receive around \$60 per month.

Dr. Sabyrbekova works with Kyrgyz policy makers who have introduced a national health insurance plan that aims to provide universal health insurance. Lessons learned from the Kyrgyz model are being studied by US policy advisers who seek a solution for America's lack of health insurance coverage.

Part of a 15-day US tour, which also includes government, corporate and university meetings in Washington, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, Dr. Sabyrbekova's visits with hospital staff in Delhi and Walton will focus on patient relations, hospital management structure, and quality improvement techniques. Dr. Sabyrbekova will also study local approaches to treating some of her country's most prevalent ailments, including hypertension and its complications, alcoholism and pneumonia, which remains the number one killer of children under five in Kyrgyzstan.

RPX was founded as a nonprofit organization in 2003 to equalize standards of health care, information access and participation in government around the world. RPX addresses its mission by providing material and technical support to



**The Resource &  
Policy Exchange**

other nonprofit organizations in developing regions. CitiHope International is an Andes-based Christian relief and development agency that delivers tangible help in the form of medicine, food and training to healthcare providers worldwide.