



## New Chief Medical Officer Takes the Helm at Stony Brook Eastern Long Island Hospital

Beth Young | August 12, 2025



*New Chief Medical Officer Dr. Alison Madden with Stony Brook ELIH CAO Paul Connor at an Aug. 7 information session at Peconic Landing.*

When Dr. Lloyd Simon retired as Chief Medical Officer at Stony Brook Eastern Long Island Hospital earlier this summer, after more than four decades of service at the hospital, administrators there knew they had to find someone special to replace him.

Dr. Alison Madden took the helm as the new Chief Medical Officer at the hospital on July 21. A gynecologist and obstetrician by training who had most recently served as Chief Medical Officer at St. Joseph Hospital in Nashua, New Hampshire, she was looking to return to her home state of New York when she came back from New England to interview for the position this winter.

She arrived in Greenport on a mid-winter day earlier this year, when the power had gone out throughout the North Fork after a car hit a telephone pole.

She was struck by how the moment brought the community together, she told a crowd gathered at Peconic Landing Aug. 7 to hear about her goals for Stony Brook ELIH.

"I felt like it was fate. You could feel, in the winter, when the power was out, walking the halls of the hospital with the leadership team, that people were smiling and helping each other. They valued connecting with patients," she said. "You can't always do that in a big academic place."

"Dr. Simon had been a practicing physician in this community for 42 years, and had been our only Chief Medical Officer ever," said Stony Brook ELIH Chief Administrative Officer Paul Connor. "So, you can imagine the anguish we were going through to have that person leave our institution, with all that institutional knowledge."

Mr. Connor said the leadership in Greenport was enthusiastic about Dr. Madden's potential for leadership at the hospital but the leadership at Stony Brook was even more enthusiastic. "They were really cheerleaders for her," he said.

"Paul Connor always says this is the last hospital on Long Island, but I came here through New London (Connecticut), so for me this is the first hospital on Long Island," she told the crowd as she recounted her trip across the Long Island Sound on the Cross Sound Ferry that winter day that she fell in love with Greenport, where she now lives with her family.

She said she was also attracted to working at Stony Brook because the leadership team is made up of physicians, not business people.

"I know (Stony Brook Medicine Executive Vice President) Dr. Bill Wertheim is a primary care physician at heart," she said. "Having that is fantastic. That's where I want to be, where the primary goal is to take care of patients."

"While you've only been here three weeks, it feels like you've been here much longer," Mr. Connor said to Dr. Madden after the talk. "It feels like you've already got the rhythm down, you understand the culture. You know small hospitals and small communities, which is a big deal. And you love this community, so it's all the cylinders are hitting on this one. There's no fear here. You just go right into whatever fray you may have to."

Dr. Madden said her fearlessness partly comes from having three older brothers, raised in New York City. She hadn't always been on a path toward medicine. She began her journey studying art history, sculpture and welding at Barnard College, but after realizing the financial struggles of a life as an artist, she began looking for a field that complemented her other strengths — working with people.

She turned to medicine, first as a researcher working on AIDS treatments at Dr. Kendall Smith's laboratory at Hunter College, which led her to Cornell Medical School. After graduating, she moved to the West Coast for her residency at Cedars Sinai Medical Center. She was pregnant at the time and realized she wouldn't be able to keep up a resident's schedule with young children at home, which set her on a path both to administration and to obstetrics and gynecology. She hasn't looked back.

She followed her nomadic husband to Hawaii, where she worked on the OB/GYN faculty at the University of Hawaii, and then moved back to the East Coast, working delivering babies at the busy UMass Memorial Medical Center before becoming the chair of OB/GYN at St. Vincent Medical Center in Massachusetts and then the Chief Medical Officer at St. Joseph Hospital in New Hampshire, a 208-bed community hospital, nearly triple the size of Stony Brook ELIH's 70 beds.

She said ELIH reminds her of the hospital in Hawaii where she worked, and Greenport reminds her of Nantucket, where she had spent time with her parents.

“You have to treat each other well in those places,” she said. “You’re on an island, and there’s no getting off of it.”

She’s already heard tales from people who had received medical care in Greenport after being transported by boat to the only Emergency Room dock she’s ever seen at a hospital.

In her three weeks on the job, Dr. Madden said she’s seen how the hospital is a critical resource for the North Fork, but also how huge the need is for health care services here.

“Our goal is to keep here what we can keep safely here,” she said, adding that the hospital is slated to become a Primary Stroke Center this year, and it is also working to keep more cardiac and trauma patients at ELIH without having to be taken to Stony Brook, with the use of telemedicine interfaces allowing doctors at Stony Brook to be involved with patient care in Greenport. The hospital is also working to expand ambulatory care and do more palliative care, with the help of telemedicine, and on a Fast Track system in the Emergency Department.

“If you just need stitches, you will be diverted out of the main ER traffic, and will be taken care of more quickly,” she said. “It helps both the patients who need extensive care and those who need it to be more efficient.”

She added that health care facilities are likely to face increased costs in upcoming years, due to cuts to federal funding for Medicaid, tariffs and increasing labor costs.



“In this community, housing is a challenge,” she said. “I was looking at a yurt when I first came here, but I’m so blessed I found a house where I can walk to the hospital. Housing does impact our ability to grow. The geography is tough.”

Dr. Madden said she will begin this fall setting up an OB/GYN practice one day a week at the Stony Brook Advanced Primary and Specialty Care office in the Mattituck Plaza. Dr. Tal Cohen, a urologist, will also be joining the practice there in September.

“Urology is a difficult position to recruit for, and, for a place like this, we need generalists. That’s going to be a big help,” she said.

Attendees at the forum shared their frustrations with the lack of integration between medical records between ELIH and Stony Brook, and with the lengthy drive to visit patients when they are transferred to Stony Brook.

Dr. Madden said medical records companies have only recently begun allowing their software to communicate better with other medical record providers — in the past, they were built with firewalls for

patient safety that had the unintended consequence of making it difficult for patients to access their own medical records from different providers.

The biggest medical record company in the country, Epic Systems, “costs about \$26 million for one tiny hospital,” she said. Stony Brook uses a smaller company, Cerner, while ELIH uses MEDHOST, a smaller company still.

Dr. Madden said ELIH is working to transport its records over to the Cerner system, which is better able to integrate with other health record systems, over the course of the next couple years.

“These EMRs (electronic medical records) were initially built with firewalls, but it’s become a nationwide problem. It absolutely affects patient care,” she said. “Being on one system with Stony Brook will help.”

“One of the things that drives leadership is problem solving,” said Mr. Connor, the Chief Administrative Officer. “Health care is complicated, difficult and highly rewarding. We have a million problems to solve every day. We’re very fortunate to have someone of Dr. Madden’s caliber and caring. That caring piece — you can’t teach it. It just has to be there. And that’s so much a part of the ethos of this hospital.”