Season of Giving

This holiday season is a time when thoughts of our family, friends and things we are thankful for are prominent in our minds. This also is the time of year when our mail and messages boxes are filled with requests for contributions from various charities and organizations. As a department, we contribute annually to the Combined Charities Campaign and the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano.

Monetary contribution is only one way that we can give. I know that some of you spend many hours volunteering in your community, and I continue to be amazed by the generosity, energy and passion you bring to your job every day and the important work that you all do for our community. Many of the less fortunate rely on us. During these economic times, our role in the community as a lifeline becomes all the more important. I know that many of you have been impacted by the current economy and may not be able to give as much as you have in years past. I encourage all of you to contribute as you are able to those who experience hunger during this season and throughout the year.

As Americans we are resilient and we have always responded to our neighbors in need. This was most recently demonstrated during Superstorm Sandy. On a large scale, communities came together to help each other and those impacted by the storm. The response was extraordinary, immediate and continuous well beyond this tragic event. During this holiday season of giving and caring we can all contribute to those in our local communities who are facing their own storms through our financial contributions or gift of time. I appreciate the sacrifice that you make to help those in need, and I am hopeful that the economy will continue to experience growth.

I am thankful for your continued commitment to caring for our most vulnerable and for your perseverance through the electronic health record implementation and other difficult challenges in the past year. I look forward to the work ahead especially implementation of the Affordable Care Act when most will have access to health insurance.

Season greetings,

William Walker, M.D.
Employees Can Help Low-Income Residents

The Earn It! Keep It! Save It! Contra Costa Campaign—a collaboration between Health Services, First Five Contra Costa, United Way and other organizations, is seeking volunteers to assist hardworking, low-income families and individuals in filing their taxes and claiming refunds and tax credits owed to them. No experience is required. You’ll receive free IRS-certified training and be connected to a tax service site in your community. Volunteers are asked to commit to regular hours (at least one four-hour shift per week) throughout the tax season, beginning in late January and ending April 15. All volunteers need to be comfortable working with a computer. Last year, the Earn It! Keep It! Save It! initiative made a $68.1 million impact on the local community.

To sign up for the Earn It! Keep It! Save It! initiative, visit www.earnitkeepitsaveit.org/volunteer/ or call Roxanne Carrillo at 925-313-6810.

Study: Bystander CPR Less Likely in Low-income Parts of County

Our Emergency Medical Services Division contributed data for a groundbreaking study on bystander-initiated CPR recently published in The New England Journal of Medicine. Analyzing data from 29 sites across the United States including Contra Costa County, the study’s authors concluded that the racial composition and income-level of a neighborhood play significant roles in determining whether someone will receive life-saving CPR from a bystander. The study found, among other things, that people suffering sudden cardiac arrest in low-income African American neighborhoods were half as likely to receive CPR from bystanders than people in wealthier white neighborhoods. Dr. Joe Barger, the Medical Director for Contra Costa EMS, said the study indicates that differences in survival rates in Contra Costa are, in part, likely due to decreased bystander CPR rates in certain areas. Pam Dodson, EMS Prehospital Care Coordinator, added that cities can improve survival rates by becoming a HeartSafe Community and teaching residents the signs of sudden cardiac arrest and how to act in time by calling 911 and using hands-only CPR.

To find out more about the study visit www.bit.ly/XgOe2O or contact Dr. Joe Barger at 925-646-4690.
No Ifs, Ands or Butts During Great American Smokeout

They came, they learned, they quit—at least for 24 hours. Many Contra Costa tobacco-users stopped smoking for at least one day last month during the annual Great American Smokeout. They got help from the Regional Medical Center Auxiliary, which put together more than 1,000 “Quit Kits” that were distributed at our hospital and health centers. Respiratory therapists from CCRMC also performed more than 85 free lung screenings with the assistance of respiratory therapy students from Napa College. Quitting smoking isn’t easy, but it can be done, wrote CCRMC’s Cardiopulmonary Director Janyth Bolden in a recent Healthy Outlook column. Janyth should know—she used to be a smoker herself. As a respiratory therapist and a former smoker, Janyth knows the benefits of quitting are almost immediate. According to the American Cancer Society, your heart rate and blood pressure drop 20 minutes after quitting; after 12 hours, the carbon monoxide level in your blood returns to normal.

To find out more about the event, contact Janyth Bolden at janyth.bolden@hsd.cccounty.us

A new mural adorns the lobby wall of the fifth floor at our Contra Costa Regional Medical Center. Thanks to everyone who helped paint it at our annual Health Care Workers as Creators event hosted by Healing Through The Arts and to our Auxiliary volunteers who helped arrange the event.

Computer Problem? Go Online!

If you have a tech problem that doesn’t need immediate assistance, you can quickly and easily avoid sitting on the phone by filling out a trouble ticket online at http://servicedesk/ and a member of our Help Desk will respond when the issue is ready to be resolved. The online Self Service portal, which launched back in June, currently receives about 10% of all tickets submitted to the Help Desk. Supervisor Larry Klein said he’d like to see that number eventually grow to 35%. Larry said the online portal is a great way to avoid waiting on hold and allows users to easily manage their tickets.

To find out more about the online Self Service portal, contact Larry Klein at larry.klein@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-957-7476.

Making News

A storied program and an innovative improvement approach have garnered attention for our Regional Medical Center in the past month. The Bay Area News Group, which includes the Contra Costa Times, Oakland Tribune and San Jose Mercury News, recently ran a front page story about the importance of residency programs like ours in the future of health reform. Also, the industry magazine Modern Healthcare ran a story about our commitment to patient engagement and how it can bring about improved outcomes. You can read these stories and others on our website at www.cchealth.org/newsroom/
Homeless Program Recruits Volunteers for Count

It’s almost time for our Homeless Program’s biennial homeless count and volunteers are being sought to help with the effort. Every two years, the Program and its partners head out into the far reaches of the county to search for and tally all persons who are homeless on a single night. The count gives us baseline data to better understand the scope of homelessness so more effective responses can be developed to meet the need. The 2013 Point in Time Count will be held from 6 to 8:30 a.m. January 30. Our Acting Homeless Program Director Lavonna Martin said volunteers are crucial to the success of the count because Contra Costa County is so large and the time frame in which the count takes place is so small. Volunteers are asked to donate three to four hours of their time.

To sign up for the Count or to find out more information, visit www.cchealth.org/services/homeless/ or contact our Homeless Program at 925-313-6124.

HazMat Makes Move to Electronic Field Reports

Beginning next month, pen and paper will be a thing of the past for our Hazardous Materials inspectors making reports in the field. In January, a move to an electronic reporting system should give the Division a better understanding of facilities that handle hazardous materials, as well as make it easier to send reports to the state and federal environmental protection agencies. The move is in response to a law requiring businesses and regulators to submit information to the California Electronic Reporting System. Our HazMat Division went live with the system in November after migrating in much of its past data. The new data management system benefits facilities, too, said Division Director Randy Sawyer. Operators soon will be able to submit paperwork electronically through a web portal, though paper submittals will continue to be accepted through 2013. Randy said the new system is expected to save time spent on administrative tasks and allow for better review of facility data and inspection reports.

To find out more about our Hazardous Materials Division, visit www.cchealth.org/groups/hazmat/

Newest ‘Fast Facts’ Published

Our pocket-sized summary of Divisions and Programs is updated with new numbers are ready for delivery. The annual Fast Facts publication includes statistics, important numbers and a message from Health Services Director Dr. William Walker. It is provides a great snapshot of Health Services for clients and partners.

To request copies of Fast Facts, call the Personnel Office at 925-957-5240.
Darius Jones Foundation Founder Wins Jefferson Award
Public Health Account Clerk Beverly Bradley has received the Jefferson Award for her work in the Darius Jones Foundation, a nonprofit named after her late 15-year-old son who died of cardiac arrest while playing basketball in 2009. The Jefferson Awards honor community and public service, a segment for the awards runs on CBS. The Darius Jones Foundation, which frequently collaborates with our EMS Division, raises awareness and funds for CPR training, medical screening and on-site AEDs with a special emphasis on youth and high school sports. You can find out more about her work and the foundation at www.dariusjonesfoundation.org Congratulations to Beverly for the great work she’s doing at the foundation!

December Milestones
Congratulations to these employees who have given us long years of service: Rita G. Hurd, Venet H. M. Cremona-Thompson, Jennifer R. Gonzaga, Maria Perpetua H. Macaraig, Cynthia P. O’Brien, Clintonia Walker, Darman L. Clement (10 years); Aggie Houshmandi, Ma Isabel Ongkingco, Juan Reardon, Patricia A. Richards, Lorena C. Ruano, Rosalia C. Gonzalez (15 years); Juliette K. Moore, John A. Mozzetti, Rosemarie E. Sutfin, Daniel M. Lively, Rebecca S. Aguilar (20 years); Tanya Gutierrez, Dominador A. Pedeglorio (25 years); Marilyn C. Alford and Raymond Neuman (35 years).

Do you know someone going the extra mile? To recognize a CCHS employee, vendor or volunteer for outstanding Service Excellence performance, submit the commendation form by email to wanda.session@hsd.cccounty.us or fax to 925-957-5401. Forms are on our website (www.cchealth.org on About Us page) or iSITE, our intranet, at http://cchs/ Nominations are subject to approval by Division Directors.
Jamar Moon
Patient Financial Services Specialist
Finance

For going the extra mile to connect homeless patients to services and for being caring and understanding with the patients.

♦ Nominated by Healthcare for the Homeless Team

Staff
West County Health Center
Staff
North Richmond Center for Health

For working together, encouraging one another and delivering wonderful care to all of our patients during the opening of the West County Health Center.

♦ Nominated by Kara Weinreich

Sue Dickerson, RN
Public Health

For helping a homeless patient receive emergency shelter and dialysis treatment and for being recognized by the local association of cancer nurses for her work with homeless cancer patients.

♦ Nominated by Nishant Shah

Greg Belknap, LPT
Kathy Campbell, RN
Kathy Ferris, RN
Infection Prevention Control Manager
Candy Jacobus
Clerk – Experienced Level
Amber Owens, LVN
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For providing flu shots to over 1,100 employees in the month of October.

♦ Nominated by Anna Roth

Jeannie Cummings
Medical Social Worker II
Public Health

For being responsive to and ensuring the needs of the patients she serves with the Lift Every Voice program are met.

♦ Nominated by Chris Castro

You are a GEM for Going the Extra Mile

Service Excellence
You are a GEM for Going the Extra Mile

Jamar Moon
Patient Financial Services Specialist
Finance

For going the extra mile to connect homeless patients to services and for being caring and understanding with the patients.

♦ Nominated by Healthcare for the Homeless Team

Staff
West County Health Center
Staff
North Richmond Center for Health

For working together, encouraging one another and delivering wonderful care to all of our patients during the opening of the West County Health Center.

♦ Nominated by Kara Weinreich

Staff
Emergency Department
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For saving my husband’s life during an emergency visit to CCRMC and for working quickly and professionally to ensure my husband received the appropriate care.

♦ Nominated by a patient’s spouse