

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

INSIDE

- 2 Director's Message (cont.)
Pride Initiative Launches

- 3 H1N1 Response Collaborative Effort
Linguistic Access Unit Helps Produce Training Videos for Providers

- 4 Reducing Health Disparities
RHD Spotlight: Partnering with Community-Based Agencies
Working with Diverse Populations to Reduce Tobacco-Related Health Disparities
Mental Health Promotes Cultural Competency

- 5 Reducing Health Disparities (cont.)
AODS Partners for Treatment and Prevention
HEAL Improves Environmental Contributors to Obesity

- 6 Honor Roll
Milestones

- 7 CCHP Group Makes Hats for Newborns
Stroke Topic of Health Show
CCHS iSITE Classes Help Users Polish Intranet Skills

- 8 Hundreds Turn Out for Free Childhood Immunizations
Environmental Health Continues Successful Swimming Pool Seminars
Basic Health Care Program Changes
Celebrating 40-plus Years

Thinking Outside the Boxes

A few weeks ago, I watched more than a dozen of our Regional Medical Center employees excitedly report on a mapping exercise they did to identify waste in processes related to treating patients with congestive heart failure. By the time you read this, they will have conducted a "blitz" to deconstruct the processes that led to the problems and proposed new ways to produce better outcomes as part of a broader initiative called Lean.



William B. Walker, MD
CCHS Director

President Obama's new approach

I thought about this CCRM Lean process recently when I read an article in the Wall Street Journal about President Barak Obama's new "drug czar." White House Office of National Drug Control Policy chief Gil Kerlikowske announced that he was going to take a dramatically different look at dealing with drug addiction, focusing on treatment and reducing the demand/addiction.

His decision to adopt a new strategy for a problem that costs millions and affects every aspect of our lives seems to be driven in large part because, like the treatment of congestive heart failure, the old ways aren't working. *(On our RHD page this month, you can read about other CCHS programs that are trying new ways of tackling old problems.)*

The question of how public money is being spent and what kind of results public programs are achieving is being debated at every level of government, in letters to the editor in local newspapers and online blogs. Political pundits are saying that the defeat of the May 19 state budget initiatives was a rebuke to the State Legislature for mishandling our tax money and failing to demonstrate successful outcomes.

Finding better ways

With fewer resources and growing demand—from the newly uninsured and people being released from prisons with no resources—we must find better ways to cope with those people who need our services.

DID YOU KNOW?

Our Mental Health Division will award \$5.5 million in state Mental Health Services Act funds for prevention and early intervention.

Locally, we are having this debate as we consider how to treat the seriously and chronically mentally ill. For years we've known that locking people in mental institutions is not effective. More recently, with the passage of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), we've been given resources to transform our mental health system. The initial MHSA community planning process launched more than a year ago that involved consumers, family members, providers and others identified a pressing need for crisis, urgent, residential and emergency-level mental health services. Right now, we have a proposal before the Board of Supervisors to create a multipurpose facility at 20 Allen Street in Martinez to respond to that vision. Working with other partners, we hope to create a more progressive, cost-efficient, flexible and responsive multidisciplinary continuum of services.

Turning the ship around

There has been some resistance and opposition to our new mental health plan and that doesn't surprise me. Commenting on the new approach to the drug problem, one expert noted that changing old approaches is "like turning around an ocean liner." In our work with Richmond's Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) to reduce street violence, we were told by experts that one key to success is getting agencies—like ours—to treat the focus group of victims and perpetrators as if they were being triaged with life-threatening conditions in an emergency room and wrap services around them immediately. Getting bureaucracies to do that was like "turning around the Titanic," they said.

I'm not a ship's captain, but when ONS Director Devone Boggan and Neighborhood Change Agents and Peacekeepers—met with our Cross Divisional Violence Prevention team in May, they asked us to find ways to respond more rapidly. I committed to that because I believe that after almost two years of struggling to identify

the public health role in responding to violence, finding different ways to make our system more responsive is one of the best strategies we can adopt.

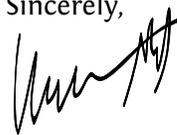
Looking at the boxes

There are other areas that are ripe for taking a fresh look at how we do business. People sometimes talk about "blowing up the box" or thinking outside the box when they advocate change. Jails, hospitals and schools—boxes that don't always produce the outcomes we want and often represent the most expensive way of providing services.

There are signs that we can find better ways to do things: CCRMC's Lean approach; the 20 Allen psychiatric facility proposal and working with the Office of Neighborhood Safety are good starts. Our Mental Health program has just been awarded a new pot of Mental Health Services Act funding for prevention and early intervention. Some of the funding is going to new partners; many of them have never delivered traditional mental health services. To make changes happen throughout our system, we have to put aside preconceived notions and think about what is effective, evaluate and learn.

It is difficult to take on new challenges when things seem to be crumbling around us. In the next few months, as the State Legislature addresses its growing budget deficits and the County finalizes negotiations with employee unions, we may be hard-pressed to do anything but hunker down in the trenches. I do believe that in order for us to thrive and continue to lead as a system we'll have to rethink what we've done in the past and not be afraid to try new models and new partnering. I welcome your comments.

Sincerely,



William B. Walker, MD

Pride Initiative Launches

June is LGBTQQI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning and Intersex) Pride Month and I am delighted to announce the launching of our Reducing Health Disparities' Pride Initiative. This is the second focused effort RHD has launched, the first being the African American Health Initiative. Currently in the planning stage, the official October 2009 Pride launch will explore what barriers and supports there are for LGBTQQI patients/clients/consumers and how we can improve and enhance our services. This launch comes at an ideal time when we must speak out against homophobia and find new and better ways to deliver equitable care and support our diverse workforce.—WW

H1N1 Response Collaborative Effort

Health Services responded quickly to the H1N1 (swine flu) outbreak, working with community and county partners, schools, health care providers, and state and federal health officials. Our Department Operations Center (DOC) was activated with our Public Health, Hospital and Health Centers and Emergency Medical Services divisions leading the surveillance and response efforts. Though the virus was less severe than initially feared, more than 62 cases were identified in Contra Costa and five elementary schools were temporarily closed. Our website served as the hub for H1N1 information and guidance with special pages set up for the public, providers and schools. Our communications unit, Community Education and Information, used social media tools Twitter and Facebook to get information out and our flu web pages alone received more than 36,000 visits. In addition, our pre-recorded public Health Emergency Information Line received more than 800 calls. The Contra Costa Health Plan Advice Nurses also fielded 6,700 calls in the first week of the outbreak and had some help answering phones from Ambulatory Care staff. The County's General Services Department, in conjunction with the Office of Emergency Services, assisted the Public Health Division receive and distribute antivirals from the State's stockpile to local hospitals.



(Left to right) Emergency Services Manager Kim Cox, Secretary-Adanced Level Dave Shoemaker, Public Health Adminstrator Bill Sorrell, and Public Health Director Dr. Wendel Brunner at the Department Operations Center.

For H1N1 information, visit www.cchealth.org/topics/swine_flu/ and Follow CCHS on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/CoCoHealth> or see our Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Contra-Costa-Health-Services/62698904738>

Linguistic Access Unit Helps Produce Training Videos for Providers

During the last two months, members from our Linguistic Access Unit have been working with the statewide Health Care Interpreter Network to produce videos that will teach health care professionals across the country how to use interpreters in person, on the phone and via video. CCHS Director Dr. William Walker has the lead role in the videos, describing how to use qualified health care interpreters. The videos, funded by a grant from Kaiser Permanente, were filmed in part at Contra Costa Regional Medical Center. Sally McFalone, Director of the Linguistic Access Unit, said despite it being an especially busy day at the hospital—the videos were shot during the H1N1 outbreak—hospital staff were very gracious in accommodating the film crew. Sally said interpreters improve health outcomes by improving communication between the health care provider and patient. The videos will be used nationwide at hospitals, health centers and medical schools, as well as CCRMC's Residency Program.



CCRMC registration employees Iris Holland and Brandy Kirchner (right) are filmed.

To find out more about the Linguistic Access Unit or the Health Care Interpreter Network, contact Sally McFalone at smcfalon@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-313-6242.



The DIRECTOR'S REPORT RHD PAGE showcases 2008-09 Division strategies and activities to address four CCHS Reducing Health Disparities goals. The goals are: Improving consumer/client/patient/customer experience; Engaging and Partnering with community and public entities; Improving staff respect, responsiveness and cultural sensitivity; and Creating systems that support and promote access and respectful delivery of services. The complete CCHS RHD plan is available at <http://www.cchealth.org>

RHD SPOTLIGHT This month's focus is on the importance of partnering with community-based agencies to reduce health disparities. The highlighted programs incorporate community voices into their decision-making and strategic planning. They recognize that to connect with and truly meet the needs of the people who represent Contra Costa's changing demographics, "business as usual" is no longer sufficient.



TPC members Gina Campora and Jacie Jones (American Cancer Society), Jaime Jenett, TPP policy coordinator, Keisha Nzewi, TPC co-chair (American Heart Association), Denice Dennis, TPP Manager, and Cheri Webster, TPP admin support (left to right).

Working with Diverse Populations to Reduce Tobacco-Related Health Disparities

For 25 years, the Contra Costa County Tobacco Prevention Coalition has been very successful in advocating for policies that reduce exposure to secondhand smoke, reduce youth access to tobacco products and reduce pro-tobacco influences. However, despite an overall 31.1% decrease in the Contra Costa smoking rate from 1990-2002, smoking rates remain high for certain populations including African Americans, American Indians, specific Asian/Pacific Islander ethnic groups, Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender people and people with low income. To work more effectively with these diverse populations, the Coalition and our Tobacco Prevention Project (TPP) conducted key informant interviews to examine how the Coalition could change policies and practices of the coalition to better partner with communities targeted by the tobacco industry. Coalition members were also surveyed for their input. The results will help the Coalition develop better methods for both engaging diverse partners in tobacco prevention policy work and also work with diverse populations.

For information, contact Jaime Jenett, Tobacco Prevention Project, at jjennett@hds.cccounty.us or 925-313-6216.

Mental Health Promotes Cultural Competency

Our Mental Health (MH) Division received 68 mini-grant proposals in April from various community-based organizations to address eight Mental Health Services Act Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) service areas. The aim of the funding is to promote non-traditional and innovative wellness/recovery strategies and culturally competent services. Twenty-three programs provided by 20 community-based organizations were recommended for funding, some are long-standing MH community partnerships and many are new partners with innovative ideas. In the youth development category, People Who Care is a green,



David Carrillo & Sherry Bradley with MH.

Continued next page

hip-hop carwash that trains high-risk youths from Bay Point and Pittsburg. Contra Costa Clubhouse in Concord was created to provide people living with mental illness the opportunity to recover meaningful and productive lives through work and work-mediated relationships. In one study, membership in a clubhouse reduced the number of hospitalizations by one third and reduced the average number of hospital days by 70%. For the membership in the Contra Costa Clubhouse this would translate into savings of more than \$500,000 annually if hospitalization could be reduced by 10 days per year per member. MHSAs Manager Sherry Bradley, who has been involved in CCHS' RHD efforts from the beginning said, "All the prior work I did with RHD served me well during the MHSAs mini-grant recommendation process."

For more information contact Sherry Bradley at sbradley@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-957-5114.

AODS Partners for Treatment and Prevention

Our Alcohol and Other Drugs Services (AODS) Division has a history of partnering with community-based agencies to provide prevention and treatment services, making the most of the agencies' knowledge of their communities. AODS contracts even stipulate community agencies provide multicultural services. Several agencies-Community Health for Asian Americans (formerly known as Asian Pacific Psychological Services), Neighborhood House of North Richmond and ANKA Behavioral Health (formerly Phoenix Programs)-specialize in providing support for individuals and families in specific communities. To better serve the Latino community, AODS has worked with Bi-Bett Corporation to develop Pueblos del Sol, a residential treatment center with 12 beds and a staff that reflects the community with Spanish-speaking counselors for male clients. Another innovation is AODS' Recovery Gateway unit with three engagement and retention specialists on loan from community-based agencies to work with AODS staff, in part to raise awareness, advocate for and build capacity for culturally competent services.

For information, contact Fatima Matal Sol at fmatalso@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-313-6311.



Left to right: Chinyere Madawaki, Director, North Richmond Center for Health, Barbara Becnel, Executive Director, Neighborhood House of North Richmond (NHNR), Dr. Wendel Brunner, Public Health Director, Andrés Soto, Director, HEAL, NHNR, Tracey Rattray and Coire Reilly, Assistant to Director, HEAL, NHNR.

HEAL Supports Environmental Approach to Obesity

The West County HEAL Collaborative is a policy change-focused program with over two dozen organizations that aims to reverse chronic obesity and diabetes trends, especially within African-American and Latino populations. HEAL works in Richmond, North Richmond, and San Pablo to improve nutrition and physical activity policies in four sectors: workplace, schools, the community, and healthcare. Staff from Public Health's Community Wellness and Prevention Program (CWPP) play several roles in the collaborative. Nutrition staff trained HEAL on how to use an assessment tool to analyze food quality in local stores. They are now working with storeowners to help them stock healthier items. Others work with HEAL to generate recommendations for the Health Element being prepared for Richmond's General Plan. CWPP Director Tracey Rattray observes, "HEAL is an effort generously funded by Kaiser that addresses the root causes of obesity and diabetes. This is an opportunity to improve conditions in West County in order to support good food and exercise and make the healthy choice the easy choice." For information call 925-313-6835.





Honor Roll

GOING THE EXTRA MILE FOR SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Paul Cardinet
Public Health Nurse

Sergio Martin
Senior Disease Intervention Technician

Bill Sorrell
Public Health Administrator
Public Health

For staying late during a recent power outage to help move and save many doses of very valuable vaccine and for moving all the vaccine back the next day.

– Nominated by Erika Jenssen and Francie Wise

Marilyn Condit
Public Health Nurse
Child Health & Disability Prevention Program

For being incredibly resourceful, compassionate and understanding, displaying a great deal of patience and persistence to facilitate hospitalization of a foster youth with diabetes and for her overall outstanding work and dedication to foster children and families.

–Nominated by Michelle Williams

Mike Dickson
Health Services Information Technology Supervisor

Shahrzad Klingner
Health Services Information Systems Programmer/Analyst
Information Systems

For the success of automating the Contracts & Grants request form system and for more recently incorporating the insurance processes into the system and decreasing the volume of status calls.

– Nominated by Jacqueline Pigg and Tasha Scott

Suzette Johnson
Substance Abuse Program Manager
Family, Maternal & Child Health Program

For unselfish contribution to the Perinatal Substance Abuse Partnership, Promoting Smoke Free Families, Fetal Infant Mortality Review, Comprehensive Perinatal Services, Lift Every Voice, African American Health Initiative and Perinatal Wellness Group.

– Nominated by Itika Greene

Kathy Lawrence
Physical Therapist II

Melissa Sendelbach
Physical Therapist II
Rehabilitation Therapy Services

For their commitment to providing services to East Bay patients by volunteering to work at the Pittsburg Health Center Rehabilitation Department, allowing the clinic to reopen despite ongoing staffing shortages.

– Nominated by Julia Henshaw and Karen Lloyd

Do you know someone who's going the extra mile?

To recognize a CCHS employee, vendor or volunteer for outstanding Service Excellence performance, submit the commendation form by email to ServicEX@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.

Milestones

Congratulations to these employees who have given us long years of service: Verona Howie, Bobby McMorris, Deborah Swan, Mary Costa, Maribel Fadrigio, Chandra Gottschall, Steven Lewis, Rose Filipelli, Chito Guevarra, Kathleen Frost, Robyn Price, Anna Torres (10 years); Sandra Gregory, May Loney, Kelly Nash, Lori Braunesreither, Gail Doyle, Dominique Morris, Judy Ng, Juliet Naca, Tasha Scott, Patricia Diane Nicholas, Susan Feierabend, Neil Jayasekera, Greta Perez, Fe Revels, Jenne Gossett, John Sturr (15 years); Yolanda Cronin, Susan Crosby, Fred Beck, Judith Bliss, Joyce Fults, Nancy Owens (20 years); Charita Dagcuta (25 years); Martha Alvidrez and Edith Henderson (30 years).

CCHP Group Makes Hats for Newborns

A growing group of Contra Costa Health Plan employees is turning a hobby into dozens of heartfelt hats. Last month, the Peek-a-Boo Hats club delivered its second basket of 64 knit and crochet hats for newborns at our Contra Costa Regional Medical Center (CCRMC) in Martinez. The group members donate their time, materials and compassion. Membership Maintenance Specialist Terrillynn Kopitar started the group after CCHP Chief Executive Officer Patricia Tanquary heard her and Medical Records Technician Maya Maran discussing the idea. Terrillynn said the group knits and crochets during breaks and tries to make a delivery of hats to CCRMC each month. Though there are more than 200 babies born at CCRMC each month, Terrillynn said making the hats is a great way to give to the community, especially during these difficult times. Terrillynn said she was especially touched when, while restocking on supplies, she was profusely thanked by a store clerk whose mother had a baby at CCRMC and received a basket of goodies that included one of Terrillynn's hats. In such a short time, the club's efforts had come full circle.



Peek-a-Boo Hats members (left to right) Glenda Coccimiglio, Maya Maran, Terrillynn Kopitar, Deboran Everist and Lufel Carrillo.

To join the Peek-a-Boo Hats club or donate resources, contact Terrillynn Kopitar at tkopitar@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-957-7267.

Stroke Topic of Health Show

Stroke prevention is the latest topic on our Get Ready, Get Healthy television show that airs Mondays and Thursdays on Contra Costa Television. Stroke Prevention was produced by CCHS in collaboration with John Muir Health Systems and includes an interview with Dr. Joe Barger, Director of our Emergency Medical Services division, discussing medical emergencies and calling 9-1-1. The 30-minute show provides information on prevention, stroke symptoms, why it's critical to call 9-1-1 and a riveting interview with a stroke survivor who shares his experience with stroke. Get Ready, Get Healthy's monthly schedule is available online at www.cchealth.org. Contra Costa Television airs on channel 27 for Comcast viewers and 32 for Astound.



For more information about Get Ready, Get Healthy call Vicky Balladares at 925-313-6817.

CCHS iSITE Classes Help Users Polish Intranet Skills

Do you have a document that needs to be posted to iSITE, our department's intranet, but don't know where to begin? Did you forget how to restrict access to a certain file or folder? Our Information Systems (IS) Division is now holding one-hour training sessions every other Thursday to help people take advantage of iSITE. Each session begins at 1:30 p.m. and is held in the IS Conference Room (595 Center Avenue, Suite 200, Martinez). Classes are held on a drop-in basis. Registration is not required but it is appreciated. The next session is June 11. Topics will cover a variety of issues and address users of all levels.

To suggest a topic or reserve a spot in a class, email the iTeam at iTeam@hsd.cccounty.us

Hundreds Turn Out for Free Childhood Immunization Clinics

Last month, 82 children received 297 free vaccinations at two clinics sponsored by our Immunization and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Programs. The clinics, in honor of Toddler Immunization Month, offered free vaccinations to anyone under 19 years old. Immunization and WIC also held four free clinics in March, which provided 547 free vaccinations to 156 children. Immunization Coordinator Erika Jessen said these clinics were not only to promote immunization, but also to respond to the growing number of people who no longer have health insurance. The first clinic, held in Concord, doubled as a photo opportunity for participation in the I Choose campaign. The state campaign allows individuals to share why they choose to immunize and strives to provide people with reputable vaccine information.



Athena Bernal, center, was one of many children who received free vaccinations at our Concord WIC Clinic on May 18.

To find out more about our Immunization Program, contact Erika Jessen at ejessen@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-313-6734.

Environmental Health Continues Successful Swimming Pool Seminars

Last year, our Environmental Health Division started offering two-hour seminars to operators of public swimming pools and spas, pool services, and contractors doing business in Contra Costa County. The seminars were so successful that they are being offered again this year. Six seminars, limited to 30 attendees each, are being offered with all but one being fully booked at this time. The seminars cover safety and sanitation requirements, including the federal Virginia Graeme Baker Act that requires all public pool operators implement measures to prevent bathers from getting trapped underwater by drains.

For more information, contact Senior Environmental Health Specialist Lino Ancheta at lancheta@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-692-2523.

Basic Health Care Program Changes

To balance the county budget, some difficult cuts had to be made regarding eligibility for health care coverage in Contra Costa County. Some residents are no longer eligible for coverage under the County's Basic Health Care program, and CCHS is working to transition them from care in our Health Centers to community clinics in Contra Costa. RHD Manager Concepcion James is available for presentations on the BHC changes. Contact her at cjames@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-957-5421.

For information in English and Spanish about the changes, health care options and to listen to a podcast, visit <http://www.cchealth.org/insurance/transition.php>

Celebrating 40-plus Years

Contra Costa Health Plan Account Representative Katherine Kentebe is retiring this month after more than 40 years of service with the county, including 29 with CCHS. Katherine has served as a Marketing Representative, Health Plan Counselor and her current role as an Account Representative. The Board of Supervisors will recognize her at their scheduled meeting on June 2.



Katherine Kentebe

The next Director's Report will be a combined July/August issue and the deadline is July 8. Publicize your upcoming events and successes by sending information to Kate Fowlie at 597 Center Avenue, Suite 255, Martinez 94553, fax 925-313-6219, or email: kfowlie@hsd.cccounty.us The Director's Report is available online at www.cchealth.org and on iSITE, our intranet, at <http://cchs>.