

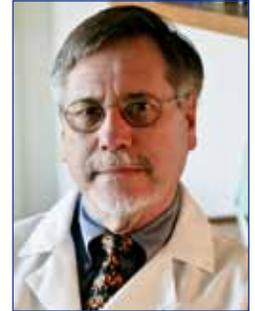
# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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## Health Reform: Bring it On

Last month, along with dozens of other staff, I attended a retirement party for Dr. Steven Tremain, who has been with Health Services for more than three decades. He has stepped down as Senior Medical Director, although he will continue part time as the Health Information Officer at the Contra Costa Regional Medical Center (CCRMC).



William B. Walker, MD  
CCHS Director

As I listened to a parade of speakers share their recollections of working with Steve, I was reminded of how unique we are in the context of our American medical system and how important all of us in this extraordinary public health system of ours will be to implementing health reform and reducing health disparities.

## We're about compassion and dedication

For the next decade and probably beyond, the American health care system will face many challenges as health reform rolls out. Public health systems like ours will be redefining their roles and maybe even their missions, finding new partners and new ways of delivering care.

While Steve's colleagues and friends talked about their admiration for his work ethic and dedication, I realized our system is characterized by the compassion and willingness of our staff to go the extra mile for their patients/consumers/clients. That—and our decade-long commitment to reducing health disparities—should stand us in good stead as we take on the new responsibilities that health reform will bring.

At the retirement event, Dr. Stuart Forman told a story about a patient Steve was treating years ago. The young woman, an immigrant with no legal status, needed a liver transplant. She was gravely ill and when Dr. Forman noticed her bed was empty, he assumed the worst. In fact, Steve had worked heroically to somehow arrange for the transplant and the woman is still a patient of ours today.

Many of our providers, like Steve, continually work to improve their skills, acquiring certification in new specialties and taking on leadership roles. Steve became not only a medical staff leader, but also spearheaded quality improvement, safety and system redesign at CCRMC. Others are now following in his footsteps.

## Our long-term commitment

Many of you came to Health Services at the start of your careers, as Steve did. Like me, some of you probably intended to stay only a few years

Continued next page

and move on to other opportunities. What we didn't foresee was the opportunity to grow and develop right here over a lifetime career. Dr. Mark Wille, who spoke at Steve's dinner, came in 1976 and mastered multiple medical specialties. Dr. Forman moved from his residency to gastroenterology and is now Director of Medical Intensive Care. Dr. Sharon Hiner did her residency here and went on to develop our nationally recognized cancer center.

And this longevity isn't just confined to our Regional Medical Center. Dr. Wendel Brunner, our Public Health Director, was a physician at the Richmond Health Center. Erika Jensen, our Immunization Coordinator, began as a student worker with Health Services and her mother preceded her in Public Health in the same role. Randy Sawyer, our Hazardous Materials Program Director began his career here 18 years ago. The list could go on. Then there are those of you who traveled the world, had stellar experiences and chose us for your long-term employment. Christine Leivermann in our AIDS program is a great example. She's worked in Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Korea, Somali, Mexico and Guatemala, almost always for NGOs as a nurse and planner. She has helped to build a hospital and a refugee camp.

What unites most of us, whether we crunch numbers, see patients, answer phones or do the myriad other tasks that keep the organization functioning, is our commitment to patients/consumers/clients and the public. The dedication we have to serving the community and to supporting each other make us a model for the new American system of health care.

## Our model system

What we've developed over the past decades is a system that puts the patient/consumer/client first and provides the kind of services that care for the whole patient. Our system recognizes the importance of primary care family practice and puts quality and safety front and center. We make judicious use of specialty care and continue to work evermore diligently to integrate the Regional Medical Center, Health Centers, Public Health, the Health Plan, Mental Health, and Alcohol and Other Drugs Services. This integrated approach is what I believe health reform is about: treating the whole person.

I think it will mean especially the need to practice evidence-based, culturally humble, linguistically appropriate medicine for an increasingly diverse population in our

community, much of which is impacted by health disparities. This practice will go a long way to reducing health-care disparities inherent in our own delivery system.

## Using a reducing disparities lens

We also recognize that reducing disparities mostly isn't about what happens between one patient and one provider. Most of what determines disparities happens in the environment—it's about socioeconomic status, access to healthy foods and safe places to play. We have embraced models like the Spectrum of Prevention, the Life Course Model and the Built Environment that address reducing health disparities in the broader community.

We've done all this not because of outside mandates, but because of the commitment of our dedicated staff—employees who have made a long-term commitment to delivering care and partnering with the community to improve the lives of our residents.

So as we move into high gear with health reform, I urge each of you to ask what contribution you make daily in your work to reducing disparities and improving Service Excellence. If our entire, integrated department works on this, we will be addressing both healthcare disparities and health disparities. If we all apply this lens to our own tasks, I feel confident we can respond effectively to the challenges ahead. In fact, I say, "bring it on, we're ready."

Sincerely,



William B. Walker, MD

The next Director's Report will be a combined issue. Deadline for the July/August edition is July 28. Publicize your upcoming events and successes by sending information to Kate Fowlie, 597 Center Avenue, Suite 255, Martinez 94553, fax 925-313-6219, or email [kfowlie@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:kfowlie@hsd.cccounty.us)

The Director's Report is available online at [www.cchealth.org](http://www.cchealth.org) and on ISITE.

## Crisis Stabilization Unit Entrance Reopens

Last month saw the reopening of our Crisis Stabilization Unit's ambulance bay at Contra Costa Regional Medical Center (CCRMC). At a ribbon-cutting ceremony, CCRMC CEO Anna Roth said a direct entrance to the unit will streamline services for behavioral health clients and reduce the load on our Emergency Department. The move is one of the latest developments to come from CCRMC's Lean management and Kaizen workshops to improve patient care and efficiency. It was made possible with input from mental health consumers, dedicated community members and, most recently, members of the Healthcare Partnership, which is a partnership of families, community leaders, doctors and nurses working to transform health care to a welcoming, accessible experience for all. Those involved also gave the entryway a fresh coat of paint. Anna said the event was an inspiring one that would not have been possible without the valuable partnerships within the community.



Anna Roth, center, is joined by community members and Health Services staff for the official ribbon-cutting of the Crisis Stabilization Unit's ambulance bay at CCRMC.

To find out more about the reopening of the Crisis Stabilization Unit's ambulance bay, contact Teresa O'Riva at 925-370-5177 or Lynette Watts 925-370-5403.

## New Respite Center to Serve Medically Fragile Homeless Adults

The doors of the Philip Dorn Respite Center will open this month, giving homeless adults a place to receive recuperative care and other services after being discharged from local hospitals. The center is named after Philip Dorn, a prior Homeless Program client who would have benefited from this facility. The new center will have 24 beds for people who have no home and are in need of medical support regular shelters do not provide. An official opening featuring State Sen. Mark DeSaulnier will be held from 3 to 5 p.m. June 10 at the center, 2047D Arnold Industrial Way, Concord. Homeless Program Director Cynthia Belon said the center would reduce both the length of stay and number of emergency room visits for homeless adults. The center is a joint project of our Homeless Program and Health Care for the Homeless and receives support from Contra Costa Regional Medical Center, Doctors Medical Center, John Muir Health, Kaiser Permanente and Sutter Delta Medical Center.



The Philip Dorn Respite Center in Concord is expected to serve as many as 380 homeless adults a year.

To find out more about the Philip Dorn Respite Center, contact Cynthia Belon at 925-313-6736.



In 2010, the Reducing Health Disparities Unit, in collaboration with CCHS Division staff, are working to integrate the core principles and practices associated with the RHD Five-Year Plan and its goals, which include: 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 into the mainstream of existing Division priorities and activities. To view the Five Year Plan, visit [www.cchealth.org/groups/rhdi/](http://www.cchealth.org/groups/rhdi/)

## Spotlight

This month's RHD page focuses on how Contra Costa Health Services is partnering with other organizations to help reduce health disparities by engaging those who are affected to work for systems change.

### Engaging the Community to Create Systems Change

One way to reduce health disparities is to engage those affected to work for systems change. That's what The California Endowment, a health foundation, is doing with the Healthy Richmond project, an initiative that aims to address the physical, social and economic conditions that impact the long-term health in Richmond. Last month, a cross-divisional group of our employees heard from two community organizers about how Health Services could support the goals of Healthy Richmond. Claudia Albano, a UC Berkeley professor and Oakland activist, described models residents use to create change. Adam Kruggel, who is working with Healthy Richmond on its community organizing efforts, outlined a method for involving CCHS frontline staff and eventually our patients/consumers/clients in identifying priorities and strategies for improving health. Adam is the Executive Director of CCISCO, Contra Costa Interfaith Support Community Organization. Assistant to the Health Services Director Julie Freestone said our Department is committed to the initiative and would explore how to apply the models internally to improve services in Richmond. She represents CCHS on the Health Richmond 25-person Steering Committee that is in a planning stage for 10-year funding and program implementation.



Health Services staff listen to community organizer experts at a recent meeting.

To find out more about Health Services' involvement in Healthy Richmond and for information about the CCISCO West County frontline staff meeting, contact Julie Freestone at [julie.freestone@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:julie.freestone@hsd.cccounty.us).

## Improving the Environment to Improve Health

A person's health can depend on the physical and social environments in which he or she lives. Poorer neighborhoods often have more environmental risks, like refineries, pesticide use and unhealthy foods. For almost 25 years, our Public and Environmental Health Advisory Board has identified emerging health concerns and advocated for change. PEHAB Chair Margie Leeds said members of the 19-person board "pride themselves in being the voice of the community, with a long-term commitment to addressing systemic issues that result in health disparities." PEHAB has worked on the County's Environmental Justice Framework, advocated for a menu-labeling resolution and



PEHAB Chair Margie Leeds, left, and Executive Assistant Joanne Genet.

most recently is working to address a recent rise in bedbugs. PEHAB Executive Assistant Joanne Genet with our Public Health Division said the bedbug epidemic is mostly affecting two of Contra Costa's poorest communities: Richmond and the Monument Corridor in Concord. Joanne said County policy does not view bedbugs as a pest nor health issue, but many families are fighting bedbugs with pesticides that could be harmful to young children.

To find out more about PEHAB, contact Joanne Genet at [joanne.genet@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:joanne.genet@hsd.cccounty.us) or 925-313-6736.

## Pride Initiative Works With Public, Agencies to Reduce LGBT Disparities

A recent effort to reduce LGBT health disparities is marking Pride Month in June at several community events. Studies consistently show that LGBT—or lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender—youths and adults are at high risk of health and mental health concerns. Since October, members of our cross-divisional Pride Initiative committee have partnered with the public and outside agencies to make Health Services a welcoming and sensitive organization. Members have sat on task forces, joined committees, held workshops and much more. RHD Manager Connie James said, "Community partnerships, like those with the Rainbow Center in Central County and the RYSE Center in West County, are playing a significant role in developing a stronger Contra Costa County LGBT presence and consciousness." This month, our Mental Health Division is partnering to host two workshops to address LGBT issues. Also this month, members of the Pride Initiative are organizing with others to march in the San Francisco Pride Parade—the first year Contra Costa will be represented in the parade. In May, the County Board of Supervisors proclaimed June as Pride Month in Contra Costa. Information on events is available on [iSITE](#) on the Health Disparities page.





**Alesia Berry, LVN**  
Richmond Health Center

For providing the very best of care to a patient with a post-surgical wound problem and for her professional concern and thoroughness resulting in an improved surgical outcome.

◆Nominated by Margaret Linde

**Community Health Workers (Please see [ISITE](#) for a list of names)**  
Public Health Clinic Services

For assisting the Public Health Nurses with the care of postpartum, newborn and pediatric clients, by providing caring and compassionate interpretation for our Latina families

◆Nominated by Jeanette Braker and Sue Crosby

**Julie Freedman, MD and The Palliative Care Team**  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center

For providing outstanding support to a patient with a terminal illness and finding the right combination of care and medication to help the patient feel comfortable and comforted.

◆Nominated by William Walker, MD

**Karina Martinez**  
Clerk– Experienced Level  
Contra Costa Health Plan

For being intuitive, diligent and sensitive when helping a CCHP member who was a victim of fraud and guiding her through a sensitive situation, for interpreting the conversation and materials from English to Spanish and for maintaining a friendly, comfortable work environment.

◆Nominated by Pam Gomez

**Tammy Ochoa, RN**  
Antioch Health Center

**Billy Wright**  
Laboratory Technician II  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center

For handling my special circumstances with true professionalism.

◆Nominated by a patient

**David Pepper, MD**  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center

For sharing his experiences as a family practice physician on the CCTV shows “Get Ready Get Healthy” and “Vida Sana en Vivo” to educate parents about the importance of immunizations and the safety of vaccines and for writing a “Healthy Outlook” column on pertussis that ran in Contra Costa Times newspaper.

◆Nominated by Pamela Anderson-Moore

**Public Health Nurses (Please see [ISITE](#) for a list of names)**  
Public Health Clinic Services

For providing excellent PHN case management services to postpartum, newborn, and pediatric clients throughout the county at home visits and in clinics. Their ability to learn and incorporate the new electronic case management system in their work has been nothing short of remarkable.

◆Nominated by Jeanette Braker and Sue Crosby



**Alvin Silva, RN**  
Healthcare for the Homeless

For always going above and beyond the call of duty with our patients and with our team.

◆Nominated by Geraldine Rivera

**Sharon Eriksen**  
Account Clerk—Advanced Level Payroll

For helping simplify the payroll process and reduce confusion regarding accrual use by initiating a conversation and asking pertinent questions.

◆Nominated by Sue Guest

**Nancy Hill**  
Senior Public Health Nutritionist  
Family, Maternal & Child Health Program

For her 19 years of commitment, leadership, advocacy and service toward creating an infrastructure that promotes healthier families through breast-feeding education and support.

◆Nominated by the Family,  
Maternal & Child Health Program

### 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 “Going the Extra Mile” commendation form, available from every CCHS Division Director, or email your commendation to [ServicEx@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:ServicEx@hsd.cccounty.us) or fax it to 925-957-5401. The form can also be downloaded from the Internet (About Us page) or ISITE, our intranet. Nominations are subject to approval by Division Directors.

**Milestones** Congratulations to these employees who have given us long years of service: Oludolapo A. Macaulay, Jose A. Colaizzo, Judy Anne D. Gonzalez, Roderick B. Hewitt, Vanessa C. Meier, James P. Ruiz, Lori A. Selby, Barbara L. Shafer, Cindy N. Fernandez, Peter A. Ordaz, Courtney A. Beach, Martha C. Garza, Cynthia R. Hellmuth, Kristin A. Moeller, Brenda Reilly, Ori Tzvieli, Hermoso B. Igama (10 years); Julie E. Custer-Ortega, Dawna M. Henderson, Lisa M. Felix, Lisa S. Derita, Andrew Minutoli, Haydee Wong, Veda S. Bhatt, Amy C. Buoncristiani (15 years); Lani Ching, Elizabeth A. Faulkner, Linda K. Lazure, Ingrid R. McDowell, Robert A. Kajdan, Kuang Peng-Yueh, Stuart Forman, David J. MacDonald (20 years); Leigh A. Pierson Brown (25 years); and Zabeth Y. Cooper (35 years).



## Honoring Those Who Help

Our Regional Medical Center Facilities Manager Larry Carlson, far left, and Auxiliary President-Elect Bill Cunningham, far right, join “High Achievers” at the 42nd annual Volunteer Awards and Recognition Luncheon in April. According to Larry, more than 28,000 volunteer hours were logged in the past year. The CCRM Auxiliary and its volunteers are true assets to Health Services.

To find out more about the Auxiliary, or learn how to volunteer at the hospital or health centers, call 925-370-5440, or visit [www.cchealth.org/medical\\_center/volunteer.php](http://www.cchealth.org/medical_center/volunteer.php)

## Mental Health Funding Keeps Kids Busy

Programs that we’ve awarded Mental Health Services Act funds to are making positive change in our communities. A star example is People Who Care, which receives funds from the Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) component of the MHSA. Recently, a People Who Care program called Hip Hop Car Wash was invited to the California Institute of Mental Health to speak about its model. The program provides after-school career development and job training skills for youths in the Pittsburg area. PEI Program Coordinator Mary Roy said the program does a great job of empowering at-risk youths. The initial project included in our MHSA Innovation Plan was approved by the State in April. In approving the \$1.4 million project of the plan titled “Social Supports for LGBTQI2-S Youth,” the state said it was a “gold standard” of submitted plans.

To find out more about the Mental Health Services Act, contact Sherry Bradley at [sherry.bradley@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:sherry.bradley@hsd.cccounty.us) or 925-957-5114.

## Healthy Outlook Creator Retires

Dr. Stephen Daniels, the creator of our Healthy Outlook column, retires June 4 after 29 years with Contra Costa Health Services. Dr. Daniels, who practiced family medicine at our Pittsburg and Concord Health Centers, started the column in 2003 and has written and edited it as a regular feature in the Contra Costa Times newspapers and its website. Topics cover illness prevention, specific diseases such as asthma and diabetes, seasonal maladies such as flu and allergies, public health issues such as tuberculosis and SARS, local problems such as pollution and violence, and much more. Dr. Daniels will continue to oversee the column while we seek another physician to take over.



## Breastfeeding Coordinator Retires

Longtime Breastfeeding Coordinator Nancy Busby Hill retires June 30 after 19 years with Contra Costa Public Health. Nancy started as a nutrition educator for the WIC Program and went on to become the first countywide Breastfeeding Coordinator in California in 1997. Among her achievements was the birth of the WIC Peer Breastfeeding Counselor Program in 2001 and she also chaired the Breastfeeding Task Force for many years as it undertook many important projects, including three fundraising walks, a baby sling project, and a number of continuing education conferences that increased interest and capacity in Contra Costa for breastfeeding support.





AODS Director Haven Fearn, third from left, presents awards following the Board of Supervisors meeting.

## County Supervisors Honor ‘People Who Make a Difference’

Last month the Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Advisory Board recognized 17 individuals and groups that make a difference in ending substance abuse. The annual “People Who Make a Difference” award presentation was held May 18 during the county Board of Supervisors meeting. Our Alcohol and Other Drugs Services Program Manager Fatima Matal Sol said this year’s honorees, which include longtime AOD board member and advocate Harold Parsley, have made measurable impacts to combat alcohol and other drug use. To win an award, nominees must have initiated, contributed to or produced a significant shift in alcohol and other drugs awareness and use. To view a complete list of awardees, visit [www.cchealth.org/groups/aod\\_board/](http://www.cchealth.org/groups/aod_board/)

To find out more about substance abuse services or to join the advisory board, visit [www.cchealth.org](http://www.cchealth.org) and click on Alcohol and Other Drug Services or call 925-313-6300.

## BEST Helps People Connect the Dots Between Wealth & Health

A program in our Public Health Division is addressing the connection between wealth and health and is getting some attention along the way. Our Family, Maternal and Child Health Programs’ Building Economic Security Today (BEST) project was featured in the latest newsletter of California Newsreel, the producer of the “Unnatural Causes” documentary series. In the past month, BEST has completed a new Asset Development Resource Guide and began implementing basic financial education classes at Women, Infant and Children Program sites. Life Course Initiative Coordinator Padmini Parthasarathy said the classes and resource guide would help improve health outcomes of low-income families by improving their financial security and stability. Padmini will also speak about BEST this month at the Northern California Children and Youth Summit, along with Debbie Casanova of Public Health’s Community Health Assessment, Planning & Evaluation Program.



Padmini Parthasarathy

To find out more about BEST, contact Padmini Parthasarathy at [padmini.parthasarathy@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:padmini.parthasarathy@hsd.cccounty.us) or 925-313-6178. Find out more about BEST online at [www.cchealth.org/groups/lifecourse/economic\\_security.php](http://www.cchealth.org/groups/lifecourse/economic_security.php)

## EMS Helps Teach CPR to Students

More than 3,000 youths in Contra Costa are now more prepared to save a life in a heart emergency. During National EMS Week, May 16-22, our Emergency Medical Services Division helped teach 3,012 local ninth-graders how to perform CPR and use an automated external defibrillator. Prehospital Care Coordinator Pam Dodson said the focus on high school students is to generate a culture that understands the need for and has a willingness to provide immediate assistance for a victim of sudden cardiac arrest. When someone collapses in sudden cardiac arrest immediate action is necessary. Pam said calling 911 and knowing when and how to perform CPR are crucial to saving a life.



Left to right: John Hayes, American Heart Association, Grace Ellis, Mt. Diablo Health Care District, and Pam Dodson, EMS.

To find out more about this project, contact Pam Dodson at [pam.dodson@hds.cccounty.us](mailto:pam.dodson@hds.cccounty.us) or 925-313-9547. To find a list of CPR classes, visit [www.ccemms.org](http://www.ccemms.org)

## First Person Disaster Experience

CCRMC Physician Dr. Neil Jayasekera and local medical volunteers will be speaking about their experience in Haiti after the devastating earthquake. Also find out about the Contra Costa Medical Reserve Corps. The training will be held in the Ball Auditorium at the John Muir Medical Center in Walnut Creek, 1601 Ygnacio Valley Road, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. June 10. RSVP requested: [bcenter@hds.cccounty.us](mailto:bcenter@hds.cccounty.us) Learn more about this training on our website, [www.cchealth.org/mrc/](http://www.cchealth.org/mrc/)

## New Home for Vital Records

Looking for a birth or death certificate from the past year? Our Vital Records & Statistics offices have moved. The new address is 10 Douglas Drive Suite 220, Martinez. The phone numbers have also changed. For birth certificates, call 925-313-1125. For death certificates, call 925-313-1126. For certificates prior to last year, contact the Contra Costa Clerk-Recorders Office at [www.ccclerkrec.us](http://www.ccclerkrec.us) or 925-335-7900.

## Doctors Travel to Canada to Talk About Training Model

Two of our physicians traveled to Canada in April to share an innovative project with other HIV specialists. Dr. Cynthia Carmichael and Chief Resident Dr. Joanna Eveland attended the 2010 Spring Conference of the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine to present a model practice for educating clinicians in HIV specialty care. The model, first employed at our North Richmond Center for Health, provides an opportunity for budding doctors in our Residency Program to teach principles of HIV care to HIV-positive patients in a group setting. In groups, patients get peer support, learn about various aspects of HIV care and later get to see the physician during their appointments. AIDS Program Director Christine Leivermann said this very beneficial project will result in more HIV-educated clinicians to cover the expected shortfall in the near future.



Dr. Cynthia Carmichael

To find out more about this project, contact Deborah Card at 925-313-6117.