

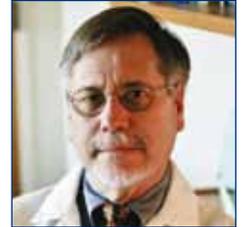
# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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## Who is really driving this bus?

You see my face out front as your health director, but really it is all of you who are driving forward our many innovations and process improvement efforts. My Division Directors are asking a lot from all of you and pushing themselves hard to reach milestones, benchmarks, goals and objectives. In this message, I will share with you more details on what we need to do to get where we are going on this bus we are all on together.



William B. Walker, MD  
CCHS Director

This journey started with the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010. As you all know far too well, thousands of Contra Costa residents are uninsured. Most of the programs available to low-income residents have complicated applications and enrollment processes that require proof of income, assets, citizenship and immigration status. The process is burdensome to say the least. In 2014, most uninsured individuals and families will become eligible for health insurance through a simplified application and enrollment process. But insurance doesn't necessarily equate to access to high-quality, cost-effective health care.

The first fueling of this bus came in late 2010 with California's 1115 Medi-Cal Waiver, when the federal government granted the state \$10 billion to begin the journey toward 2014 when most of the provisions of ACA will be effective. Our share of these dollars will help us build the necessary infrastructure to get us across the bridge to Health Care Reform and beyond.

## Changing our organizational culture

The first stop along the way is to improve our processes to ensure that everything we do is patient centered. From the initial call to schedule an appointment, enroll in program coverage or just ask a question of a member of the medical team, we are using Kaizen—lean management principles—to look carefully at every step along the way to determine the value added for our patients. If none, then we are taking corrective action. Many of you have already participated in these events along with our patients and reported how rewarding the experience was for you. This work will continue throughout various divisions as we continue our work to become the health care system of choice for county residents. Technology is an effective cost-saving tool that we will use to our advantage.

## What's around the bend?

We must take advantage of available technology to help us become more effective, efficient and patient centered. In just a few short months, we will launch cclink, our electronic health record (see story on Page 3). This will allow us to connect patients' records across systems of care, and give patients access to their provider for things that do not require an office visit among other things.

Continued next page

Implementation of an electronic health record will test our patience and fortitude, but I know that we are up to the task. As I have said before, we will see a temporary decline in productivity during implementation. Many of you have already been taken away from your daily tasks, and others of you will need to spend time training and learning the many uses and advantages of cLink. There will be sacrifices that we will all have to make. I ask that you please stay on board and we will all be proud when we arrive at our destination—a fully implemented electronic health record system with capability of e-mail communication between patients and providers, online appointment scheduling and more.

### Increasing our capacity to serve

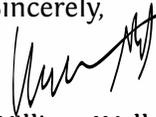
It is no secret that throughout the nation, health systems like ours are struggling to find enough primary care providers to meet the demands. We have no magic bullet, but are taking critical steps to prepare our system to meet the increased demand for care both now and in 2014. We are expanding our Health Centers, utilizing mobile health clinics, expanding evening and weekend clinics, contracting with our community clinic partners, private providers and medical groups. But most importantly, the process improvements that we are implementing will make available more appointments for patients who need to see a doctor. Many patients' needs can be met without an office visit. For example, an LVN can give medical test results or coordinate prescription refills, and an advice nurse can screen patients over the telephone and get them the right care in the right place. These small efforts have huge impacts on efficiency and effectiveness.

### Keeping the bus moving

If Health Reform does not remain in place and doesn't get funded, we will run out of fuel—federal funding—to keep us moving along the bridge to carry us over to a place where comprehensive health care is a fundamental right. This is an election year and a lot is at stake for our system to be able to continue the work so our patients/clients/consumers can access high-quality, affordable care. There are legal challenges pending to ACA, and threats that key provisions of the law will be defunded or rescinded. This is a challenging journey, but one that I am happy to make with all of you. Therefore, I am very hopeful that ACA will remain intact and fully funded.

As we do this work together with focus on the patients/clients/consumers that we serve, I want to be sure that we don't forget our other most valuable asset: you—CCHS employees. With this in mind, I will be asking each of you to give me feedback about how we are doing as an employer through a survey. I will schedule brown bag lunchtime meetings for those of you who would like to hear more from me and my leadership team about the strategic plan and direction for the department. You will hear more about this very soon. It may not be a smooth ride, but it will be well worth the journey. Stay tuned.

Sincerely,



William Walker, M.D.



## ccLink: Coming Electronically to a Workplace Near You in July

This summer, our electronic health record system—which we’ve named ccLink—will bring us the latest technology while allowing us to provide the safest and highest quality care for our community. It’s a system unlike any other we’ve had at Contra Costa Health Services. Built on Epic technology, ccLink creates a centralized system to deliver the best care with the best technology—from scheduling to charting to billing. It is a one-stop tool for obtaining patient and membership data. Health Services providers and caregivers will gain quick access to a patient’s electronic record, allowing them to make the best care decisions. Eventually, patients will have access to their record and data through an online portal, giving them important information about their health no matter where they are. Patient privacy has always been a top priority and that will not change with ccLink. The system provides secure, reliable access to patient data, allowing for an increased level of security that follows strict HIPAA mandates. Some benefits of ccLink will not be fully available to CCHP members who use the Community Provider Network or the Kaiser Network. Implementing this system is no simple task. Team members have been preparing for the launch for several months now. A successful launch needs your help. Be ready to learn, ask questions and help co-workers. Managers will be able to enroll their teams for ccLink End User Training beginning March 12. We’ve developed a special section on [iSITE](#) for updates and information. Visit it regularly to keep informed about the project.



### Benefits at a Glance

- ⌘ Streamline patient care at CCRMC & Health Centers
- ⌘ Enhance communications between care team members
- ⌘ Standardize processes across many locations
- ⌘ Provide eligibility information for CCHP members as well as other patients seen at CCRMC & Health Centers
- ⌘ Integrate communications from CCHP Advice Nurses and Case Managers with CCRMC and Health Center providers
- ⌘ Provide an avenue for referrals and prior authorization requests to contracted community providers...and much more!

### Stay Involved!

Visit [iSITE](#) regularly

View the timeline

Watch for new information

Ask questions

Download the brochure (later this month)

Send feedback to [cclinkinfo@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:cclinkinfo@hsd.cccounty.us)

The next Director’s Report will be the April issue. Send story suggestions to Kate Fowlie at [kate.fowlie@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:kate.fowlie@hsd.cccounty.us) by March 16. Electronic copies available at [www.cchealth.org/topics/publications/](http://www.cchealth.org/topics/publications/)



## New iSITE Promises Modern Look, Improved Functionality

Get ready: A new and improved version of iSITE will be rolled out in a matter of weeks. iSITE is the Health Services intranet, a collection of internally hosted websites that act as a warehouse for work-related documents and data and will serve as the “go-to” site for employee information. Our Information Technology Unit has spent the past year rewriting the system to improve its ease of use and provide additional tools and features. Information Architect Marc Miyashiro said users who log into the system April 3 will see a completely revamped iSITE. The changes include easy document uploading, streamlined navigation, improved search, an enhanced people finder and collaboration tools, among other things. Marc said that experienced iSITE users will appreciate the new look and enhanced capabilities, while new users will find a friendly environment for sharing information.

If you have questions about the new version of iSITE or would like to schedule a training session for your group, contact [iteam@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:iteam@hsd.cccounty.us)

## Earn It! Keep It! Save It! Saves Millions for Low-income Families

If clients are asking for a little extra help this tax season, they might find some good news from the Earn It! Keep It! Save It! program. The United Way-led coalition of more than 250 organizations in the Bay Area provides low- to moderate-income households with free, quality tax return preparation. The program ensures eligible taxpayers claim the earned income tax credit, which can amount to as much as \$5,751 per family. Last year, 351 volunteers helped prepare 9,859 returns in Contra Costa for more than \$10 million in total refunds. The earned income tax credit helps struggling families make ends meet.



To find a tax site, visit [www.earnitkeepitsaveit.org](http://www.earnitkeepitsaveit.org) or call 510-238-2424.

## Big Effort Keeps Big Apple in Contra Costa

Contra Costa County retained the Big Apple trophy for raising more money per employee than Solano County during the annual holiday food drive. Health Services placed third among large departments for our per-employee total of \$7.49. In total, we raised \$9,966.06—the equivalent of nearly \$30,000 in buying power for the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano and more than any other county department. Contra Costa as a whole raised more than \$93,000 during the drive. Congratulations and thank you for your continued dedication to help those most in need!



## EMS Pumps Up Community, Board of Supervisors with Hands-Only CPR Lessons on Valentine’s Day

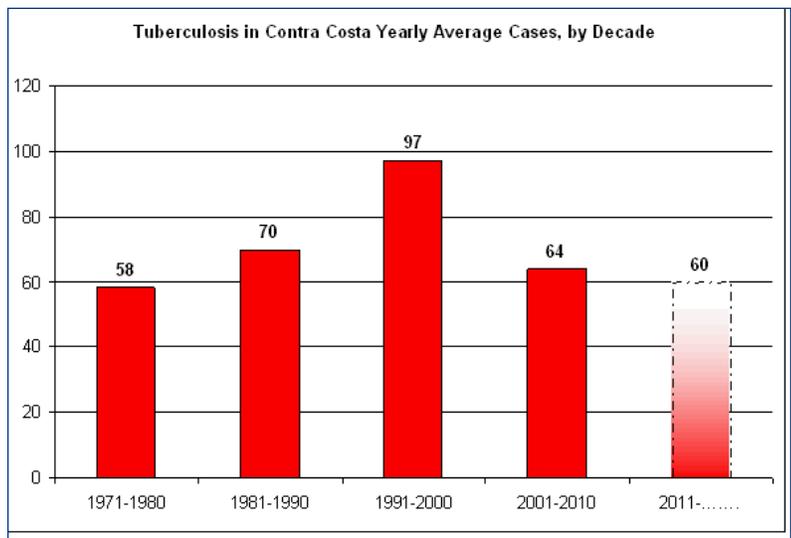
Hearts were thumping as dozens of community members learned to save a life this Valentine’s Day. Our Emergency Medical Services Division joined its HeartSafe Community partners to teach passersby how to administer CPR and operate an AED outside the County Board of Supervisors meeting, where February was proclaimed American Heart Month. Our Prehospital Care Coordinator Pam Dodson said if more people call 9-1-1 as soon as they observe the signs of a cardiac emergency, the more likely a person is to survive. Since the HeartSafe Community campaign began in 2009, bystander initiated CPR rose from 28.4% in 2009 to 41.7% so far this year. EMS also distributed newly created public awareness materials at the Valentine’s Day event, including wallet cards and posters.

« EMS Prehospital Care Coordinator Pam Dodson, left, teaches Hands-Only CPR to KCBS Reporter Dave Padilla.

To find out more about our HeartSafe Community campaign or to download printable materials, visit [www.cchealth.org/ems/heartsafe.php](http://www.cchealth.org/ems/heartsafe.php) or call Pam Dodson at 925-313-9547.

## Epidemiology Report Evaluates Tuberculosis Cases in Contra Costa

After a historic low of 33 in 2010, cases of active tuberculosis in Contra Costa returned to a more usual level in 2011, according to a new epidemiology report by our Public Health Division. The report, which will be released for World TB Day on March 24, details the 60 cases from last year. There was an annual average of 64 cases from 2001-10. TB Controller Wendy Malone said the team, including the TB medical director, public health nurses and disease intervention technicians, works closely with health providers throughout the county to identify suspected cases. Our Public Health Laboratory tests to confirm TB and to determine drug resistance. Through case management, our TB Program follows all identified tuberculosis cases and their contacts through completion of treatment. Early treatment is essential to preventing spread, so it is important for providers to recognize the signs and report cases immediately.



To find out more about tuberculosis in Contra Costa County or to access the epidemiology report when it is released, visit [www.cchealth.org/topics/tb](http://www.cchealth.org/topics/tb) or call 925-313-6740.



The Patient-Centered Health Home Kaizen No. 3 team poses at the Pittsburgh Health Center.

## Staff, Clients Develop Innovative Solutions During Rapid Improvement Events

If you've been to our Regional Medical Center or one of our Health Centers recently, there is a possibility that you heard the word "Kaizen." The word has its roots in Japan and once translated, it means to break apart and put back together in a better way. This aligns with the mindset we bring to our Rapid Improvement weeks, better known as Kaizen events. These events are part of our improvement efforts to engage with and include the community at large, especially those most vulnerable to health conditions and those who are disproportionately at risk for poor health outcomes, to include them in our system redesign. Every month, a team of multidisciplinary staff—usually from multiple Divisions—comes together with their distinctive skillsets to test improvement ideas for a week. For those who have not gotten the opportunity to participate in one of the Kaizen events, it is a chance to get exposure to the science of quality improvement, team building and rapid cycle testing. At its core, a Kaizen is about giving frontline staff the time and support to develop innovative solutions to problems that will make our health care system more efficient, timely, safe, patient-centered, equitable and effective for patients. Recently, one was held at our Pittsburgh Health Center focusing on our drive to build a Patient Centered Health Home. This week emphasized working care coordinators to reduce the amount of time from when a patient makes a request for service until they get their issue resolved. The team tested placing a licensed vocational nurse as a panel coordinator working with the care coordinators, creating a sorting system for providers' inbox/charts and performing a trial of the panel coordinator's capacity to conduct population management with diabetes patients. By teaming our care coordinators with clinical staff, we were able to effectively reduce the time patients had to wait to have their requests for service completed.

To find out more about the Patient Centered Health Home kaizen, contact Miles Kotchevar at [miles.kotchevar@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:miles.kotchevar@hsd.cccounty.us) or Cheryl Toledo at [cheryl.toledo@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:cheryl.toledo@hsd.cccounty.us). You can also find information about our Culture of Continuous Improvement at [www.cchealth.org/medical\\_center/culture/](http://www.cchealth.org/medical_center/culture/)

## Farmers Market Crops Up at Regional Medical Center

Beginning next month, you will be able to shop a bounty of fresh produce at our Regional Medical Center in Martinez. A pilot farmers market will begin in April and last six weeks. If the pilot is successful, it will continue for a longer term. During the pilot, farmers markets at Contra Costa Regional Medical Center will be held from 3 to 7 p.m. Tuesdays in the courtyard near the cafeteria. The market is expected to have 12 to 14 booths, including organic and nonorganic foods. Organizers say it will also feature live music, prepared foods and health information, among other things. Depending on the success of this project, organizers say there could be pilots at other Health Centers in our system. The pilot is a no-cost partnership with Contra Costa Certified Farmers' Markets.

To find out more about the farmers market, contact Larry Carlson at [larry.carlson@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:larry.carlson@hsd.cccounty.us). To find other farmers markets in Contra Costa, visit [www.cchealth.org/topics/nutrition/farmers\\_markets.php](http://www.cchealth.org/topics/nutrition/farmers_markets.php)



# Service Excellence

You're a **GEM** for Going the **Extra Mile**

### Jose Avila

Environmental Health Technician  
Environmental Health

For pulling together several agencies to work on the abatement of code violations. For building and maintaining strong work relationships with the City of Richmond Police and Code Enforcement Department doing work together with food vendors.

◆Nominated by Jocelyn Habal

### Vicky Balladares Aldrin Bernabeo Andi Bivens Shawn Eyer Kate Fowlie Oliver Symonds

CCHS Community Education and Information Unit (CEI)

For providing excellent assistance working with the media, developing public outreach brochures and updating the Environmental Health Website, always being readily available, and their expertise and professionalism.

◆Nominated by Jocelyn Habal

### Markas O'Donnell

Student Worker—Deep Class  
Concord Health Center

For working hard with a smile

◆Nominated by Zohra Akbari

### Nancy Palmer, MD

Antioch Health Center

For organizing two Department of Family Medicine retreats that provided participants access to up-to-the-minute administrative updates and enrichment speakers with a refreshing point of view of the work that we do.

◆Nominated by Jose Yasul

### Rose Zambrano

Nursing Program Manager  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center

For being a great nurse program manager and mentor, for her guidance, advice and leadership, taking time to discuss with me my career goals helping me on the right path.

◆Nominated by Eddie Mendoza-Ong

### Lyndsey Silva

Certified Medical Assistant  
Concord Health Center

For being extremely knowledgeable and resourceful and for her ability to work out any problem to the benefit of the patients she serves.

◆Nominated by Magdalena Rodriguez



# Service Excellence

You're a **GEM** for Going the **Extra Mile**

## Nursing Staff

Brentwood Health Center

For working cooperatively to ensure timely and respectful care for our patients and for being an example of team work.

◆ Nominated by Shelly Maramonte

## Lynne Simoncini-Sarmiento

Clerk—Senior Level  
Concord Health Center

For assisting medical staff to locate records, for taking on challenges and for her commitment to our patients.

◆ Nominated by Shannin Wright

## Hoot Awardee of the Month



Cheryl Harris, January

See “past recipients” of Hoot award.

## 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](mailto:wanda.session@hsd.cccounty.us) or fax to 925-957-5401. Forms are on our website ([www.cchealth.org](http://www.cchealth.org) on About Us page) or iSITE, our intranet, at <http://cchs/> Nominations are subject to approval by Division Directors.

## March Milestones

Congratulations to these employees who have given us long years of service: Farina N. Khan, Christine P. Brighton, Habib Amin, Cho Nai Cheung, Michael A. Dossey, Joselito E. Isidro, Donald R. Nixon, Zeny M. Ramiro, Randall L. Sawyer, Graciela E. Vaquerano, Michael S. Dickson, Richard R. Bryan, Christina A. Borenstadt, Ron M. Hamiter, Coralyn E. Lam, Kathryn M. McCabe, Mona T. Stardragon, Nancy R. Turner (10 years); John Ward, Gloria J. Lafarga, Suzanne E. Thompson, Kathi Schwertscharf, Karen L. Rodrigues, Thalia L. Siegel, Susan B. Meltzer, Tamara Stanton, Ayore R. Riaunda (15 years); Joseph G. Doser Jr., William E. Fung, Blanca P. Camacho, Elina M. Webb, Violeta Jimenez, Neal C. Price, Nenetete R. Reyes (20 years); Anne M. Pato, Sandra K. Vernell, Frank E. Wallace III, Sharyn L. Anderson (25 years); Birda Arnold, Fayechoy S. Chao and Sukhwinder K. Malhi (30 years).