Integrating Behavioral and Physical Health Care

With the opening of our George & Cynthia Miller Wellness Center in Martinez last month, we celebrated more than just a new health facility.

The Miller Wellness Center is an example of health reform taking shape on the local level by improving access to care and integrating behavioral and physical health. This new wellness center represents an important path we have embarked on as a health system to integrate these two vital but often siloed services.

That’s why we call it a “wellness center,” not simply a health center. The name reflects the fact that it offers more than just physical care. In addition to primary care, pediatrics, group medical visits and same-day appointments, the center also will offer behavioral health, including mental health and substance abuse services (see story about the opening celebration on page 5). The behavioral health services at the site will include psychiatry, short-term individual and family therapy, outpatient care for substance abuse, support groups, and crisis management and referral into long-term mental health treatment for adults, children, youth and their families.

Expanding the Model

It is the third site in the last year where we have brought primary and behavioral health together under one roof. The Concord Health Center Building 2 (CHC2) and the expanded Mental Health Clinic in Concord both opened in 2013. Even before that, Behavioral Health’s Homeless Program was planting the seeds of integration when we opened the Philip Dorn Respite Center four years ago. The facility serves as a transitional safety net where homeless adults can go when they leave a hospital and still need medical care. These sites have been very successful and CHC2 staff also will help implement this integrated care model at the new Miller Wellness Center.

Every Door is the Right Door

The goal is that every door is the right door to our services. The idea is that if someone comes in for a medical visit, they also will be able to have their physical and behavioral care needs met in one place.

The integration of our Behavioral Health Division also reflects this goal. Behavioral Health Director Cynthia Belon has worked hard over the last two years to bring together Alcohol & Other Drugs, the Homeless Program and Mental Health into one division (see story on Behavioral Health’s new brochure on page 6).
Cynthia’s efforts in her Division and in partnership with Ambulatory Care are helping to expand behavioral health and primary care integration throughout our system. Cynthia, Ambulatory Care Medical Director Chris Farnitano, CCRMC & HCs Mental Health Program Chief Julie Kelley and other staff are hard at work making this a reality at the new Miller Wellness Center. The focus is not on what services we provide (because we provide many) but on how we provide those services. Thanks to the dedication and hard work by staff, we are making great progress along this path and we plan to make this integration the new standard.

Sincerely,

William B. Walker, M.D.

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Public Hearing on Impacts of Potential Downgrade or Closure of Emergency Services at Doctors Medical Center

In my message last month, I talked about how Doctors Medical Center (DMC) in San Pablo faced closure if Measure C failed. You all likely know by now that the measure didn’t pass. In April, DMC notified us of its intention to close as early as the end of July if this happened. As the local Emergency Services Authority for the county, our Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division is required by state law to hold a public hearing on downgrades or closures of a facility that provides emergency medical services. To meet this requirement, we have scheduled a public hearing on June 9 to gather public comment on the impacts of the potential downgrade or closure of emergency services at DMC. The purpose of this hearing is not to determine whether or not the hospital will close. It is part of the legally-mandated process whenever changes to hospital emergency services are proposed. With its emergency room and intensive care unit, DMC has been a critical part of the county-wide emergency medical services system. A report commissioned by our EMS Division showed that DMC’s closure would be devastating. Contingency planning is underway to mitigate the potential closure as much as possible but there would be impacts. EMS will include the public comment from this hearing in a report it will submit this month to the state Health and Human Services Agency. It is my hope that a community solution can be found to help preserve these emergency services.—WW

DMC Public Hearing
6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Monday, June 9
City of San Pablo’s Maple Hall,
13831 San Pablo Ave., San Pablo

Members of the community are encouraged to attend and comment

Written comments may be submitted no later than 5 p.m. June 9 in order to be included in the impact report. Written comments will be accepted via email to EMS Director Patricia Frost at Patricia.Frost@hsd.cccounty.us; fax: 925 313-9554; or mail: Contra Costa EMS, 1340 Arnold Drive, Suite 126, Martinez, CA 94553.

For more information, visit cchealth.org/ems

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The next Director’s Report will be the July/August issue. Publicize your upcoming events and successes by sending information by July 15 to Kate Fowlie at 597 Center Avenue, Suite 255, Martinez 94553, fax 925-313-6219, or email kate.fowlie@hsd.cccounty.us. The Director’s Report is available online at http://cchealth.org/topics/publications/ and on isite at http://cchs/
myccLink, Our New Online Patient Portal, Launching This Summer

Starting this summer, Contra Costa Regional Medical Center (CCRMC) & Health Centers’ patients can sign up for myccLink, our new free online portal. With myccLink, patients and Contra Costa Health Plan members who receive their primary care at CCRMC & Health Centers can email their doctors, view most lab results, request prescription refills and access other information in their medical record via the Internet. The initial rollout will begin on July 1 at CCRMC. People receiving care through inpatient services or at the Emergency Department will be given activation codes and instructions for signing up in their discharge paperwork. On August 1, we will begin offering myccLink at all our outpatient health centers. Staff are currently being trained on how myccLink works, and will continue to receive training in the coming weeks. A six-month pilot involving eight providers and their patients concluded in April. A post-pilot survey showed that patients overwhelmingly found myccLink beneficial and that, on average, pilot providers spent less than one hour per week handling requests from patients on the portal.

For more information about myccLink, contact Dr. Rajiv Pramanik at rajiv.pramanik@hsd.cccounty.us. FAQs and more materials will be provided on iSite soon.

Sharp Increase in Contra Costa Pertussis Cases Mirrors Statewide Trend

A sharp increase in reported cases of pertussis, including many outbreaks in school settings, has kept public health departments across California busy this spring. Pertussis, also known as whooping cough, is especially dangerous to babies. Four babies with pertussis in Contra Costa County have been hospitalized this year, and two babies elsewhere in the state have died. The best way to protect newborns from pertussis is for women to receive a pertussis booster (Tdap) during each pregnancy, a fact that Public Health is promoting locally as we work with schools, community members and healthcare providers to promote vaccination, provide education, minimize risk of spreading the disease and ensure that patients receive appropriate care. Contra Costa County received reports of 118 pertussis cases during the first five months of 2014, more than in all 12 months of 2013. The California Department of Public Health reports a similar trend, with nearly 2,700 reported cases through the end of May. Pertussis is a cyclical disease, with peaks in disease every three to five years. California and the county last experienced a peak in 2010.

For more information, visit cchealth.org/pertussis
Volunteers Needed for Project Homeless Connect on Aug. 6 in Richmond

Behavioral Health’s Homeless Program needs volunteers to help make Project Homeless Connect 2014 a success on Aug. 6. This annual, one-day event to help people who are experiencing homelessness in Contra Costa County routinely draws more than 1,000 people and provides immediate access to healthcare, housing and employment resources, food and supplies, and vital social services for our neighbors in need. Project Homeless Connect is made possible each year by hundreds of volunteers, who engage with participants, ensure that lines move smoothly, staff tables, serve meals and distribute donations to our consumers. We encourage you to volunteer using your leave, with approval from your supervisor. Volunteers are needed Aug. 6 at the Richmond Memorial Auditorium, 403 Civic Center Plaza in Richmond. Sign up for a half-day shift (6:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.) or a full-day shift (6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.). Volunteers are also needed from noon to 5 p.m. on Aug. 5 for setup.

For more details or to volunteer, call 925-313-7700, email projecthomelessconnect@hsd.cccounty.us or visit cchealth.org/homeless/phc

New Faces Bring Environmental Health’s Food and Pool Inspector Team to Full Staffing

The Environmental Health Division has added eight new specialists to its Food and Pool Inspector team, which regulates thousands of restaurants and public swimming pools in Contra Costa County. The team now has a full complement of 23 inspectors, with the additions counteracting past staffing attrition. All of the new hires have completed the requisite college coursework, and six of them are preparing for the state exam through a lengthy period of on-the-job training with Environmental Health that includes classroom work, shadowing registered inspectors and conducting supervised inspections. Trainees will also get experience in the other aspects of environmental health, such as septic system installation and solid waste facility inspections, during the 18-month training period. Specialists are assigned to districts within Contra Costa County and are responsible for timely inspections of retail fixed food facilities and any swimming pool or spa that serves more than one residence.

To learn more about Environmental Health’s inspection programs, visit cchealth.org/eh
Celebration for the New George & Cynthia Miller Wellness Center

Health Services staff, community members and others attended the May 12 dedication ceremony for the George & Cynthia Miller Wellness Center, our newest outpatient health center. The Martinez facility was named after the retiring Congressman and his wife to honor their decades of service improving the health of the community and supporting health care reform. The 10,000-square-foot facility integrates physical and behavioral health care under one roof. The May 12 celebration included tours of the facility led by Ambulatory Care Medical Director Dr. Chris Farnitano, and a bevy of speakers such as Congressman Mike Thompson, Contra Costa County Supervisors John Gioia, Karen Mitchoff and Candace Andersen, CCHS Director Dr. William Walker, Regional Medical Center and Health Centers Chief Executive Officer Anna Roth and, of course, the guests of honor.

(Left) Congressman Miller embraces his wife, Cynthia. (Above) The Millers cut the ceremonial ribbon with their grandchildren, Congressman Mike Thompson, County Supervisors John Gioia, Karen Mitchoff and Candace Andersen, along with CCHS Director Dr. William Walker, CCRMC & HCs CEO Anna Roth, BH Director Cynthia Belon and CCHP CEO Patricia Tanquary.

To see more photos from the event, visit CCHS’ Facebook page. For more information about the George & Cynthia Miller Wellness Center, visit cchealth.org/centers/mwc.php

Staff Encouraged to Attend Web Training for Better Serving LGBT Patients

The Pride Initiative encourages all CCHS managers, supervisors and staff to take an important webinar from the Human Rights Coalition regarding best practices for serving LGBT patients and consumers. Completing this free training allows CCHS to maintain its designation as a national leader in LGBT health care, which we obtained in 2013. An introductory webinar for non-managerial employees will be held on June 4 and June 11 from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m, and on June 25 from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. A session that provides health care managers and supervisors with the information they need to ensure compliance with Medicaid and Medicare Service (CMS) and Joint Commission requirements will be on June 5 and June 12 from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., and on June 25 from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. Join members of Pride during the afternoon sessions on June 5 and June 11 for a group viewing of the webinar at 597 Center Ave., Suite 200 in Martinez.

To learn how to register for the webinars, visit ISITE. For more information contact Joanne Genet at joanne.genet@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-313-6763, or Carla Goad at carla.goad@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-313-6787.
Nominate Someone for the Ruth Pease Award

Do you know someone who has gone to extraordinary lengths to help patients? If so, nominate them for the Ruth Pease Award! This award is given by the medical staff to a non-physician who exemplifies the dedication of Ruth Pease, a longtime CCHS nurse who worked enthusiastically and tirelessly to positively affect bedside care delivery. Nominees must be a current county health professional, actively engaged in delivery of high quality patient-centered care, and have a passion for change. This year’s award winner will be honored at the annual Medical Staff Dinner & Dance on Sept. 26 at the Pleasant Hill Community Center.

Please submit nominations via email no later than July 1 to Sue Pfister at sue.pfister@hsd.cccounty.us

Behavioral Health Debuts New Brochure

The Behavioral Health Division, working with the Community Education & Information Unit, has published a new trifold brochure explaining its services and how consumers benefit from our merged mental health, substance abuse and homeless services. This combination of services allows us to provide flexible, effective treatment for people with complex needs without requiring them to interact with multiple programs to get all of the care they need. The brochures are now available in clinics and health centers across Contra Costa County.

To request BH brochures, contact Jeannie DeTomasi at 925-957-5201 or Jeannie.DeTomasi@hsd.cccounty.us

June Milestones

Congratulations to these employees who have given us long years of service: Nakima E. Ayler, Robert C. Blink, Justin B. Chatten-Brown, Cinnie M. Chou, Carmen C. DeLos Santos, Kimberly A. Ferlise, Laura F. Knapp, Pramita E. Kuruvilla, Sonia Lameiras, Yvette Mesa, William J. Peterson, Ching-Ping A. Riu, Patrick B. Wilson (10 years); Kathleen C. Caudel, Mary G.C. Costa, Maribel D. Fadrigo, Rose M. Filipelli, Chandra M. Gottschall, Chito Q. Guevarra, Verona R. Howie, Bobby McMorris, Anna M. Torres (15 years); Lori J. Braunesreither, Gail T. Doyle, Susan B. Feierabend, Jenne Gossett, Neil Jayasekera, May C. Loney, Dominique M. Morris, Sandra T. Murguia-Gregory, Juliete Naca, Judy C. Ng, Patricia Diane Nicholas, Greta Perez, Tasha Z. Scott, John Sturr (20 years); Fred J. Beck, Judith C. Bliss, Susan D. Crosby, Nancy L. Owens (25 years); and Martha A. Alvidrez (35 years).
Craig McIntire  
Speech Pathologist  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers  
For giving excellent speech therapy and going beyond to connect the patient to assistance with housing and other non-medical services essential to maximizing his recovery from a stroke.  
♦ Nominated by Dawn Marie Wadle

Karla De Trinidad  
Clerk—Experienced Level  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers  
For remaining calm under pressure when a traffic accident delayed staff and patient arrivals to West County Health Center. For stepping up and doing a great job creating and implementing a plan while keeping patients informed with overhead announcements.  
♦ Nominated by Dawn Marie Wadle

Medical Staff Office  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers  
For taking on increasing amounts of work while still doing projects like Electronic Medical Records reimbursement and the Time Sheet Survival Guide.  
♦ Nominated by Dawn Marie Wadle

Lori Donachie  
Clerk—Experienced Level  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers  
For always having a pleasant personality and being willing to help and address questions during special situations with staffing.  
♦ Nominated by Eddie Geoff

Jennifer Newfield  
Mental Health Clinical Specialist  
Behavioral Health Services  
For her outstanding professional skills and going the extra mile to provide excellent customer service.  
♦ Nominated by Sue Meltzer

Luda Korneeva  
Mental Health Clinical Specialist  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers  
For doing an excellent job caring for patients and for being a wonderful co-worker and colleague.  
♦ Nominated by Sue Meltzer

Imbera Alispahic  
Certified Medical Assistant  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers  
For her dedication and for providing service excellence to all.  
♦ Nominated by Sue Meltzer

Caroline Killough  
Ambulatory Care Clinical Supervisor  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers  
For providing amazing leadership at the West County Health Center.  
♦ Nominated by Sue Meltzer

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 (cchealth.org on the About Us page) or iSITE, our intranet, at http://cchs.org. Nominations are subject to approval by Division Directors.
Loretta Chuckrow, PHN  
California Children’s Services  
For encouraging specialty providers to become California Children’s Services certified thereby expanding the number of providers available in the county and reducing travel distance for children and their families to see a specialist.  
♦ Nominated by Yodeillie Baybayan

Margarita Maciel  
Community Health Worker Specialist  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers  
For often going the extra mile to assist patients and staff with a smile and for being an excellent team player.  
♦ Nominated by Sue Meltzer

Martha Anaya  
Community Health Worker Specialist  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers  
For going the extra mile to provide service excellence to patients and staff.  
♦ Nominated by Sue Meltzer

Marjan Orellana  
Pharmacist I  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers  
For picking-up and delivering an elderly, home-bound patient’s medication to his home after he was discharged from the hospital on a very rainy day. For inspiring all of us to truly care for our patients’ needs.  
♦ Nominated by Sara Levin

Dee Araya  
Senior Medical Records Technician  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers  
For demonstrating great leadership skills, working hard, and for being conscientious, patient and thoughtful.  
♦ Nominated by Lesley Bunch

Sheilah Zarate, PHN  
Public Health  
For her work ensuring infants with pertussis receive appropriate medical care.  
♦ Nominated by Kathleen Harriman, California Department of Public Health.

Rhonda Smith  
Volunteer Program Coordinator  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers  
For her dependability and help in ensuring there was live music at the George & Cynthia Miller Wellness Center grand opening celebration  
♦ Nominated by Kate Fowlie

Mary Lou Helix  
Volunteer  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers  
For volunteering to play her flute at the George & Cynthia Miller Wellness Center grand opening celebration. Her beautiful music created a wonderful atmosphere for the open house.  
♦ Nominated by Kate Fowlie