

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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Importance of Community Immunity

There is no doubt the ongoing measles outbreak in California underscores how critical vaccinations are. We are seeing the resurgence of a once eradicated illness that happens to be one of the most infectious diseases around. Statewide, there have been more than 130 confirmed cases of measles (see the California Department of Public Health's [website](#) for more info). In Contra Costa County, we have had one case so far this year and four cases last year.

What's particularly frustrating is the fact that outbreaks like this one are preventable. When some people choose not to vaccinate themselves or their children, others can be affected. Most of the recent measles cases in California with known vaccination statuses were not vaccinated by choice. Fifteen of the other cases involve babies under one year of age who are too young to be vaccinated. Measles cases associated with this outbreak are occurring in six other states and two other countries. These cases demonstrate how interconnected we are in the Bay Area and the world and how critical it is to create community immunity.



William B. Walker, MD
CCHS Director

Immunity Takes the Whole Community

What makes me hopeful is that most people in the community get vaccinated and awareness and support continues to grow for immunizations. We are hearing from more and more concerned community members people asking how they can help increase vaccination rates in their areas. Our Public Health Division has created resources on our [website](#) to provide parents, schools, providers and the other community members with information on what they can do.

We know protecting our community from serious, vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles and polio requires a community-wide effort. Vaccinated community members are protected from diseases and they also protect others by not spreading disease. This is especially important for community members who may not be able to be vaccinated, including babies, pregnant women, and those with certain health conditions or those who don't develop protection after vaccination.

Immunizations help keep our community healthy and safe. People who are vaccinated or have had measles before are extremely unlikely to catch measles, even if they had contact with a contagious person. However, those who were not previously vaccinated are at high risk if exposed.

Knowing your status is important. People born before 1957 are considered immune as they likely had measles as children and developed immunity from the disease. However, adults born after 1957 should review their vaccination records to ensure they have received the MMR vaccine or talk to their regular

Continued next page

healthcare provider for questions about immunization status. Pregnant women and people who are HIV positive or immune suppressed are considered to be at high risk for measles if they are not vaccinated.

What we can do

As health care providers, we can recommend vaccinations, review immunization records and offer vaccines to our patients.

As parents, we can share immunization information (see our [website](#) for links to reputable sources, as well as a map showing immunization rates for schools in Contra Costa County) and encourage our friends and family to get vaccinated.

As school representatives, we can review students' immunization records and the immunization assessment process, including procedures for personal belief exemptions, conditional admissions, transfers, and permanent medical exemptions, as well help keep parents and students informed.

We all play a role in protecting ourselves, our families and our community from vaccine-preventable disease. Please help create Community Immunity!

Sincerely,



William B. Walker, M.D.



**COMMUNITY IMMUNITY:
WHAT YOU CAN DO**

#COMMUNITYIMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

For more info on what you can do or how to get involved, visit our website: cchealth.org/communityimmunity or call the Contra Costa Health Services' Public Health Immunization Program at 925-313-6767.

The next Director's Report will be the April issue. To publicize upcoming CCHS events and successes, contact Kate Fowle at kate.fowle@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-313-6636. The Director's Report is available online at <http://cchealth.org/topics/publications/> and on isite at <http://cchs/>



Dr. Wendel Brunner plans to retire from his role as Public Health Director this summer after 32 years in the position.



The initiative aims to get patients all they need during one visit so they won't need to come back as often for followups.

Health Services Seeks Candidates for Public Health Director

Health Services has begun its search for a new Director of Public Health. Dr. Wendel Brunner plans to retire from his role as Public Health Director this summer after 32 years in the position. The new Public Health Director may also fill the role of county health officer if they are a licensed physician, but it is not a prerequisite for the position. The Public Health Director oversees the Public Health Division, which has traditionally served as an advocate for programs and policies that promote community health and health equity, with special attention to vulnerable populations. Dr. Brunner will continue working part-time with Contra Health Services assisting the Behavioral Health Division, as well as other divisions on integration efforts around physical and behavioral health. Review of applications for Director of Public Health begins March 15 and will continue until the position is filled.

New Initiative Aims to Make it Easier for Patients to Schedule Appointments

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center (CCRMC) & Health Centers is implementing a new initiative to improve its patients' access to care. In February, the Martinez Health Center and George and Cynthia Miller Wellness Center began piloting advanced-access efforts that attempt to get the most out of each appointment through a team-care approach. The idea is that if patients can get all they need during one visit, they won't need to come back as often for a followup, increasing the number of appointments available to other patients. Some of the improvements being tested include pre-appointment screenings, ordering labs in advance, offering alternate care options like telephone appointments, standardizing intake by medical assistants and simplifying provider schedules. Even before the beginning of the pilot in February, some improvements were rolled out. For instance, the George and Cynthia Miller Wellness Center has been on the simplified schedule for several months and they have seen steady improvement in access. The plan is to gradually roll out these improved access measures at all our health centers over the next year.

For more information about the job, or instructions to apply, visit cchealth.org/jobs.

For more information, contact Ambulatory Care Medical Director Dr. Chris Farnitano at chris.farnitano@hsd.cccounty.us

Nurse-Family Partnership Celebrates Graduation of Families from 2-year Health Education Program

A Public Health program intended to improve newborn health among low-income Contra Costa families celebrated a milestone in February when its first group of consumers graduated from an intensive, multi-year program of health education and prevention. Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP), funded through the Affordable Care Act, connects first-time mothers with public health nurses, who make regular home visits during pregnancy and throughout the first two years of the newborns' lives. Each mother served by the program is partnered with a nurse early in her pregnancy and receives ongoing support through her child's second birthday. Nurses tailor their support to the individual, providing advice on topics such as nutrition, breastfeeding and postpartum health, and connecting the families to resources ranging from health referrals to safe child car seats. NFP is an evidence-based, national model for improving community health implemented by the county in 2012. In Contra Costa, which continuously enrolls 100 women in its local version of the program, 94% of babies born to participants were full term and of a healthy weight, and 100% of mothers initiated breastfeeding.



Nurse Jaime Baculpo sits with the 2-year-old child of a Nurse-Family Partnership program participant at the NFP graduation ceremony in February.

To learn more about the Contra Costa Nurse-Family Partnership program and other perinatal services offered by CCHS, visit cchealth.org/perinatal

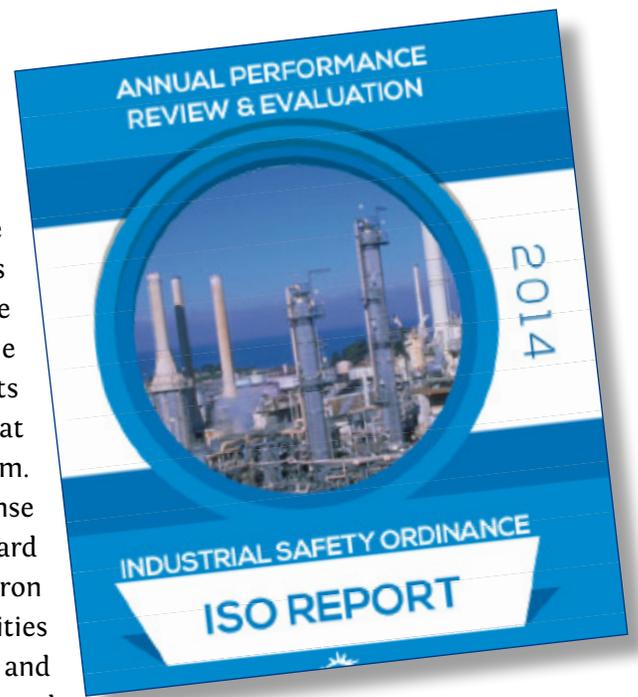
Contra Costa County to Move Ahead with Laura's Law Plan

The Behavioral Health Division and stakeholders in Contra Costa's mental health community will develop a program this year to implement Laura's Law, the state measure allowing courts to require outpatient treatment for people with records of hospitalizations and violence resulting from serious mental illness. The Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a three-year plan at its February 3 meeting to create an assisted outpatient treatment program that would annually accommodate about 37 consumers placed by Contra Costa Superior Court and a similar number who accept voluntary placement. The Board's proposal would provide the program with \$2.25 million in Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funding. Implementation of Laura's Law will be subject to the same community review process used for all MHSA-funded services.

For more information, contact Behavioral Health Services Director Cynthia Belon at cynthia.belon@hsd.cccounty.us.

HazMat Releases Annual Report on Industrial Safety Ordinance

Our Hazardous Materials Program presented its annual report on the county's Industrial Safety Ordinance (ISO) to the Board of Supervisors earlier this month. Hazardous Materials Program Chief Randy Sawyer told supervisors that there were no major chemical accidents or releases in 2014 at the seven facilities regulated under the county ISO. This contrasts with the increased activity in 2012, including one incident that reached the highest level on the Community Warning System. Randy also spoke about changes made to the ISO in response to recommendations from the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board in the aftermath of the fire at the Chevron Richmond refinery. The ordinance now expands where facilities are required to perform "inherently safer systems analyses," and implement those safer systems to the greatest extent feasible and as soon as administratively practicable. It also requires facilities to perform an analysis to determine the effectiveness of the safeguards at the facilities. The Hazardous Materials Program also administers the city of Richmond's ISO. HazMat staff will be presenting its annual report to the Richmond City Council on April 28.



There were no major chemical accidents or releases in 2014 at the seven facilities regulated under the county ISO.

For more information about the ISO, contact Accident Release Prevention Supervisor Cho Nai Cheung at 925-335-3212.

Contra Costa to be Pilot Site for Stroke Data Collection

Contra Costa County will be the pilot site for a new way of collecting stroke data. Our Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division is partnering with the California Stroke Registry and primary stroke centers in the county to connect pre-hospital and hospital data. The California Stroke Registry is a data repository that hospitals throughout the state use to monitor and evaluate the quality of care stroke patients are receiving. All primary stroke centers in Contra Costa send data to the registry. Being able to combine EMS and hospital data will provide a comprehensive picture of the stroke patient from dispatch to discharge in one database. Details of the pilot are still being worked out, but our EMS staff expect that it will provide vital information. Mia Fairbanks, prehospital care coordinator for Contra Costa EMS, said that bridging prehospital and hospital data will help EMS providers understand the entire system across the continuum of care and how they can best care for patients suffering from strokes.

For more information about the stroke data pilot, contact Mia Fairbanks at maria.fairbanks@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-313-9559.



This smoking shelter in the common area outside 597 Center in Martinez was removed as part of the smoke-free campaign.

County Properties are Now Smoke-Free

As of March 1, all county-owned and leased properties have been designated as 100% smoke-free to improve the health and safety of people visiting and working at county facilities. Outdoor smoking shelters and ash canisters near county facilities are being removed and large signs are being posted at each affected property to encourage compliance with the new smoking ordinance, which was approved by the Board of Supervisors last year. The smoking prohibition applies to tobacco products, marijuana and electronic smoking devices, such as vapor pens. Enforcement of the smoke-free properties law will be done primarily through signage and education. People who smoke or use electronic smoking devices off County property during work hours are expected to comply with state anti-littering laws. Our Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers campuses have been designated smoke-free since 2006.



For more information about the ordinance and to find resources on how to quit smoking, visit smokefreec.org.



Column: Why Flip-Flops Are Bad For Your Feet

Flip-flops may seem like the perfect warm-weather footwear, but the truth is they're terrible for your feet, writes Dr. Harry McIlroy in a Healthy Outlook column that recently appeared in the Contra Costa Times. With flip-flops, your toes need to grip the strip of fabric at the top to keep the shoe in place. This causes the muscles in the feet to contract instead of stretching out. Over time, this repetitive stress can increase a person's risk for tendonitis, Achilles problems and a painful condition called plantar fasciitis. Of course, flip-flops can't be blamed as the cause of all my patients' foot pain, says Dr. McIlroy, a family physician at Contra Costa Regional Medical Center & Health Centers. There are other factors like excessive weight and inactivity. But bad footwear like flip-flops can compound the problems created by these other factors.

To read the rest of Dr. McIlroy's column, visit cchealth.org/column. CCRMC providers interested in writing about health issues for Healthy Outlook should contact Dr. David Pepper at theairdoctor@gmail.com.



Tanya Rovira

Senior Health Education Specialist
Public Health

For her hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm and for making our Food Day event at the Contra Costa Food Bank a great success.

◆Nominated by Gwenn White

**Jaime Baculpo, PHN
Lanett Beard**

Administrative Aide

Dawn Dailey

Public Health Nurse Program Manager

Alicia Grand, PHN

Lorena Martinez-Ochoa

Director of Family, Maternal & Child Health

Maritza Vukaljcic, PHN

Nayeli Zavala, PHN

Nurse Family Partnership Program, Public Health

For their and the entire NFP Program staff's dedication to program quality and exemplary team work. For providing Contra Costa County families with an excellent home visiting program that surpasses the NFP model requirements and the California Home Visiting Program standards. For making a positive difference in the lives of the families they serve.

◆Nominated by Catherine Gilmore-Zarate, California Department of Public Health

Bill Sorrell

Administrator, Public Health

For going out of his way to ensure that I experienced a positive onboarding as a new employee. For being approachable, offering advice and making me feel welcome.

◆Nominated by Joshua Sullivan

Jose Saavedra

Public Health Program Specialist I

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For ensuring that our Data Center at Pittsburg clinic is secure by responding to every situation that arises. For every encounter I have had with him he has gone the extra mile!

◆Nominated by Karri Flowers

Steele Colby

Medical Staff Coordinator

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For taking on the lead credentials coordinator position without extensive training and handling a complex job very well.

◆Nominated by Guenter Hofstadler

Debbie Cowden

Disability Benefits Coordinator, Personnel

For always being there to answer questions and being knowledgeable, prompt, and caring. For always treating me as if I was family.

◆Nominated by DeAnn Bologna

MARCH MILESTONES

Congratulations to these employees who have given us long years of service: Grace A. Cavallaro, Ernest Jacobo, Parna M. Kamyabar, Dinah M. Alano-Sales, Susan D. Gore, Lisa A. Van Order, Evelyn G. Svetcos (10 years); Margarita Allen, Maria E. Betancur, Rosalie M. Cabading, Emily A.L. Karr, Pamela P. Phimphasarn, Lesley A. Splivalo, Joan B. Weiner, Grace M. Dwyer, Vincent King (15 years); Francis M. Crockett, Tracy J. Kelly (20 years); Ronda R. Arends, Kimberly D. Lopez (25 years); Patti L. Villarreal (30 years); and Janie H. Decesare (35 years).



Cindy Walker

Nursing Shift Coordinator
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers
For helping the night shift obtain resources for our patients.
For finding staff to cover during periods of staffing shortages.

◆Nominated by DeAnn Bologna

Claudia Ortega

Member Services Counselor
Contra Costa Health Plan
For going above and beyond to help a client resolve her health insurance issues in a timely manner.

◆Nominated by Julie Peck, Employment and Human Services Department

Lourdes Jensen, RN

Contra Costa Health Plan
For helping me better understand how to manage my diabetes and putting me on the path to getting control of the disease.

◆Nominated by a patient

Cynthia Brown

Medical Records Technician
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers
For being a strong leader of the Health Information Management (HIM) Department, boosting moral and making sure we all have fun.

◆Nominated by Darman Clement

Michelle Lembeck

Therapist Aide
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers
For going above and beyond to support the ergo program during unforeseen staffing shortages. For ensuring that clients and patients got their appointments scheduled and received services.

◆Nominated by Karen Lloyd

Almar Ahad

Network Administrator I, Finance
For supporting the Medical Staff Office during the Electronic Prescriptions for Controlled Substances (EPCS) enrollment period by being immediately available to answer calls, guide us through processes, and resolve issues. For doing his work with a smile and patience.

◆Nominated by Cheryl Goodwin

Carrie Del Bonta

Clerical Supervisor
David Longstroth, MD
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers
For remaining calm and providing leadership during a serious patient event.

◆Nominated by Brenda Stewart

Andi Bivens

Graphic Designer
Community Education & Information (CEI) Unit
For her help with our annual report. For getting things done with little direction and showing outstanding initiative.

◆Nominated by Craig Stroup



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/> Nominations are subject to approval by Division Directors.