Faces Behind the Numbers

It’s February and we are again in the midst of discussions about local, state and federal budget reductions and how we’re going to deal with them. In the next months, you are going to be hearing a lot of numbers – millions of dollars we may need to cut from our county budget, billions in state deficit figures and trillions in the federal deficit. Those numbers are often hard to get our minds around – and staggering.

What we talk about less often are the people who are impacted – people who need our help to keep themselves, their families and our community healthy. Those people have faces and lives and stories to tell. We were asked by the California Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems and its National Association to share those stories with our elected officials and the media to put a face on the potential impact of the economic crisis we are in. I know many of you have patients, clients, consumers or customers who tell you their stories every day. Here are a few I’ve shared recently with our Congressional delegation. (Read more patient stories on iSITE – and share others by emailing kfowlie@hsd.cccounty.us)

The Stories We Hear

A young man who was a paramedic started having abdominal pain. His job didn’t include health insurance but he was able to turn to Contra Costa Regional Medical Center for care. After being diagnosed with cancer, he underwent lifesaving chemotherapy treatment there and is now living a healthier life.

A former technology industry executive with diabetes lost his job, his wife and his health coverage. He suffered from severe depression. Unable to find employment in his field, he tried several part-time jobs, including as a gas station attendant. He couldn’t keep these jobs because he was unable to stand on his feet for long periods because of foot pain from his diabetic neuropathy. Despair drove him to attempt suicide. After the attempt, he started mental health care at CCRMC and is being seen in our family practice clinic. Though he is still looking for employment, he now has health care and his diabetes is under control.

A 30-year-old man lost his job of five years. He has Crohn’s disease — a serious, chronic digestive illness — and was getting medical care when he had insurance. His monthly intravenous infusions for his disease were interrupted because of his lack of insurance. As a result of a flare up, he was admitted to CCRMC. Now he is being followed in our GI clinic and family practice clinic, has Medi-Cal and is able to get infusions of specific therapy monthly.

I recently had a new patient arrive at my family practice clinic – a lifelong Kaiser patient, 40 years old with multiple problems and on multiple medications. She had been without her medications for the previous two months because of the loss of her job and health insurance. She was appreciative of us being there for her.

A New Phenomenon

These stories show how our challenge as a safety net provider has changed. Traditionally our patients, consumers and clients have been the chronically underinsured. Now we are...
I Need Your Ideas!

In the next few weeks, I will be required to provide the County Administrator with recommendations for every possible cost savings that could be implemented to address the county and state budget deficits. So to prepare for impending budget cuts, I’ve asked each CCHS employee to submit at least one idea for how we can reduce costs and improve operations. Senior Staff and I are committed to reviewing the ideas as quickly as possible and implementing as many of them as is feasible. I have already received hundreds of ideas – please keep them coming! The deadline for submitting ideas is February 17. Submit your ideas to Julie Freestone via email at jfreestone@hsd.cccounty.us, by fax 925-957-5401 (75401 from the county system) or on iSITE (type cchs in your browser), where more info and a podcast on the Idea Campaign also are available.

“One has to assume, first, that the individual human being at work knows better than anyone else what makes him or her more productive...even in routine work the only true expert is the person who does the job.”
—Peter F. Drucker

I Need Your Ideas!

The Director’s Report is published monthly. Deadline for the March edition is February 13. 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 cchealth.org and on iSITE, our intranet, at cchs.
Finding Health Plan Provider Information Now a Click Away

Contra Costa Health Plan (CCHP) has made it easier for its members to find a health care provider, pharmacy or facility. The new online service was developed by CCHP with the help of a number of Health Services employees. Members can now search for more than 1,300 contracted health care providers. The service, called the Online Search Engine (OSE), lists details about each provider, such as specialty, gender, languages spoken, location, office hours and health care network. Tracy Ann Ealy, Director of Provider Relations for CCHP, said quality health care begins with choice, and this search engine gives CCHP members another tool to help chose their provider. Search results are integrated with Google Maps, which makes it easier for members to find directions to their destination. The OSE will also save in printing costs for CCHP member informational materials. The new technology did not require additional county funds.

To access the Online Search Engine, visit www.contracostahealthplan.org. For more information, contact Tracy Ann Ealy at tealy@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-313-9501.

Renovated Bay Point Health Center Reopens

After a six-month closure for renovations, our Bay Point Family Health Center (BPFFHC) reopened last month with a new state-of-the-art Children’s Dental Clinic. In addition, the clinic now features a fully equipped treatment room and a Dental Consult room. Other improvements include a complete interior paint job, new carpet, new vinyl floor in the dental clinic, public restroom, treatment room and dental consult room. During the closure, all clinical services and staff were temporarily relocated to the Pittsburg Health Center.

For more information on the renovations, contact Jose Saavedra, BPFFHC Center Manager, at jsaavedr@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-427-8297.

Contra Costa Medical Reserve Corps Under Development

Our Public Health and Emergency Medical Services divisions are working to establish a community volunteer health service corps, known as the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). The MRC program is sponsored by the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General, and local MRC units are made up of individuals who volunteer to assist their communities in times of emergency or disaster. Volunteers will receive training to provide or assist with medical care at shelters, mass vaccination and prophylactic medication dispensing sites, disaster first aid stations, and alternate care sites. MRC volunteers include trained health care professionals such as nurses, physicians, pharmacists, paramedics and EMTs, dentists, and veterinarians, as well as mental health professionals such as psychologists, social workers, family therapists, and psychiatric technicians. MRC also includes non-medical volunteers such as interpreters, chaplains, office workers, legal advisors, and other support staff. No volunteer will be asked to perform services beyond their competency or comfort level.

For more information, contact Barbara Center with EMS at bcenter@hsd.cccounty.us or call 925-313-9558. Interest Forms for the corps are also available online at: www.cchealth.org/groups/ems/
Milestones

Congratulations to these employees who have given us long years of service: Sandra Gutierrez, Richard Fredericks, Albert Hall, Kimberly Hauer, John Lindquist, Tina Salazar, Svetlana Sandeno, Alleatha Bell, Anna De La Cruz, Alma Garcia, Gale Matthews, Guadalupe Mendez, Rosario Caballero, Elizabeth Villanueva, Jorge Barbaste, Josephine Belleza, Diane Ysmael (10 years); Cristina Co-Fernandez, Anita Ko, Angelique Parker, John Johnson, Elizabeth Isenberg, Beth Hornbeck, Janet Brown (15 years); Josee Ducasse (20 years); and David Fry (25 years).

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 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.

Linda Bailey
Clerk – Senior Level
California Children’s Services

For her consistent, conscientious work and for her supportive and thorough approach to training co-workers.

—Nominated by Barbara Sheehy

Dawn Dailey
Public Health Nurse Program Manager
Public Health Division

For performing outstanding, dedicated and vitally important community service. She has been an enthusiastic, dedicated and active volunteer member (and current Secretary) of the California Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Advisory Council since 1998.

—Nominated by Dr. Thomas G. Keens, Chair, California SIDS Advisory Council

### Going the Extra Mile for Service Excellence

#### Honor Roll

**Lolita Adona, FNP**  
**Leigh Pierson Brown, FNP**  
**Vanessa Najar**  
*Community Health Worker I, Public Health Division*

For demonstrating great teamwork by dedicating extra time to complete sports physicals so 14 Richmond High students were eligible to try out for the soccer team.

—Nominated by Eva Lopez

**Becky Aguilar**  
*Clerical Supervisor*

**Sandra Gholson**  
*Clerk – Specialist Level*

**Mark Haidinger**  
*Clerk – Experienced Level*

**Kim Neal**  
*Director, Health Information Management, Contra Costa Regional Medical Center*

For working indefatigably to restore Contra Costa Regional Medical Center to compliance with JCAHO standards.

—Nominated by Keith White

**Linda Bailey**  
*Clerk – Senior Level*

**Dawn Dailey**  
*Public Health Nurse Program Manager, Public Health Division*

For her consistent, conscientious work and for her supportive and thorough approach to training co-workers.

—Nominated by Barbara Sheehy

**Dawn Dailey**  
*Public Health Nurse Program Manager, Public Health Division*

For performing outstanding, dedicated and vitally important community service. She has been an enthusiastic, dedicated and active volunteer member (and current Secretary) of the California Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Advisory Council since 1998.

—Nominated by Dr. Thomas G. Keens, Chair, California SIDS Advisory Council

**Linda Bailey**  
*Clerk – Senior Level*

**Dawn Dailey**  
*Public Health Nurse Program Manager, Public Health Division*

For performing outstanding, dedicated and vitally important community service. She has been an enthusiastic, dedicated and active volunteer member (and current Secretary) of the California Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Advisory Council since 1998.

—Nominated by Dr. Thomas G. Keens, Chair, California SIDS Advisory Council

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GOING THE EXTRA MILE FOR SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Honor Roll

Lisa Diemoz
Evaluator/Planner
Public Health Division

For her exceptional skills, thoroughness and calm approach to developing databases that track and analyze data improving the lives of the 17,000 children we serve each school year.

—Nominated by The Children’s Oral Health Program

Michele Garbers
Executive Secretary
Office of the Director

For her attention to detail and assistance in proofreading Health Services’ newsletter, the Director’s Report, every month.

—Nominated by Kate Fowlie

Brigitte Imhof
Public Health Nurse
Public Health Division

For working with care and extra diligence to provide foster children and families with the very best care and for facilitating communication between Children and Family Services and pediatric clinic providers.

—Nominated by Leigh Pierson-Brown

Lorrie Knott
Clerk – Senior Level
California Children’s Services

For exceptional assistance during times of reduced staffing and for handling extra jobs without being asked and volunteering to take on additional duties.

—Nominated by Diana Cunnison

Teresa Lascano
Ambulatory Care Clinic Coordinator
Martinez Health Center

Benet Moody
Clerk – Senior Level
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center

For going above and beyond in a particularly challenging situation, doing everything possible to address a member’s concerns with professionalism and perseverance.

—Nominated by Teresa O’Riva

Maria “Izzy” Ochoa
Certified Medical Assistant
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center

For always having a positive and helpful attitude and for taking on new responsibilities during a difficult budget time helping to improve patient care and access.

—Nominated by Samir Shah
Reducing Health Disparities

To celebrate Black History Month, we're highlighting work underway to address African American health disparities. Read more about health disparities affecting the Contra Costa African American community.

John Muir Funds Planning Grant to Reduce African American Disparities

To address health disparities affecting African Americans in Bay Point and Pittsburg, the Center for Human Development (CHD), with a $126,800 planning grant from the John Muir/Mt. Diablo Community Health Fund, is leading a 12-month collaborative planning process. CHD has convened CCHS, La Clinica de La Raza, Planned Parenthood: Shasta-Diablo and resident leaders from the Bay Point and Pittsburg communities to develop a plan of action. To emphasize the importance and relevance of culture in providing health care and training health educators, our Senior Health Education Specialist Tiombe Mashama participates in the planning process, which is expected to design the goals and objectives for a Bay Point/Pittsburg African American Health Initiative. The plan will identify new ways for organizations to work together with the community to increase multiple access points to high quality, culturally sensitive health care that will be trusted and used by African Americans.

This proactive approach grew out of the efforts of two African American health conductors employed by CHD, Le’Andra Turner and Evelyn Dodson who serve our Bay Point and Pittsburg Health Centers. They have been gradually building trust by helping their neighbors find appropriate preventive and primary care, get to medical appointments and navigate the health care system. The conductors have also conducted extensive outreach through community events; organizing workshops on nutrition, HIV-AIDS and chronic disease management, and creating support groups.

CHD is currently recruiting a member of the African American community to lead this work and is seeking ways to engage the African American faith community in the planning process.

For more information, contact Tiombe Mashama at 925-957-5553.
Public Health Nurse Program Manager Dawn Dailey recently presented her research related to antepartum depression in African American women to CCHS’ African American Health Initiative members and CCHS employees. Her research of 119 African American women who received perinatal services through CCRMC and our Health Centers indicated that 42% of women reported symptoms indicating they were high risk for diagnosis of clinical depression. Research has shown that depression during pregnancy negatively affects maternal health, well-being and quality of social relationships, and the in utero environment of unborn fetuses. Infants of depressed women are more likely to be born preterm, have lower birth weights and suffer from adverse developmental outcomes. Dawn pointed out that depression is a racial health disparity for African American pregnant women and routine screening with appropriate treatment is needed to reduce health disparities. To mark Black History Month, she will lead a three-part series on perinatal depression sponsored by Reducing Health Disparities in collaboration with Suzzette C. Johnson, Public Health Program Manager, and Lynor Jackson-Marks, Mental Health Clinical Specialist.

For information about the upcoming presentations at the Richmond and Pittsburg Health Centers, contact RHD Administrative Support Lauren Stoddard at lstoddard@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-957-5422. For information about the research, contact Dawn Dailey at ddailey@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-313-6325.

Health Services’ African American Health Initiative (AAHI) is partnering with the Bay Area Black United Fund to recruit African Americans to be Critical Mass Health Conductors (CMHC) for West County. The goal is to engage African Americans in becoming health advocates for themselves, their families and their communities. As in the spirit of Harriet Tubman, who took herself to freedom first, African Americans who sign up for CMHC will learn practical ways to achieve their health goals. They are asked to choose life-affirming activities on a daily basis by: assuming personal responsibility for their health and well-being; promoting cultural messages that embrace healthy lifestyles; asking for support to make healthy changes in their life; and working to remove inner obstacles. The CMHC effort is part of CCHS’ Reducing Health Disparities (and AAHI) goal to establish partnerships with the community. The next CMHC training cycle begins this month. CCHS employees involved in CMHC recruitment include Dawna Vann, RHD Resource Coordinator; Chinyere Madawaki, North Richmond Center for Health Manager; Suzzette Johnson, Family, Maternal and Child Health Program Manager; Gwenn White, Community Wellness & Prevention Program Health Education Specialist; Hannah Head, Mental Health Utilization Review Coordinator; and Odessa Stone, Contra Costa Health Plan Community Outreach Specialist., all of whom also are Health Conductors.

Download the CMHC recruitment flyer on iSITE (cchs on the browser). For more information, contact Dawna Vann at dvann@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-957-5436.
**STEMI System’s Speed Helps Save Patients**

In its first 120 days, the county’s STEMI System, overseen by our Emergency Medical Services Division, met or exceeded all local and national benchmarks. STEMI (ST Elevation Myocardial Infarctions) are “high risk” heart attacks that need rapid cardiac intervention. The average time from initial 911 call to cardiac intervention at a STEMI Center in Contra Costa was 93 minutes. That mark is nearly 30 minutes faster than the national benchmark of 120 minutes. STEMI Program Manager Patricia Frost said the low times are due to the number of STEMI Centers in the county, close coordination between field paramedics and STEMI Centers staff, and the training and dedication of both field and hospital personnel. The five county-designated STEMI Centers are Doctors Medical Center in San Pablo, John Muir Medical Center – Walnut Creek Campus, John Muir Medical Center – Concord Campus, Kaiser Permanente Walnut Creek Medical Center, and San Ramon Regional Medical Center. The successful program has been profiled on the front page of the Contra Costa Times and in the online publication California Healthline. The STEMI program and the importance of calling 911 is the topic of one of our recent Healthy Outlook columns. See separate story in this Director’s Report.

For information about the STEMI System, contact STEMI Program Manager Patricia Frost at pfrost@bsd.cccounty.us or visit EMS at www.cccems.org

**Healthy Outlook Column Covers High-Risk Heart Attacks**

One of our recent Healthy Outlook columns published in the Contra Costa Times publications covered a new system in our county that better serves heart attack victims. Dr. Joe Barger, Medical Director of CCHS’ Emergency Medical Services Division, talked about how to tell if you are having a heart attack and the importance of calling 911. Contra Costa County has launched a new system to quickly care for victims of a STEMI – or high-risk – heart attack. Under this system, STEMI heart attacks can be identified in the field and STEMI Centers can be notified before the patient arrives. This practice cuts down on the time it takes to begin treatment, therefore reducing damage to heart muscle.

To read more of this and other Healthy Outlook columns, visit cchealth.org and click on the Healthy Outlook link in Items of Interest or on the Publications page.

**Manager of the Year for Contra Costa Health Plan**

Congratulations to Troy Lam, Manager of Marketing and Member Services, for being Contra Costa Health Plan’s Manager of the Year! Troy was selected for his expertise, professionalism and skills, according to CCHP Director Patricia Tanquary. Under Troy’s leadership, the Marketing and Member Services Department has shown the highest service levels in Member Services history. The speed of answering member calls has increased resulting in a lower number of “hang-ups” before receiving assistance. His open-door policy has boosted employee morale and ensured that Member Services runs smoothly. Troy is a true asset to CCHP and Health Services.

**Contra Costa Wins Back ‘Big Apple’**

The “Big Apple” trophy has returned to Contra Costa County. The annual “County Cares” Holiday Fund/Food Fight is a competition between Contra Costa and Solano counties to raise money for the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano. This past holiday season, Contra Costa employees raised $67,860.04 – or $9.83 per employee – earning Contra Costa the “Big Apple” trophy, which is given to the county that raises the most amount of money per employee. Health Services staff contributed $14,048.80 to Contra Costa’s total. Solano County employees raised an average of $8.32 per employee. The Food Bank serves roughly 82,000 people in the two counties each month.