

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

## INSIDE

- 2 Director's Message (cont.)
- 3 CCRMC and Health Centers  
Taking Things Apart to  
Make Things Better  
State Approves \$5.5 Million in  
MHA Funds for Mental  
Health Division  
Hospital Gala Raises Money,  
Awareness for CCHS
- 4 Reducing Health Disparities  
RHD Spotlight: Latino  
Community
  - Linguistic Access Unit Speaks  
Their Language
  - Spanish Program Vida Sana  
En Vivo Nearly a Decade Old
- 5 Reducing Health Disparities  
(continued)
  - Health Plan Focusing on  
Reducing Childhood Obesity  
Rates Among Latinos
  - Promotoras Take on  
Diabetes
- 6 Honor Roll  
Milestones
- 7 EMS Assistant Director Lauren  
Kovaleff Retires After Nearly  
30 Years with CCHS  
IS Creates New Service  
Excellence Guidelines  
AODS Receives Grant to Sup-  
port Juvenile Drug Court
- 8 CCHS Working with Richmond  
to Reduce Street Violence  
Help Connect People Experi-  
encing Homelessness with  
Health and Other Services  
Healthy Outlook Column Dis-  
cusses Increase in TB Cases

## Recognizing the Work We Do

During this difficult economic time when we have to make almost continuous and very hard decisions to balance our budget, we risk losing sight of who we are and the truly amazing work we do.

Although the future may seem uncertain, the new administration in Washington appears committed to giving every American access to health care. And as an integrated public health system, we are in a unique position to serve as a model for health care reform.



William B. Walker, M.D.  
CCHS Director

## A unique, integrated system

People always marvel when I describe the varied and vital work we do. Our system includes the 166-bed Regional Medical Center and eight federally qualified Health Centers. That's often enough for one health agency, but we also have Alcohol and Other Drugs, Public Health, Environmental Health, Hazardous Materials, Mental Health, Emergency Medical Services and the Health Plan. There were 433,541 visits to our Health Centers and more than 50,000 visits to our Emergency Department last year. Our Health Plan serves more than 94,711 people.

We protect the community during disasters, such as chemical explosions and refinery fires, and respond to disease outbreaks such as meningitis and tuberculosis. We also ensure high standards by inspecting every restaurant and food-handling enterprise in Contra Costa County. We prevent illness and suffering through our outreach programs for immunizations and HIV/AIDS testing, and our alcohol and drug abuse prevention programs. We care for children and adults with serious mental illness. We make sure the ambulance is there when people call 911.

In addition, we partner with the University of California Davis for our nationally recognized Family Practice Residency Training Program. We also partner with the Bay Area Tumor Institute in our research-based Cancer Center and are able to participate in national and international oncology clinical

Continued next page

## Swine Flu Information and Health Resources

Swine flu information, factsheets and guidance is available in English and Spanish on our website: [www.cchealth.org](http://www.cchealth.org) and our pre-recorded Health Emergency Information Line at 1-888-959-9911. The public also can call our Advice Nurses at 1-877-661-6230. Also get updates by following us on Twitter at: [www.twitter.com/CoCoHealth](http://www.twitter.com/CoCoHealth)

trials.

We employ the best and the brightest of physicians and nurses, chemical engineers and hazardous materials specialists, pharmacists and laboratory technicians, health educators, language interpreters, and many other health professionals to protect the health of all Contra Costans. Our programs work in partnership with residents, community-based organizations and other local and state agencies.

And while doing all that, we stretch every dollar by bringing in nearly \$700 million dollars per year from State and Federal sources and rely on county taxpayers for less than 15% of our budget. But the struggles we have shared with every other public health system in the country to continue thriving underscore the compelling need to fix the American health care system. It's broken.

## Health reform is coming

The United States spends more money on health care than any other industrialized nation and we have worse outcomes. Millions of Americans have no health coverage and the public systems like ours that are charged with picking up the slack are over capacity and underfunded.

Obviously reform in our health care system isn't going to happen on the local level. Nearly all of the funding for our health care system—85%—is from state and federal sources, most especially Medi-Cal.

In my role as past-president of the California Association of Public Hospitals, I spent many hours talking with state health care officials, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, his staff and legislators about health reform. Those discussions looked promising, but the State's budget woes killed any hope of change on the state level.

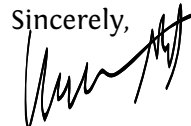
As a member of the National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems' Health Reform Task Force, I'm now having those conversations on the national level.

## Meeting with Congressman Miller

A few weeks ago, Congressman George Miller came to CCRMC to meet with me and a small group of physicians and nurses. He wanted to talk to people on the frontlines of a safety net health system. As the Chair of the House Education and Labor committee, he is one of five Congressional Committee Chairs working closely with the Obama administration to move health reform. He described the broad principles being considered and we described the enormous potential we saw in using a health system like ours as a model for cost-effective care. What makes us unique from much of the delivery system—especially the private sector—is our “systemness.” The whole continuum of care—from our family-based primary care services to inpatient, ancillary services and the Health Plan—is under one umbrella. We are the public version of the much-admired Kaiser model. Our participation in Project LEAN (see story on Page 3) should make us even more cost effective and improve our patient outcomes.

I was very encouraged by Congressman Miller's attention to our needs—including the increased demand created by the newly uninsured as a result of the economy—and his pride in our services. As a long-term supporter of Health Services, he knows more than most people do about our system. His wife Cynthia is a lay member of CCRMC's Ethics Committee. We've learned some things over the years in Contra Costa about the most effective way to deliver health care. We've learned that giving people an insurance card and saying they are covered doesn't solve the problem of access. To have effective health care for everyone, we have to maintain capacity and even expand it. I have faith that Congressman Miller and President Obama can deliver true health reform and all of us will have access to quality care.

Sincerely,



William B. Walker, MD

The Director's Report is published monthly. Deadline for the June edition is May 15. 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](mailto:kfowlie@hsd.cccounty.us) The Director's Report is available online at [www.cchealth.org](http://www.cchealth.org) and on iSITE, our intranet, at <http://cchs>.

## CCRMC and Health Centers Taking Things Apart to Make Things Better

A dozen CCRMC/Health Center staff fanned out recently to take a look—through the eyes of our patients with congestive heart failure—at how much value our system delivers. They were the first of four “Kaizen” (improvement) teams that will be taking things apart—and putting them back together—in a way that better serves our patients. The goal is to have a patient-centered system with multi-disciplinary teams using standard methods of dealing with everything from admission and treatment to pharmacy, appointments and discharge. With a grant from the [California Health Care Safety Net Institute \(SNI\)](#), CCRMC is one of four public hospital systems working with SNI as part of its LEAN Core Measures Improvement Initiative. LEAN was developed by the Toyota Production System (TPS) and has been used successfully in health settings as well. The idea is that expenditure of resources for any goal other than the creation of value for the end customer is wasteful and



Dr. Steve Tremain CCHS Senior Medical Director, takes a look at a “waste wheel” as part of the LEAN training.

so a target for change. The initiative, which continues throughout the year, is serving as pilot to determine if LEAN could be expanded through CCHS.

For more information, contact Anna Roth at [aroth@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:aroth@hsd.cccounty.us) or 925-370-5101.

## State Approves \$5.5 Million in MHSA Funds for Mental Health Division

Our Mental Health Division was approved for \$5.5 million in state Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funds to create new Prevention & Early Intervention (PEI) programs. The programs are focused on the prevention and early intervention of mental health problems. New projects will tackle: underserved cultural communities; trauma and community violence; stigma reduction; suicide prevention; supporting older adults; parenting education and support; juvenile justice programs; families experiencing mental illness and youth development. Mental Health Director Donna Wigand said funds come at an extremely critical time for the county. The funds, which were approved by the state Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (OAC), culminates a yearlong process that involved more than 900 individuals in Contra Costa. In approving the funds, OAC said Contra Costa’s projects took a “culture of wellness” approach that truly indicated they were following the needs of the community.

Call Sherry Bradley at 925-957-5150 or visit MHSA on the web at [www.cchealth.org/services/mental\\_health/prop63/](http://www.cchealth.org/services/mental_health/prop63/)

## Gala Raises Money, Awareness for Hospital, Health Centers

Last month’s annual hospital gala was a swinging success! More than 240 people attended this year’s fundraiser, Jazz at the Craneway. The event, hosted by the Contra Costa Regional Health Foundation, has already raised more than \$60,000 for CCRMC and the Health Centers. Regional Health Foundation Executive Director Lynda Gayden expects more donations in the coming weeks. Final figures are expected sometime this month. CCHS Director and County Health Officer Dr. William Walker was honored for his work and achievements. The gala featured live big band music by the Montclair Women’s Big Band, two live auctions, dinner and dancing.

For more information, contact Lynda Gayden at [lgayden@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:lgayden@hsd.cccounty.us) or 925-957-5424.



The DIRECTOR'S REPORT RHD PAGE showcases 2008–09 Division strategies and activities to address four CCHS Reducing Health Disparities goals. The goals are: 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. The complete CCHS RHD plan is available at [www.cchealth.org](http://www.cchealth.org)

**RHD SPOTLIGHT** One of the four goals of the Department's Reducing Health Disparities efforts is to improve consumers/clients/patients/customers' experience in utilizing our services. This month we feature efforts underway in Health Services to address health disparities in the Latino community.

## Linguistic Access Unit Speaks Their Language

Latinos represent more than 20% of Contra Costa's population. For many, Spanish is the primary language. Through the department's Linguistic Access Unit, under the supervision of Francie Wise in the Public Health Division, Latinos and other non-English or limited-English-speaking patients are better able to utilize CCHS. Sally McFalone, Director of the unit, works with Martin Lynch, a Senior Disease Intervention Technician, to obtain video and telephonic interpretation (spoken) and translation (written) services for staff. Interpretation services are offered primarily through CCHS' participation in the statewide Health Care Interpreter Network (HCIN). In a recent month, HCIN handled a whopping 3,879 calls totaling nearly 50,000 minutes. Spanish interpretation accounts for 66% of all HCIN traffic. We have four Span-



Martin Lynch and Sally McFalone

ish-speaking interpreters on the network. When they are busy, calls go to our State network partners. If they are all busy, the call goes to Language Line, a private language interpretation vendor. CCRMC and all our Health Centers, except Bay Point and the Center for Health in North Richmond, have video interpretation units.

For more information on these services contact Sally McFalone at [smcfalone@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:smcfalone@hsd.cccounty.us) or 925-313-6242.

## Spanish Program Vida Sana En Vivo Nearly a Decade Old

For almost a decade, CCHS has produced a unique Spanish-language health show launched at the urging of our own staff to better inform the Latino community. Community Education and Information staffer Vicky Balladares has produced Vida Sana en Vivo (A Healthy Life—Live) for five of those years. The 30-minute production originally aired live and is now pre-recorded. Vida Sana en Vivo has almost 50 Spanish-language programs to its credit. The show's current host is Elizabeth De Dios, a Richmond firefighter. The West Nile virus and HIV/AIDS programs won national recognition as outstanding examples of community broadcasting programs. Vicky, originally from Nicaragua, is very sensitive to the needs of the local Latino community and works closely with CCHS staff to develop shows that promote health messages to the Latino community. The show airs on Thursdays at 3:30 p.m. and Fridays at 5 p.m. The show airs on Comcast Channel 27 and Astound cable viewers see it on Channel 32.



Vicky Balladares

For information about Vida Sana En Vivo, contact Vicky Balladares at [vballada@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:vballada@hsd.cccounty.us) or 925-313-6817.

## Health Plan Focusing on Reducing Childhood Obesity Rates Among Latinos

Forty-four percent of low-income Hispanic children ages 5 to 8 years old are either overweight or obese, a rate that is significantly higher than for white or African American children. Bayley Raiz, Contra Costa Health Plan's new Quality Improvement Director and his staff have launched an effort to address that disparity. The Plan's Quality and Disease Management (QM) unit discovered that minimal bilingual health education resources are available locally for parents to help their children. Senior Health Education Specialist Patricia Sanchez is implementing a variety of obesity prevention interventions for CCHP children, ages 3 to 11 years old who struggle with weight, and their families. With input from the QM staff including, Otilia Tuitin, Manager of Cultural and Linguistic Services, Maureen Alba, Quality Management Nurse, Pediatric Health Consultant Dr. Dianne Dooley and the Promotoras and WIC programs, Patricia has developed culturally and linguistically



Otilia Tuitin, Dr. Diane Dooley and Patricia Sanchez (left to right) appropriate curriculum and an obesity prevention tool kit. Dr. Dooley will provide training for our providers on proactive counseling to help patients develop goal-setting skills.

To learn more, contact Patricia Sanchez at [psanchez@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:psanchez@hsd.cccounty.us) or 925-313-6019. Materials available at [www.cchealth.org](http://www.cchealth.org)

## Promotoras Take on Diabetes

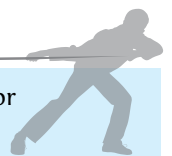
Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in Contra Costa—and one of the leading causes of death for Latinos in the county. Latinos are diagnosed with the disease at younger ages than other groups. The Bay Point/Pittsburg Promotora Program—a joint effort between the Center for Human Development and CCHS' Reducing Health Disparities Unit—has been partnering with the Pittsburg Health Center diabetes team to help Latinos improve their health outcomes with diabetes. A grant from the San Francisco Foundation received last year has allowed the Promotoras to deliver health education classes to more than 100 people and offer health benefit enrollment assistance. During the classes, participants learn about nutrition, exercise, seeing their doctors, and preventing diabetes complications. The Promotoras motivate parents and grandparents to educate their children so that they can prevent diabetes in their families. They've also provided navigation assistance—help such as phone calls to encourage patients to comply with doctor



The Promotoras involved with this project have included: Promotora Coordinator Estela Cerda, Miriam Medina, Elizabeth Luciano, Yolanda Costilla and Nurial Jovel.

instructions, to follow healthy lifestyles practices, make doctor appointments, where to purchase glucose testing materials, how to use a glucose testing machine and more. The grant also supports educating medical staff about Latino cultural practices and beliefs.

For information contact Estela Cerda at 925-427-8339 or [ecerda@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:ecerda@hsd.cccounty.us) or Concepcion James at 925-957-5421 or [cjames@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:cjames@hsd.cccounty.us)





# Honor Roll

GOING THE EXTRA MILE FOR SERVICE EXCELLENCE

## Cristina Fernandez

Accountant III

## Thomas Mathew

Accountant III

Finance Division

For doing a fantastic job with both the Medi-Cal Administrative Activities invoices and the Targeted Case Management cost reports. This very functional collaboration with the Public Health Division has worked to maintain the financial integrity of both programs and gain the respect of the California Department of Health Care Services.

◆Nominated by Sue Guest

## Lauren Kovaleff

Assistant Director

Emergency Medical Services

For 30 years of service in building and shaping the Emergency Medical Services system in Contra Costa County.

◆Nominated by Art Lathrop

## Lawrence Burchett, MD

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center

For easing a patient's fear and frustration about complications following surgery.

◆Nominated by a patient

## Patricia Weisinger

Account Clerk - Advanced Level

Materials Management

For getting capital asset information caught up by working to ensure equipment gets tagged during a time of short staff in Materials Management.

◆Nominated by Cindy Collins

## Kathleen Sullivan, PHN

Public Health Tuberculosis Program

For saving our system untold amounts of money and blazing the trail for other nurses and patients to be able to get patients covered through TB Medi-Cal.

◆Nominated by the Public Health Nurses of the TB Control Program

## Scott Hanson

Hazardous Materials Specialist II

Hazardous Materials Division

For his calm, professional demeanor, helping a property owner under extremely stressful circumstances during a hazardous materials incident involving a suspected clandestine methamphetamine lab.

◆Nominated by Eric Jonsson

## Dana Stephens

Secretary

Ambulatory Care

For promptly and appropriately using CCHS' Incident Response Information System (IRIS) to alert Emergency Management Team members to a gas leak at the Antioch Health Center.

◆Nominated by William Walker, MD

## 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 commendation form by email to [ServicEX@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:ServicEX@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.

## Milestones

Congratulations to these employees who have given us long years of service: Anntheia Farr, Linnie Hanis, Vicky Balladares, Carmen Valdivia, Kathleen Gilman, Eula Banks, Susan Foster, Irma Bosch-Mora, Gabriel Cooley, Jeri Noble, Brenda Salgado, Liza Arrivas (10 years); Nancy McCoy, Christina Thompson, Steven Dinning Jr., Cassandra Kolto, Anthony Sadler, Michael O'Leary, Ingrid Sanchez (15 years); Amy Alviz, Ronald Sanders, Sheila Stelly, Baulo Ansel, Beverly Faust, Carmencita Hernandez, Mary Kiefer, Viet Trung Le (20 years); and Kathy Brown (40 years).

## EMS Assistant Director Lauren Kovaleff Retires After Nearly 30 Years with CCHS

Lauren Kovaleff, Assistant Director of Emergency Medical Services (EMS), retired in March after almost 30 years with Health Services and roughly 40 years in the field. Lauren has been a mainstay at EMS since her arrival in 1980. During her career at CCHS, Lauren has responded to many large-scale incidents, including the plane crash at Sun Valley Mall in 1985. However, it will be her other interests, rather than disasters, that keep her busy in retirement. Lauren is an avid dog owner and was just elected chair of the national Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen Health and Rescue Foundation. She also is a longtime member of the Lindsay Wildlife Museum in Walnut Creek. EMS Director Art Lathrop said Lauren's devotion has helped produce high-quality emergency medical services in Contra Costa. The County Board of Supervisors honored



Lauren Kovaleff, left, and EMS Director Art Lathrop. Lauren retired from CCHS in March after nearly 30 years of service.

Lauren last month for her contributions to EMS and to the people of Contra Costa County. Recruitment efforts are underway for her replacement.



Robin Melendez, Bill Jurewicz, and Steve Dinning (left to right) collaborate during a workshop.

## IS Works to Create Service Excellence Guidelines

Working with our Reducing Health Disparities Unit and Personnel staff, a group of Information Systems (IS) managers and staff recently attended a series of workshops to create new Service Excellence standards for IS. Building on the concepts of communication, innovation and customer service, the following positive future statement was created: "We engage our customers and colleagues as we channel innovation and harness technology to create a positive customer experience." Under the leadership of the new Chief Information Officer, David Runt, a set of core principles will be created to demonstrate what Service Excellence means for IS.

To find out more about Service Excellence, contact Personnel Officer Shelley Pighin at [spighin@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:spighin@hsd.cccounty.us) or 925-957-5251.



Harold Parsley, left, presents AODS Director Haven Fearn with a \$1,000 check.

## AODS Receives Grant to Support Juvenile Drug Court

Our Alcohol and Other Drugs Services Division was awarded a \$1,000 check to support the Contra Costa Juvenile Drug Court Programs. This contribution will provide alcohol-testing supplies and the funding needed to purchase bus passes to assist youths in transportation to and from treatment. The check, from the Lutheran Women of Faith of the Lutheran Church in Concord, is the result of a mini-grant submitted by Harold Parsley, on behalf of the Alcohol and Other Drugs Advisory Board. The Juvenile Drug Court is a free court-supervised alcohol and drug treatment program for youths who are in probation and re-offend or violate probation due to substance abuse. The court motivates youths with rewards and sanctions.

To find out more about the Juvenile Drug Court, contact AODS at 925-313-6300.



Tiombe Mashama, second from left, with NCAs Joe McCoy, Kevin Muccular, Diane Gatewood and Sal Garcia (left to right).

## CCHS Working with City of Richmond to Reduce Street Violence

One of the priorities of our Cross Divisional Violence Prevention Team, launched in 2006, is to support the City of Richmond’s Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS). The focus of the ONS is to build and support initiatives that reduce street violence by developing, focusing and connecting resources for individuals and communities most at risk for violent crime. ONS outreach workers, called Neighborhood Change Agents (NCAs), work to intervene in conflicts, prevent retaliation, broker health

and social services and steer individuals away from violence to more positive endeavors. Working with the NCAs, Tiombe Mashama, a Community Health Education Coordinator in our Reducing Health Disparities Unit, helps the NCAs navigate our complex systems to best meet the needs of their clients. Tiombe is working with ONS Director DeVone Boggan to increase ONS visibility within CCHS to create opportunities for shared learning and improved service delivery by ONS and CCHS.

For more information, visit [www.cchealth.org](http://www.cchealth.org) or contact Tiombe Mashama at [tmashama@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:tmashama@hsd.cccounty.us) or 925-957-5553.

## Help Connect People Experiencing Homelessness with Health and Other Services

Our Homeless Program’s fourth annual Project Homeless Connect is next month and volunteers are still needed. The one-day event connects homeless people with food, medical and dental care, substance abuse programs, shelters and more. Last year, a record-setting 621 people were served in Antioch. This year the event will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesday, June 17 at the Richmond Memorial Auditorium. CCHS employees who will not be representing their program or division as a service provider, but wish to volunteer, must use approved time off. An estimated 15,000 people experience homelessness every year in Contra Costa County.

To volunteer, visit our website at [www.cchealth.org](http://www.cchealth.org) or contact our Homeless Program at 925-313-6124.

## Healthy Outlook Column Discusses Increase in TB Cases

Dr. Charles Crane, our Tuberculosis Program Medical Director, writes about TB cases increasing in Contra Costa in a recent Healthy Outlook column. In the column published by the Contra Costa Times newspapers, Dr. Crane explains that the increase is a reminder we must all work to prevent further spread of the disease. Early diagnosis and treatment prevents infected patients from developing active tuberculosis and becoming contagious.



Dr. Charles Crane

To read more of this and other Healthy Outlook columns, visit [www.cchealth.org](http://www.cchealth.org) and click on the link in Items of Interest. A podcast on TB is also available on our website.