Talking About Health

I have said many times over the last few years as we’ve discussed health care reform that I would like to stop talking about access and health insurance and talk about health. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has significant impact outside of doctors’ offices, clinics and hospitals. For example, transformational grants announced in May will provide funds for communities around the country to partner with health systems, business groups, faith and community-based organizations, and other community stakeholders to develop broad-based interventions that will address the health of communities. I believe we are ideally poised to successfully compete for these new ventures and succeed in improving the health of our communities.

Developing partnerships for prevention

We now have years of experience in developing partnerships. Larry Cohen, who in the 1980s began work in our health system to develop principles of community interventions, successfully founded the Prevention Institute. In the 1990s, we launched and staffed our healthy neighborhoods effort in West County and continued that work for a number of years.

Through our Public Health Division’s Community Wellness & Prevention Program (CW&PP), we have a long history of undertaking projects, including Healthy Eating, Active Living (HEAL), the Violence Prevention Project (VPP), and the Tobacco Prevention Project (TPP), that involved multiple stakeholders working in partnership and collaboration. Our Public Health Clinic Services have built partnerships with schools, opening our first school-based health center (SBHC) more than 20 years ago and currently operating five licensed SBHC clinics at 14 elementary, middle, and high schools in Contra Costa County. These clinics reached maximum capacity with 8,000 completed visits in 2010. (Read a story about some of these clinics on Page 5)

Family, Maternal and Child Health Programs (FMCH) efforts include Black Infant Health (BIH), the Medically Vulnerable Infant Project (MVIP), Prenatal Care Guidance (PCG), the Family Economic Security Partnership (FESP), oral dental health exams, education and preventative services for children in the schools, and the Life Course Model which focus on interventions before and during pregnancy to address disparities and improve health outcomes for children through adulthood.

DID YOU KNOW?

Health Services has been working with the City of Richmond to create one of the nation’s first General Plans with a health component.

Continued next page
Taking promoting health to a new level

Many of these efforts were by definition traditional public health interventions and funded by local public health grants. More recently, the health care field has moved toward health promotion. CCHS is currently involved in the Institute for Healthcare Improvement’s (IHI) Triple Aim initiatives. It strives to bring together three components of health: per capita costs, population health results and patient experience of care. We were among 14 pilots including National Health Services in Great Britain and Sweden, and other large health systems around the country. We are now trying to take this activity to a new level.

We are in conversations with Kaiser and the City of Richmond around a major community health improvement effort in West County. With the assistance of IHI, we are now formulating a template and hope to integrate this effort with The California Endowment’s (TCE) Healthy Richmond project. TCE has made a 10-year commitment to assist Richmond and 13 other neighborhoods across California to improve the health of their neighborhoods through community engagement, policy and system changes, and addressing disparities.

Transforming the health of communities

We all know that West Contra Costa County has health indicators that show some of the worst disparities in health outcomes. Poverty, violence and the built environment make it difficult to eat healthy and exercise. My hope is that our combined efforts in West County with Kaiser, Brookside Clinic, the new San Pablo Health Center, the City of Richmond and our Public Health Division can demonstrate over the next decade that the health of a large community can be transformed with partnership, passion and perseverance.

In East and Central County the CEOs of the hospitals and Community Clinics are in discussion about efforts they can work on together to address disparities. The East County Action Access Team (ECAAT), made up of representatives from each of the hospitals, clinics or health systems in East and Central County, have been challenged with identifying specific activities that we can work on together to address disparities and improve health outcomes in our communities.

Bonnie Zell, who grew up in El Cerrito, will be joining us in July to assist with our IHI efforts. Dr. Zell, an OB/GYN practitioner and IHI Fellow, was chief of medicine at Richmond Kaiser before she worked for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and most recently for the National Quality Forum. We are excited to have someone with Dr. Zell’s breath of knowledge and experience on our team during this exciting time while we are preparing for Health Reform implementation.

This work is about keeping people healthy, turning the curve on the high cost of health care, and improving the experience of the patients/clients/consumers we serve. We have known for a long time that it makes sense to prevent disease and injuries and to address the historical, systemic problems that show up as health disparities in our communities. Our Public Health Division, under the leadership of Dr. Wendel Brunner, has worked tirelessly on these issues over the years and now their work is recognized as core to health and health care at all levels.

Sincerely,

William Walker, M.D.
Dozens Celebrate Official Groundbreaking of New West County Health Center

After years of anticipation, we broke ground at the new site of our West County Health Center. Employees, elected officials and community members gathered in San Pablo last month to take part in the ceremonies. The new state-of-the-art facility is expected to be complete in July 2012 and open its doors by September 2012. The West County Health Center replaces the aging Richmond Health Center, which has served West County for almost 50 years. Health Services Director Dr. William Walker said the new health center will increase the number of people we serve, increase access to services and create a medical hub for West County residents. The facility will be located near Doctors Medical Center. It is funded in part by $12 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Kick-off Events for Electronic Medical Records Implementation

We’ll be holding events this month to officially kick off implementation efforts of the Electronic Medical Record (EMR) at our Regional Medical Center and Health Centers. Our staff have been working hard to set the stage for getting the EMR up and running by July 2012. We’ll be using the EPIC EMR, which is known nationwide and is considered state of the art. It’s currently used by many other health systems and will help us better serve our patients. Hospital, Health Center and Health Plan staff are invited to attend one the following four events at locations around the county: 5 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 14 at the Pittsburg Health Center; 10 a.m. to noon Wednesday, June 15 at CCRMC; 5 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 15 at Martinez Health Center; and 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday, June 16 at the Richmond Health Center. All events will include an overview of the Epic project, a discussion of the benefits for staff and patients and a demonstration of how the EMR works. Please check for updates on these events on iSite and stay tuned for more details.

For information on the kick-off events, contact Tess O’Riva at teresa.o’riva@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-370-5177 or Marianne Bunce-Houston at marianne.bunce@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-370-5822.
**County Supervisors, AODS Honor ‘People Who Make a Difference’**

Eleven individuals and groups were recognized by the County Board of Supervisors last month for their efforts to combat alcohol and drug abuse. The 2011 “People Who Make a Difference” awardees, selected by the Alcohol and Other Drugs Advisory Board, included people from law enforcement, schools and the community. To win an award, nominees must have initiated, contributed to or produced a significant shift in alcohol and other drugs awareness and use. AODS Program Manager Fatima Matal Sol said there was an outpouring of nominations this year—a signal of strong community support to prevent alcohol and drug abuse.

To see a complete list of winners or to learn more about substance abuse services in Contra Costa, visit [http://cchealth.org/groups/aod_board/pdf/2011_pwmd_awards_brochure.pdf](http://cchealth.org/groups/aod_board/pdf/2011_pwmd_awards_brochure.pdf) and click Alochol & Other Drugs.

**Volunteers Needed for Annual Homeless Connect Event**

Volunteers are still needed for our annual one-day event next this month that connects hundreds of people experiencing homelessness with food, medical and dental care, substance abuse programs, shelters and more. The success of the event largely depends on volunteers, who are needed to help set up, greet and direct people, distribute goods, serve lunch and assist service providers and provide general assistance. Contra Costa Health Services is sponsoring the event with the City of Richmond and Chevron. Anyone over the age of 18 is encouraged to volunteer. Project Homeless Connect 7 is from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesday, June 15, at the Richmond Memorial Auditorium, 403 Civic Center Street, Richmond, CA 95804. Volunteers are needed noon to 5 p.m. June 14 and 6:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. June 15. Volunteers are asked for at least a half-day service. Health Services staff must get approval for time off to participate.

Volunteer registration forms are available online at [www.cchealth.org/services/homeless/](http://www.cchealth.org/services/homeless/) or by calling 925-313-6124. Completed forms must be received by June 10. Email forms to [projecthomelessconnect@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:projecthomelessconnect@hsd.cccounty.us) or fax them to 925-313-6761.

**Food Bank Employees Learn Food Safety from Environmental Health**

Food bank employees will soon be trained how to properly handle the food donations they receive thanks to our Environmental Health Division. Later this month, Environmental Health Specialist Michele DiMaggio will hold a one-day class for the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano Counties. Michele said participants will learn proper hand washing, sanitizing and storage, among other things. Participants will receive Food Safety Certification upon completion of the training. The training isn’t required for the food bank; Michele said the Food Bank program director is doing it as a precautionary measure.

To find out more about the training, contact Michele DiMaggio at [michele.dimaggio@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:michele.dimaggio@hsd.cccounty.us) or 925-692-2534.
New West County African American Health Conductor to Help Formerly Incarcerated

People recently released from jail or prison are at an increased risk of death and a new grant from the San Francisco Foundation aims to change that. The Foundation awarded $40,000 to the Contra Costa Regional Health Foundation for our African American Health Conductor Program to hire and train another African American health conductor. The new conductor will work closely with the Richmond Office of Neighborhood Safety, the San Quentin Medicine Project and other programs to conduct community outreach and identify formerly incarcerated West County residents who may need medical or mental health access, navigation, appointments and other community resources and support services. The grant also supports education for West County medical staff to learn about the needs and issues of the formerly incarcerated. Our Reducing Health Disparities Program Coordinator Tiombe Mashama noted, “The formerly incarcerated have 12.7 times the increased risk of death in the first two weeks after release. Many of the persons who leave the prison system with chronic care issues do not have a transition care plan. As a result, they are at great risk for premature death and poor health outcomes.” The new conductor joins a team of two other health conductors (LeAndra Turner and Liz McCoy) and a lead conductor (Cynthia Garrett) who serve West and East county. Our Health Conductor Program is a joint program with the Center for Human Development.

For more information about this new project or the Health Conductor Program, contact Tiombe Mashama at 925-957-5553.

Clinic Services’ School Health Centers on Display at Kennedy High Open House

Our Public Health Clinic Services Program participated in a School Health Center Open House last month at Kennedy High School. Clinic Services operates mobile clinics at three schools in the West Contra Costa Unified School District and operates the Health Center at Richmond High. People touring the Health Center at Kennedy High heard from students about how the centers improve their health and academic success. Richmond High Health Center Coordinator Anisha Johnson said the open house was an opportunity to highlight the services provided by Clinic Services, such as sports physicals, immunizations and reproductive health services. During a recent assessment of the Richmond High School Based Health Center by UCSF, an overwhelming amount of staff and students said the services provided are greatly needed on campus. The school district hosted the open house in collaboration with the California School Health Center Association. Clinic Services also will staff the Health Center at El Cerrito High beginning September.

To find out more about School Based Health Centers operated by Clinic Services Program Manager Susan Nairn at susan.nairn@hsd.cccounty.us
Emergency Management Team Tests Communication during Mock Flood

Members of our Emergency Management Team (EMT) got hands-on practice with emergency communications in May during the County’s Golden Guardian exercise. EMT members participated at the county Emergency Operations Center, the Health Services Department Operations Center, and Division Operations Centers. In an emergency, communication is vital to a coordinated and effective response, says Public Health’s Emergency Services Manager Kim Cox. The exercise, which involved more than 35 EMT members at 11 locations, simulated a major flood in East County that affected hospitals, skilled nursing facilities and other health care services. Participants followed California’s Emergency Management System procedures, which standardizes communication and coordination. Kim said many lessons were learned from the exercise that will better prepare Health Services for a real disaster response. The EMT wants to remind Health Services staff that in a real emergency, all county employees would become disaster service workers.

To find out more about the exercise or the EMT, contact Kim Cox at 925-313-6648. To learn about your role as a disaster service worker, visit www.cchealth.org/topics/emergencies/.

Hitting the Links for Healthy Living Program

Health Services staff and community members took to the greens last month to raise some green—$700, to be exact—for our Contra Costa Health Plan’s Healthy Living Program. Proceeds will be used to provide augmented services and materials beyond the standard required benefits that support the efforts of chronic disease patients (non-commercial Health Plan members) to manage their conditions. The third annual “Contra Costa Challenge” golf tournament, organized by Dave Fry of our Information Technology Program, took place at the Shadow Lakes Golf Club in Brentwood and attracted 30 participants.

To find out more about our Contra Costa Health Plan, visit www.cchealth.org/health_plan/.

New Health Column Discusses Risks of Eye Floaters

Eye floaters—those pesky things that glide through the eye and cast shadows on our vision—are nothing to worry about, says our ophthalmologist Dr. Kevin Beadles in a recent Healthy Outlook column. They’re exceedingly common, and unless you notice a sudden change—in shape or frequency—your best bet is to learn to live with them. Many things, like trauma and eye surgery, can bring about eye floaters, but usually they appear with age, according to Dr. Beadles. Any changes in normal floater activity could be an early sign of retinal detachment, he writes, so it’s best to contact your health care provider if you notice anything different.

To read more of this and other Healthy Outlook columns, visit www.cchealth.org/topics/column/ To suggest an idea for the column, contact Dr. David Pepper at theairdoctor@gmail.com
Thelma Bentley  
Joanna Fon  
Medical Staff Coordinator  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center

Sue Crosby  
Director Public Health Clinic Services

Pat Hill, FNP  
Public Health

Laura Miller, FNP  
Richmond Health Center

For helping me navigate the credentialing process and meet a very short deadline.

◆ Nominated by Teresa Holbrook

Brenda Duncan  
Greg Garcia  
Roz Miller-Boyd  
Yvette Mosbarger  
Yolanda Ramirez  
Information Systems Assistant II  
Information Technology

For scanning an estimated 500,000 contract/grant documents over the last year and a half and for dealing with complex documents and many changes with a positive attitude. The Contracts and Grants Unit appreciates all of their hard work.

◆ Nominated by Tasha Scott

Karen Sandri  
Physical Therapist II  
California Children’s Services

For serving her clients with excellence, treating them as family, for always being willing to help her co-workers and going above and beyond with every client she treats.

◆ Nominated by Elizabeth Diaz, Jackie Guzman and Janice Wheelihan

Nalini Singh  
Authorization Representative  
Contra Costa Health Plan

For helping me on two occasions to find a pharmacy close to my home that accepts my health insurance and for her hard work, dedication and follow through.

◆ Nominated by a patient’s family

Maggie Rodriguez, LVN  
Concord Health Center

For her willingness to always offer your assistance to other nurses and for helping patients access care as quickly as possible.

◆ Nominated by Shannin Wright

Do you know someone who’s going the extra mile?

Service Excellence nomination forms are available at http://www.cchealth.org/groups/health_services/excellence.php and isite from any cchs computer.
Frost Named EMS Director

It’s official: Pat Frost is the new Director of our Emergency Medical Services Division. Pat has served as the Acting EMS Director since March, when former Director Art Lathrop retired. She brings more than 30 years of experience as a pediatric/neonatal critical care nurse, educator, quality improvement coordinator and nurse practitioner. Since joining EMS in 2006, Pat has helped build and coordinate the county’s Prehospital Quality Improvement Program, STEMI System, develop a pediatric surge plan and much more. Health Services Director Dr. William Walker said Pat was selected for her extensive knowledge in EMS policies, procedures and protocols. In this new role, Pat said she looks forward to strengthening the EMS community and ensuring quality prehospital care for all.

Guerra Retires After 20 Years

Emergency Preparedness Manager Dan Guerra will retire this month after 20 years with Health Services. Dan was recruited as Environmental Health Deputy Director in 1991, after helping San Joaquin County win the coveted Crumbine Award. In 1997, Dan became the Emergency Preparedness Manager, where he worked as facilitator and self-described cheerleader of our department-wide preparedness efforts. He helped implement communications modules, prepare hospitals and health care providers, and design the Department Operations Center, among other things. EMS Director Patricia Frost said Dan has been pivotal in engaging the hospital community in disaster preparedness.

June Milestones

Congratulations to these employees who have given us long years of service: Kimberley A. Haglund, Elise A. Lewis, Ann B. Lockhart, Rajiv Pramanik, Heather G. Cedermaz (10 years); Debra Fernandez, Lolita Angeles, Esther Luna, Rosa Magana, Luz-Elena Onate, Marina J. Yuen, Joe Ann Hampton-Jarvis, Sandra M. Magana, Michele Y. Simes, Teresa Madrigal, Mary A. Aldrich, Patricia Munoz-Zuniga (15 years); Prescilla M. Manglinong, Alyce M. Nash, Christopher Farnitano, Jeremy M. Fish, David N. Goldstein, Eva R. Lopez (20 years); Christina M. Berger, Adelina S. Pilarski, Annie P. Salas (25 years); Waynette D. Jeffrey-Henry and Lori L. Barnett (30 years).

Todd Chamberlin
Medical Records Technician

Tony Magana
Clerk—Senior Level

Anna Williams
Senior Medical Records Technician
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center

For their rapid response to a leak at CCRMC. Their quick thinking and action prevented damage to important records.

◆ Nominated by Donna Page

June Milestones

You are a GEM for Going the Extra Mile

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Medical Records Technician

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