Summer Doldrums – Not This Year

Summer is usually a time when many of us take vacations for rest and rejuvenation in preparation for a busy fall. This year we are not able to slow our pace in the midst of a flurry of activities that are moving us toward a transformed health system.

This summer is different for several reasons. For the first time in recent years, we have a finalized state budget in July. There may be revisions made to the state budget mid-year that will hurt us, but we move forward for now somewhat relieved. Our transformation activities are mostly fueled with federal revenues, which ease the impact of the state budget on our system. In addition to the timely passage of a state budget, we are engaged in multiple innovative, transformational projects.

July has already started to heat up with many projects underway such as:

- We are fully engaged with preparation for implementation of electronic health records (EHR) in July 2012 (see story on Page 3).
- We are participating in many quality improvement projects through kaizen events and most recently, a team completed value-stream mapping to assess and ultimately improve how our patients access appointments through our Appointment Scheduling Unit.
- We are completing the second month of moving seniors and persons with disabilities (SPDs) into Contra Costa Health Plan’s managed care.
- We are improving access by adding more clinic hours with more providers.
- We have multiple capital projects underway including the West County Health Center in San Pablo, mental health/primary care facility in Martinez, addition of primary care to the mental health clinic in Concord, and expansion of several existing health centers.
- We are continuing the integration of our Homeless Program, Alcohol & Other Drugs Services and Mental Health Services.
- We are reassessing emergency medical services in West County to deal with a possible crisis of access given the uncertainty of Doctors Medical Center’s future (see report: www.cchealth.org/press_releases/2011_07_dmc_closure.php).

DID YOU KNOW?

With new federal funding, we’ll be able to serve 5,000 children with our mobile health clinics at schools (see story Page 3).
- We applied for and are awaiting results of the CDC’s Community Transformation Grants (CTGs).
- We are working with many partners, stakeholders and community-based organizations on myriad community health projects.
- We are fully implementing the Low Income Health Program (LIHP) to enroll low-income uninsured residents.
- We were approved for federal funding to add two new mobile health vans (see story Page 3).

This is just a glimpse of the multitude of activities moving us toward a transformed health system. More importantly, this work carries out our vision to provide access to lower cost, high quality, comprehensive, integrated health care while promoting prevention and community interventions that lead to healthier communities. Our model is a local version of the national vision outlined in the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

My hope is that our efforts will be sustained and not undone by the politics of finance at the federal level. We are re-envisioning how we deliver health care in partnership with our patients and the communities we serve. As we formulate our new vision, I encourage each of you to share your creativity and passion and take time to enjoy your contribution. Despite all the financial woes around us, this is a historical moment to witness rapid, positive change in ways that help us fulfill our mission to care for and improve the health of all people in Contra Costa County with special attention to those who are most vulnerable to health problems.

A multitude of projects implemented simultaneously can feel overwhelming and can certainly test our fortitude. We must stay focused on our patients and the communities we serve. I am grateful for the energy, passion and commitment that I see among all of you during these stressful times. As your leader, I personally thank each of you. Have a good remainder of the summer and be ready for a stimulating and vigorous fall.

Sincerely,

William Walker, M.D.

Communicate with CEI

Ever wonder who puts this newsletter together each month? Or who manages our website and social media tools, creates health promotion materials and brochures and communicates with policymakers, our partners and the media to ensure that the public knows about our programs and services along with critical health information in emergencies? That would be our communications unit, Community Education & Information (CEI), located at 597 Center Avenue, #255 in Martinez. CEI is responsible for managing department-wide internal and external communication, including the use of CCHS logos and branding. If you have questions or have a program or event you’d like to highlight in the Director’s Report, online or with the media, contact our Communications Officer Kate Fowlie at kate.fowlie@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-313-6268. The next Director’s Report will be the September issue. The deadline is August 19. The Director’s Report is available online at www.cchealth.org/topics/publications/ and on iSite at http://cchs/ – WW

Health Services has 2,000+ Twitter followers!

Follow @CoCoHealth on Twitter for the latest health information in Contra Costa County.
Employees Pack Meetings to Learn About Proposed Electronic Health Records

Four full-house meetings in June unveiled to hundreds of employees what will be coming a year from now with electronic health records. Our Hospital and Health Centers Chief Medical Informatics Officer Dr. Rajiv Pramanik and other Health Services staff joined Epic employees to talk about electronic health records and give a live demonstration of the software. There’s still much to be done before the planned system-wide launch in July 2012. This month, the Epic Core Team will wrap up site visits and begin working on validation sessions. Dr. Pramanik said the validation sessions provide an opportunity to ensure best practice workflows, generated from Epic’s vast installation base, works for our patients and staff. The Team is also working on a set of frequently asked questions, which is expected to be posted to the Epic isite page later this month. Also on isite are video clips from the kick-off events and Dr. Pramanik’s presentation.

To find out more about the Epic ehr project, visit isite or contact Dr. Pramanik at rajiv.pramanik@hsd.cccounty.us

Clinic Services Adds Two Mobile Clinics with Help from Affordable Care Act

Our mobile clinics will roll into more schools and serve more children than ever before thanks to a grant from the Affordable Care Act. Our Public Health Division’s Clinic Services Program received $498,524 to add two mobile health vans to its current fleet of four. Clinic Services Director Susan Crosby said the new vans will serve an additional 1,950 schoolchildren per year. She said the aim is to keep kids healthy so they can stay in school. The 44-foot-long vans offer health screenings, health promotion and disease prevention activities. They are expected to be up and running next year.

For more information, contact Susan Crosby at sue.crosby@hsd.cccounty.us or visit our Facebook page to view coverage.
Health Centers, Public Health Make Push to Vaccinate Schoolchildren Before Fall

Driven by the possibility of not being allowed in school next year—and with help from our Public Health Division and Contra Costa Health Plan—schoolchildren are getting their whooping cough vaccination. A new state law, which took effect July 1, requires all students entering seventh-through 12th-grade to show proof they received a whooping cough booster—called Tdap—since their 7th birthday. At the end of June, more than 3,000 youths ages 10 to 19 years had received a free vaccine from our Public Health Division or Health Centers. In addition, more than 300 Health Plan members received free Tdap vaccine from Rite-Aid and Walgreens. Immunization Coordinator Paul Leung estimated the new requirements affect 100,000 youths in Contra Costa, but said about half already had the booster before the law took effect. In addition to its regular Immunization Clinics, our Public Health Division has ongoing clinics through August.

To find out more about the law or to find a clinic near you, visit www.cchealth.org/topics/pertussis/ or call 925-313-6767.

Training Outlines Roles, Responsibilities of Staff at Safely Surrendered Baby Sites

People who work at sites where parents can safely surrender their baby are set to receive standardized training for the first time since the law was enacted here. Our Public Health and Emergency Medical Services Divisions worked with Contra Costa Children and Family Services (CFS) to develop a curriculum for all Safely Surrendered Baby sites in Contra Costa. Rachel Foster of CFS said it has never been clear how training should happen on an ongoing basis. The Safely Surrendered Baby law went into effect here in 2003. Our EMS Director Pat Frost said “The Safely Surrendered Baby Law: Training for Emergency Personnel” curriculum is the first standardized course to help staff reliably manage a surrendered baby situation. Padmini Parthasarathy of our Public Health Division’s Family, Maternal and Child Health Program, said staff aren’t always clear about their responsibilities. This resource, she said, details how the law works in Contra Costa and what is expected of site staff.

To view the curriculum, visit www.cchealth.org/topics/baby_safe/ For more information about the law in Contra Costa, call 925-313-6254.

Health Plan Improves Service on Medi-Cal Managed Care Plan

The state recently recognized the hard work of our Contra Costa Health Plan’s Member Services Department with the Most Improved Quality Award for our Medi-Cal Managed Care Plan. In May, Health Plan CEO Patricia Tanquary was in Sacramento to accept the award from the state Department of Health Care Services. The award was based upon the most improved service and support in 2010 to Medi-Cal Managed Care Plan members. It was awarded for the plan’s achievement of innovation, quality and timeliness of grievances, achieved under the leadership of Marketing and Member Services Manager Arleen Stanton. Patricia said the award is tangible evidence of our Health Plan’s culture of caring. Congratulations to our Health Plan on their marked improvements!

To find out more about our Contra Costa Health Plan, visit www.cchealth.org/health_plan/ or call 925-313-6004.
Health Services Celebrates Pride Month with Education, Awareness Workshop
At an education and awareness workshop in June, more than 50 employees learned ways to improve care for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. Participants of the PRIDE event learned about sensitivity, available resources and new standards to reduce health care disparities. The workshop included many speakers, including a transgender man, a bisexual woman and a lesbian mother. Agency representatives also presented about services available to LGBT youths. One agency said that up to 40% of homeless youths in the United States identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Health Services Director and Keynote Speaker Dr. William Walker encouraged LGBT advocates to promote full implementation of a new Joint Commission Requirement in our own health system. The requirement says that a hospital must respect, protect and promote patient rights, as well as prohibit discrimination based on age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression. Members of the Health Services PRIDE Initiative committee were recognized for their development of promotion materials, including a non-discrimination poster and flyer, a story booklet and an LGBT resource brochure, which will be distributed throughout the department.

Community Baby Shower Aims to Improve African American Birth Outcomes
It was a baby shower unlike any other. More than 125 families packed Richmond’s Nevin Community Center in May to learn to improve birth outcomes and facilitate innovative change in their environments. In Contra Costa, African Americans experience the highest rates of fetal and infant deaths. The African American Community Baby Shower, sponsored by our African American Health Initiative, Opportunity West and the City of Richmond, was a tremendous success. The event featured workshops and resources covering a range of topics, including nutrition and physical activity, having a healthy baby, fetal and infant mortality and men’s involvement. Suzzette Johnson of our Family, Maternal and Child Health Programs proclaimed the event helped foster partnerships with the community, build trust and improve the relationship between Health Services and the African American Community. A second African American Community Baby Shower is being planned.

To find out about the next African American Community Baby Shower contact Suzzette Johnson at suzzette.johnson@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-313-6258 or the African American Health Initiative, contact Dawna Vann at dawna.vann@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-957-5436.
Volunteers, Service Providers Connect with Hundreds at One-Day Homeless Event

Once again, our Homeless Program served hundreds of people in a single day to help them find a home and become self-sufficient. A record 844 people attended Project Homeless Connect 7 at the Richmond Memorial Auditorium. The annual event is a one-day, one-stop shop that combines health and social services. This time, the event included Clean Slate Clinic, a way for people with criminal records to obtain their record of arrest and prosecution sheet, get screening, intake and counseling, as well as legal information on housing, background check and employment. More than 90 convictions were dismissed for the 40 people attending homeless court. Earlier this year, our Homeless Program tallied 4,274 sheltered and unsheltered homeless people in Contra Costa. Acting Homeless Program Director Lavonna Martin said while the tally points to a need for continued outreach and services, it was encouraging to see a large turnout at the Richmond event. She noted that two-thirds of this year’s attendees were identified as newly homeless or at risk of being homeless.

To find out more about homeless services, visit www.cchealth.org/services/homeless or call 925-313-6124.

Take CCHS Apps on the Go with Android, Apple Devices

Looking for a co-worker’s phone number? There’s an app for that. And if you need to update our Incident Response Information System (IRIS) from the field, there’s an app for that, too. Building upon the popularity of mobile applications—or apps, as they’re called—our Information Technology Unit is retooling some of Health Services’ core programs to work with mobile devices powered by the iOS and Android operating systems. IT Supervisor Mike Dickson said mobile apps enable employees to access information and do tasks while they are away from their desks. Appropriate security is in place to ensure privileged information is not released to the public.

To download these apps, visit www.bit.ly/CCHSApps on an iOS or Android device. For more information about the apps, contact Mike Dickson at mike.dickson@hsd.cccounty.us.
**Thelma Bentley**  
Medical Staff Coordinator  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center  
For being efficient, obtaining signatures in just one day to expedite the privileging process for a doctor and for always being friendly, helpful and responding to questions.  
♦ Nominated by Elizabeth Bierer and Marisha Chilcott

**Advice Nurse Unit**  
Contra Costa Health Plan  
For being competent, sympathetic and caring, for helping me obtain urgent care appointments as needed, for excellent customer service and follow-up and for making me feel that they cared about me.  
♦ Nominated by a patient

**Travis Fry**  
Student Worker – Deep Class  
Public Health  
For his outstanding efforts in helping to create systems to organize supplies and equipment for the Health Emergency Response and Immunization Units and for helping to further our emergency preparedness efforts.  
♦ Nominated by Kim Cox

**Thelma Bentley**  
Medical Staff Coordinator  
Doris Bonner, RN  
Kim Neal  
Director of Health Information Management  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center  
For coordinating the process for my surgery board application within a tight deadline.  
♦ Nominated by Dino Elyassnia

**Julia Machado**  
Supervising Clinical Laboratory Scientist  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center  
For computerizing a manual reporting process that resulted in enhanced patient care and physician productivity.  
♦ Nominated by Jamie Pehling

**Marcelle Indelicato**  
Senior Emergency Planner  
Office of the Sheriff  
For skillfully orienting us to the Emergency Operations Center, guiding us in our Med/Health Liaison role, and consistently making herself available for questions, concerns and troubleshooting.  
♦ Nominated by Barbara Sheehy, Wanda Session, Lorena Martinez-Ochoa, Connie James and Jackie Peterson

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*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](http://www.cchealth.org/groups/health_services/excellence.php) and isite from any cchs computer.
Mental Health Consumer Concerns Recognizes Mental Health Employees

Four co-workers were lauded for their dedication and work at the Mental Health Consumer Concerns 35th anniversary. Mental Health Specialist II Anna Lubarov took home the Howie the Harp Award; Program Manager John Allen was named mental health provider of the year; Community Support Worker Shane Barnes was named consumer provider of the year; and our Older Adult Program, designed by Program Manager Cesar Court, was named mental health program of the year. Mental Health Consumer Concerns is a nonprofit organization that works with the Office of Consumer Empowerment in our Mental Health Division to ensure consumers and family members have access to mental health services and care.

Longtime AODS Staffer Retires

Bob Kajdan, a driving force behind our NEW Discovery House, will retire at the end of August after 21 years with our Alcohol and Other Drugs Services. Bob was intimately involved with the planning of the construction of Discovery House, which is considered an architectural model program for residential treatment of alcoholics and addicts. During his time with Health Services, Bob was also a consultant and trainer. For many years, he managed the Parolee Services Network and was a liaison to mental health, the courts and parole offices.

July Milestones

Congratulations to these employees who have given us long years of service: Mary A. Holzapfel, Farifteh Molaparast, Jennifer Love, Tracy A. Hudson, Christopher M. Keaveny, Lynnette Krebs, Otilia Tiutin, Carol Armenta, Anicia Maribel M. Rickard (10 years); Eileen H. Brooks, Frenda Y. K. Chan, Davida McEachnie, Robert E. Jones, Victoria Perry, Pamela Weary, Susan N. Smith, (15 years); Maria R. Ferrer, Diane A. Gale, Peggy A. Stanton, Heidi A. Asao, Mary E. Kooymen, Wendy D. Mailer, Angela M. Roche (20 years); Maiyoon Chao, Faiza Isaaq, Dolcie L. Wilks (25 years); James Carpenter, David Suchow and David S. Hill (30 years).

August Milestones

Congratulations to these employees who have given us long years of service: Trishia K. Maruri, Alycia D. Rubio, Elizabeth A. Topete, Cheryl Bryan, Herolinda Z. Gonzalez, Maria R. Togonon, Susan M. Cianciarulo, Philip H. Hom, Katie M. Mitchell, Maria E. Soto, Buck D. Stealman, Sylvia Taqi-Eddin, Michelle L. Edwards, Micheal D. Pereira, Nadia Arias, Shawn D. Frison, Harbinder Kaur, Glen A. Stewart, Denise L. Stevenson, Maritess C. Rayrao (10 years); Yasmin P. Lavaly, Kenneth A. Katzman, Rachel Salumbides-Deguzman, Catherine L. Kissinger, Joanne B. Genet, Fatmata Longstreth, Brenda J. Parker (15 years); Ronald Power, Nestor Y. Millado, Renee M. De Leon, Rosemarie R. Garcia, Carol D. Raymond, Elena O’Mary, Connie W. Ward (20 years); Gilbert Elies (30 years); and Eugenia A. Detomasi (35 years).