

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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Keeping Focused on the Positive

As we approach this season of Thanksgiving there are many issues in the news that can distract us from being thankful, but we must remain focused.

Though Covered California has experienced issues with its enrollment software, the report released this month indicates that the pace of enrollment and the number of folks trained to help individuals enroll are increasing. Instead of focusing on the struggles of implementing this monumental change, we can look to the positive impact the Affordable Care Act (ACA) will have on the health of our communities. I remain confident that in time we will see improvements in the health of our community as a result of ACA implementation.



William B. Walker, MD
CCHS Director

Suburban Poverty in East County

During this time of year, our thoughts turn increasing to those who are less fortunate. We know that there is a direct correlation between poverty and health status. There are many contributing factors to health, including lack of access to healthy foods, safe places to exercise and unhealthy behaviors such as tobacco consumption. And we also know that place matters—community environments have a strong impact on the health status of residents. As we look at our own county, we tend to think of poverty in our urban cities. We are now seeing a significant shift in the suburbs of Antioch, Pittsburg and other parts of East County. This is due in part to the housing boom and subsequent housing burst.

My first job with Health Services in 1974 was to provide health care in a one room clinic in Oakley where the majority of my patients were agricultural workers. Today, there are far fewer farms and many more single and multifamily homes. Many have been vacated by those who have been impacted by the economic recession and the result is a significant increase in suburban poverty.

East Contra Costa is highlighted as an example of this in the book, "Confronting Suburban Poverty in America" by Elizabeth Kneebone and Alan Berube with the Metropolitan Policy Program of the Brookings Institution, a nonprofit public policy organization based in Washington, DC. East County is described on the book's website as "the unofficial foreclosure capital of the Bay Area" with challenges that "far outstrip the capacity of a strained local public sector...and overwhelmed the extremely thin nonprofit safety net." It also notes that compounding the problem, East Contra Costa County "lacked

proximity and transportation options that might help their residents access needed services.”

Partnering with Community-Based Organizations

Public health and health care providers know that the health effects caused by suburban poverty are best addressed when communities work in partnership with cities, counties and other community based organizations (CBOs). We have seen great success in West County where for several decades the County, cities, funders and a significant number of CBOs have worked together to address poverty and other health disparities. East County’s CBO infrastructure needs support to expand in order to help communities address the needs of those living in poverty and this is due in part to the rapid growth and changing needs of the communities.

The Community Wellness and Prevention Program in our Public Health Division organized visits to suburban areas in East County for funders and other stakeholders and shared a data report emphasizing the many health disparities that folks living in this area are now experiencing (see separate story on page 4). We hope that bringing attention to the issues will foster the growth of existing organizations

and the development of new CBOs that the County, cities, funders and existing CBOs can partner with to address the disparities.

A Season of Giving

There is something that each of us can do to contribute to our communities. We can support the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano, which supplies food to families in need throughout the year and especially during this holiday season. I know many of you gave to a charity of your choice through the Combined Charities Campaign last month. We can help individuals and families who are suffering through our financial giving or donation of our time through the many volunteer organizations in our county. Let’s also remember the victims of typhoon Hayan in the Philippines.

May you all enjoy the Thanksgiving season with family and friends. I am thankful for all of you and what you do to improve the health of Contra Costa residents.

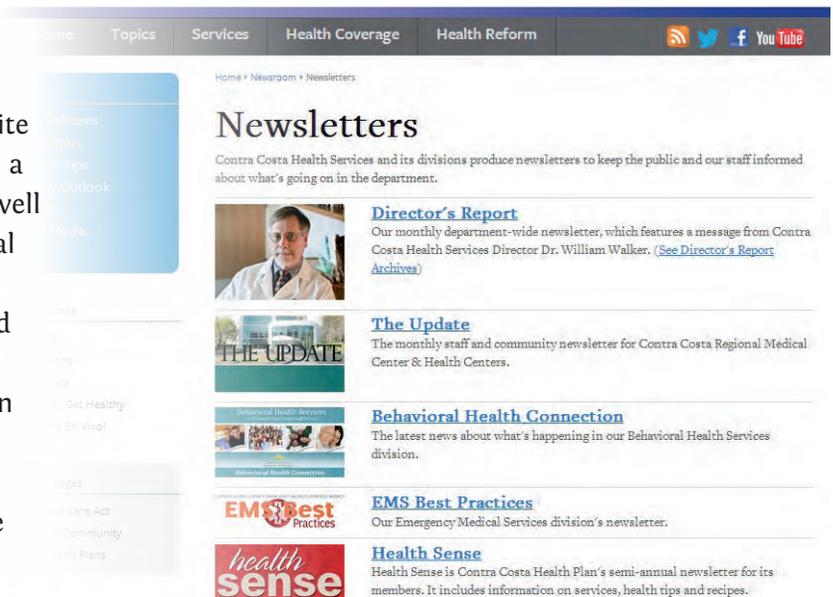
Sincerely,



William B. Walker, M.D.

Have You Got the Scoop?

You can now access news from all over Contra Costa Health Services in one place on our website by visiting cchealth.org/newsletters. The page is a one-stop shop to read the Director’s Report as well as division newsletters produced by the Regional Medical Center & Health Centers, Emergency Medical Services, Behavioral Health Services and the Health Plan. The web page was designed by our communications unit, Community Education & Information which oversees our website and production of CCHS newsletters such as the Director’s Report, can also be accessed from the News tab on iSITE.



The next Director’s Report will be the December issue. Publicize your upcoming events and successes by sending information by November 28 to Kate Fowlie at 597 Center Avenue, Suite 255, Martinez 94553, fax 925-313-6219, or email kate.fowlie@hsd.cccounty.us. The Director’s Report is available online at <http://cchealth.org/topics/publications/> and on iSITE at <http://cchs/>

Environmental Health Using Mobile Devices for Food Facility Inspection Reports

Environmental Health inspectors are now using electronic tools in the field to improve efficiency and standardize the reports they generate daily while regulating thousands of commercial food facilities in Contra Costa County. Beginning in October, staff began bringing tablet computers and mobile internet hotspots to their inspections, giving them fast access to records and new templates for reports. Once inspectors are accustomed to the new system, these changes have the potential to greatly reduce the time needed to complete their paperwork. The change also saves paper, as email is now the primary conduit for food facilities to receive inspection reports and other paperwork. “It’s a clear benefit to the public,” Environmental Health Specialist Steven Wharton said. “As we grow accustomed to the process, it will take less time to complete an inspection.” Environmental Health worked with CCHS Information Technology to customize the software for use with most facilities it inspects, with additional work in progress to include certain outliers, including mobile food vendors.



Environmental Health Specialist Steven Wharton enters inspection results into a tablet computer while in the kitchen of a local school cafeteria.

Social Media at CCHS

Social media like Facebook and Twitter are powerful communication tools that can help us connect with those we serve. Contra Costa Health Services uses Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and more to communicate important information about health issues and our services (see our social media page: cchealth.org/socialmedia). Health Services has a social media policy, and CCHS programs interested in using social media to present information about a program or Division, convey a CCHS message or augment a communication campaign in an official capacity should contact our departmental communications unit for guidelines on setting up these tools and their use.



For more information, please contact CCHS Communications Officer Kate Fowlie at kate.fowlie@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-370-5224 or visit iSITE to see Policy 110-A—Dissemination of Information (including Patient Information) to the Public and Media.

IT Mobile Device Fair a Big Hit

IT staff Lee Schugar (blue shirt), Ashley Taylor and Timothy Speakman (purple shirt) helped nearly 40 employees with installation of CCHS apps and other services during a mobile device fair November 14 in the lobby of our Regional Medical Center. Because of high interest in the services, another event may be planned for December so stay tuned for future announcements.



Health Services Seeking Partners to Reduce Health Impacts of Suburban Poverty in East County

Our Community Wellness & Prevention Program (CW&PP) is reaching out to foundations and partners for ways to address suburban poverty issues in East Contra Costa County highlighted in a report our Public Health Division published earlier this year, “Health Indicators and Environmental Factors Related to Obesity for Antioch, Bay Point and Pittsburg.” A steering committee, consisting of local and regional community organizations and staff from the City of Pittsburg and Supervisor Federal Glover’s office, provided guidance in writing the report, which was partially funded by Kaiser Permanente. The report shows that population rates in these communities are climbing at a faster rate than the rest of the county, and that these communities are also experiencing higher-than-average rates of poverty, violent crime, foreclosures, premature deaths from chronic diseases and childhood obesity. CW&PP and the Epidemiology, Planning and Evaluation unit are taking partners to visit the region to raise awareness about the need to combat growing health disparities there. CW&PP also



CW&PP Director Tracey Rattray holds a map while a local farmer points out agricultural zones to visitors from Kaiser. Preserving farmland in East County is important to maintaining a sustainable food supply.

is working with the steering committee to establish a project in Pittsburg focused on healthy eating and active living, as well as to attract partners and funders to address the health impacts of suburban poverty in the region as a whole. More than 50 people participated in tours in October, visiting industrial sites, schools, community organizations, parks, farms, churches and downtown areas.

To learn more about CW&PP’s efforts in East County, visit cchealth.org/healthylivablepittsburg or call Tracey Rattray at (925) 313-6835.

Board of Supervisors Recognizes Food Day, Need for Food Equality

Recognizing the link between availability of nutritious food and chronic diseases in Contra Costa County, the Board of Supervisors approved a resolution from our Community Wellness & Prevention Program (CW&PP) recognizing national Food Day on Oct. 24. High rates of heart disease, stroke, some forms of cancer and obesity are associated with food insecurity and other factors, not just in Contra Costa but across the nation. Food Day is part of a national grassroots campaign to promote healthy, affordable and sustainable food options for everyone and raise awareness about risks associated with unhealthy diets. CW&PP works to encourage healthy eating through the WIC program, health education in the community and schools, partnerships with youth-serving and faith organizations, campaigns to reduce consumption of soda and other sugary drinks and installation of water fountains in low-income community settings.



CCHS staff with the Board of Supervisors



Members of the HazMat Incident Response Team practiced critical skills at the annual Urban Shield regional exercises.



A county employee receives a flu vaccine at Vista Oaks Occupational Medicine.

CCHS Staffers Prepare for the Worst at Urban Shield Disaster Drill

Our Hazardous Materials Response Team showed strong again at the annual Urban Shield regional exercises on Oct. 26 and 27, earning a second- and third-place overall finishes during two days of disaster exercises intended to test the preparedness and capabilities of first responders in the event of a large-scale emergency. Our team did finish with the highest two-day score at the event, which Alameda County hosted. Top prize, which Contra Costa earned in 2012, went to the Idaho Civil Support Team this year. Meanwhile in Martinez, our staff from Emergency Medical Services, Public Health and the Community Education & Information Unit participated in a Bay Area UASI mass casualty exercise in Martinez, working with representatives from several Bay Area counties on a coordinated response to a faux train collision. The Contra Costa Coroner's Office led a demonstration of a Portable Field Morgue in the Public Works parking lot on Glacier Drive, while the EOC served as communications hub for response to the incident and coordination of mutual aid. These annual exercises provide an objective assessment of our collective capabilities to aid the public in the face of terrorist attacks and large-scale disaster, identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

Don't Delay Getting Your Flu Shot

The holiday season has arrived and so has the flu season. Before November ends, many of us will be crowding shopping malls for holiday shopping, hosting friends and relatives in our homes, or boarding airplanes to travel. Before life gets really busy—both at home and at work—get your flu vaccine. There's no better protection for you, your co-workers, family and community than getting vaccinated. Every year, influenza accounts for an estimated 150,000 hospitalizations and 24,000 deaths in the United States. This season's flu vaccine provides protection from up to four flu strains, including H1N1 (swine flu). Contra Costa County employees can get vaccinated from their regular health care provider or at Vista Oaks Occupational Medicine, 10 Douglas Drive, Suite 110 in Martinez, on Fridays from 8:00 AM to 11:30 AM. No appointment is necessary, but employees should request time off from their supervisor. There is no charge for employees with the Contra Costa Health Plan. For employees with other health insurance, flu shots are \$25. CCHS health care workers who are required to be vaccinated can still get their shot for free.

For more information on the flu and prevention, visit the Health Services website: cchealth.org/flu.

Raising Awareness about Prescription Drug Abuse and Disposal

The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors formally recognized October as National Medicine Abuse Awareness Month, thanks in part to the awareness-raising work of the Contra Costa Pharmaceutical Collaborative, which includes several Health Services programs. Misuse of prescription drugs is one of the fastest-growing forms of drug abuse in the nation, and the collaborative is getting the word out about the danger of abuse, common ways that medicine can fall into the wrong hands, and the need for proper disposal of prescription drugs when they are no longer needed. Supervisor Mary Nejedly Piepho introduced a proclamation recognizing the month in Contra Costa County at the Oct. 22 meeting. The collaborative includes CHS' Environmental Health Division, Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Commission, Contra Costa Public and Environmental Health Advisory Board, Contra Costa Alcohol and Other Drugs Advisory Board, Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority, Contra Costa County Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Coalition, Delta Diablo Sanitation District, the National Coalition Against Prescription Drug Abuse, and West Contra Costa Integrated Waste Management Authority.



CCHS staff and other members of the Contra Costa Pharmaceutical Collaborative with Supervisor Piepho



(Left to right) CCHS Director Dr. William Walker, Assemblywoman Susan Bonilla, Supervisor Karen Mitchoff, Dr. Chris Farnitano, patient Tim Tarman, Amy Peake, Congressman George Miller's Office.

Concord Health Center Building 2 Open House

We celebrated the expansion of our Concord Health Center Building 2 with an open house on November 18. CHC2 is an example of health care reform at the local level and an innovative transformation effort that integrates behavioral and physical health care into one location at the center.



(Left to right) Matthew Luu, MH Program Supervisor; Alvin Silva, Nurse Program Manager, Health Care for the Homeless, and Arturo Castillo, Program Manager, Homeless Program, at the open house.

For more information, visit <http://cchealth.org/press-releases/2013/1118-concord-health-center.php> and for more pictures, visit our Facebook page.



Tami Rennaker, RN

Inpatient Breastfeeding Task Force

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For their efforts during World Breastfeeding Week to promote and showcase the work being done to improve patients' breastfeeding experience at CCRMC, as well as the incredible dedication and commitment they demonstrate every day by providing high quality breastfeeding support to our families.

◆ Nominated by Francine Jolton

Beverly Bradley

Account Clerk—Advanced Level

Public Health

For her professionalism and for going beyond the call of duty to perform her job.

◆ Nominated by Shenna Madison



**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 (www.cchealth.org on About Us page) or iSITE, our intranet, at <http://cchs/> Nominations are subject to approval by Division Directors.

Paul Kwok, MD

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For providing a calming and empathetic presence to our family when an emergency C-section had to be performed. For staying by our side during the process and for going above and beyond.

◆ Nominated by a patient

Natalie Aguilar

Stephanie Serrano

Eligibility Work Specialists

California Children's Services

"Thanks for all you do! You have all helped me so much. Not enough thanks in the universe could be sent to you." *(Parent)*

For going that extra mile to guide parents or caregivers of our special needs children through the maze of CCS financial eligibility. For Your patience, courtesy and professionalism and for making the process easier for our CCS families and staff. *(Management Team)*

◆ Nominated by a client's family and by the CCS Management Team

Service Excellence

You are a GEM for Going the Extra Mile



Raz Moghbel

Acting WIC Director
Public Health

For her thoughtful and professional dedication to our program, which has encouraged her support staff to set new standards of excellence in our work and services to the community. For her ability to bring out the best in the people around her by mentoring and empowering us to excel in all that we do.

◆ Nominated by Patricia Richards

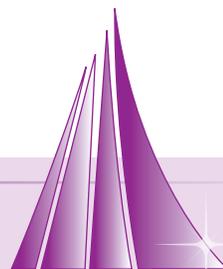
Benita Smith

Clerk—Senior Level
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For actively managing external and internal referrals and going above and beyond to connect patients to the services they need.

◆ Nominated by Ori Tzvieli

NOVEMBER MILESTONES



Congratulations to these employees who have given us long years of service:

Diana L. Van Name, Jo Anne M. Garrett, Lyndsey A. Silva, Harjinder K. Dhanoa, Lindy L. Tallman, Gwendolyn Wright-McClendon, Maria J.V. Belaro (10 years); Patrick J. Maher, Jeffrey R. Boatright, Angela C. Guerra, Willie B. Coleman, Denice A. Dennis, Angela M. Bennett, April N. Littleton (15 years); Guy M. Hardman, Karl K. Norwood, Toni K. McDonald, Yong Lee, Anne O. Lisenko, Judith A. Smith (20 years); Phyllis A. Mace, Livier A. Gonzalez, Cynthia A. Hellman-Wylie, Kalpana D. Ghiya, Tamera S. Rennaker (25 years); Margaret A. Harris, Derrell A. McKinney, and Linda D. Hubbard (30 years).