

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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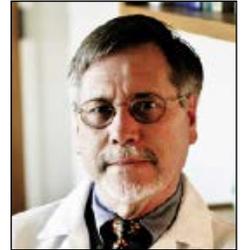
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Preparedness and Ebola

Recently, we have seen the first confirmed case of Ebola in the United States followed by the infection of two health care workers who helped provide care for that patient in a Texas hospital. The patient, who died last week, was infected in Liberia, one of the areas in West Africa where there is currently an Ebola outbreak.

Understandably, news of the first Ebola cases in the United States has created concern about the possibility of being exposed to the disease, particularly among those who work in healthcare settings. Ebola is spread through direct contact with the blood or other body fluids of a sick person, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

While the risk to people living and working here in Contra Costa County is currently very low, we must still be prepared to handle this or any other health emergency so we can protect the lives of the public, our patients and our staff. We've formed a department-wide Ebola Working Group to help coordinate our preparedness and response efforts, and I wanted to share with you some of the ways in which Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS) is preparing to handle Ebola should it appear in our county.



William B. Walker, MD
CCHS Director

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center & Health Centers

Our Contra Costa Regional Medical Center (CCRMC) & Health Centers is educating frontline providers and non-clinical staff on how to identify people at risk for Ebola using specified travel and symptom criteria. A team has been dedicated to following and evaluating the emerging guidance and recommendations, and training is ongoing for staff on the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Simulations and scenarios trainings to learn how to provide care to persons suspected or confirmed to have Ebola are also underway.

Alerts with travel screening questions have been posted at all potential patient entry points, as well as running on computer screensavers throughout health services and on electronic billboards in patient waiting areas in the health centers. Workflows are being developed to facilitate the transport of patients from our outpatient health centers to more appropriate healthcare settings if needed.

Local Public Health Role

Our Public Health Division is in regular contact with local hospitals and issued health alerts to providers, which include recommendations to establish a routine process to immediately ask any patient presenting with fever about their recent travel history, and to report suspected Ebola cases to Public Health for testing and surveillance purposes. Public Health also organized a conference call where representatives from

local hospitals shared information with CCHS about their plans for triage, screening, isolation, consultation with Public Health, and care should a person with Ebola arrive at their facility. Information for providers is also on our website, as well as links to the latest guidance from the CDC.

EMS, Dispatch, First Responders, Ambulances and Community Hospitals

Our Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division has been in contact with dispatch agencies, ambulance providers and community hospitals, and will be working with fire and law enforcement first responders, about steps they should use to detect, protect, isolate and treat any suspected Ebola patients. EMS is also working to ensure the transition of care from ambulances to hospitals goes smoothly and will be instituting a series of joint coordinated exercises with EMS System stakeholders to test response and build local capabilities.

Keeping Staff and Public Informed

Once again, I want to reiterate that the risk of exposure to Ebola in Contra Costa County is currently very low. However, we still must be ready for the worst while hoping for the best.

Part of that is providing the latest information possible to our staff, patients and community. CCRMC & HCs CEO Anna Roth and our Public Health Director, Dr. Wendel Brunner, will provide an update on preparedness efforts to the County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, Oct. 21. A video of the presentation will be available on the county website afterward.

There also is more information on what we're doing and links to updates and helpful resources available on [iSITE](#) or our [public website](#).

By being vigilant, we will be better prepared to care for and protect the public and healthcare providers, and contain the disease should the need arise.

Sincerely,



William B. Walker, M.D.

Health Care Workers Required to Get Flu Vaccination or Wear Masks

The flu season is fast approaching and now is a good time to get vaccinated—before we start to see the flu in our community. Though Ebola is dominating the news, influenza is a more common illness facing our community and can be serious and even deadly. Getting vaccinated is the best prevention against the flu and protects you, your family and those we serve. It's also required for health care workers in the county and has been since 2012. That's when, acting as the county's health officer, I issued an order requiring people working in licensed health care settings who have direct patient contact or work in patient care areas to get vaccinated.

That means staff and volunteers at Contra Costa Regional Medical Center (CCRMC) and our health centers, as well as Public Health and Behavioral Health employees, will need to get their vaccines before the start of the flu season, which spans from November 1 to March 31. Those who decline flu vaccine must wear a mask while in patient care settings.

The vaccination and masking requirement helps protect both patients and workers from the flu and reduce the spread of a serious illness in the community. Influenza is the eighth leading cause of death in the United States and each year, about 200,000 people are hospitalized with influenza.

I issued the order because voluntary influenza vaccination rates among health care workers were too low and patient safety was at stake.

For the first influenza season under the order, the 2012-13 season, many facilities in Contra Costa reported substantial improvements in vaccination coverage compared to the previous season. Multiple skilled nursing facilities reported that 99-100% of their employees were vaccinated. Five hospitals in Contra Costa County surpassed the Healthy People 2020 goal of 90% coverage for employees. This is a significant accomplishment, as only 50 (13%) acute care hospitals in the state achieved this goal.

This year, I've expanded the order so it now applies to employees of residential facilities for the elderly. This will add further protections for vulnerable members of our community.

There are plenty of opportunities for Contra Costa Health Services employees to get flu vaccine (see story on page 4). 781 know I will be getting my flu shot—just like I do every year.

—WW

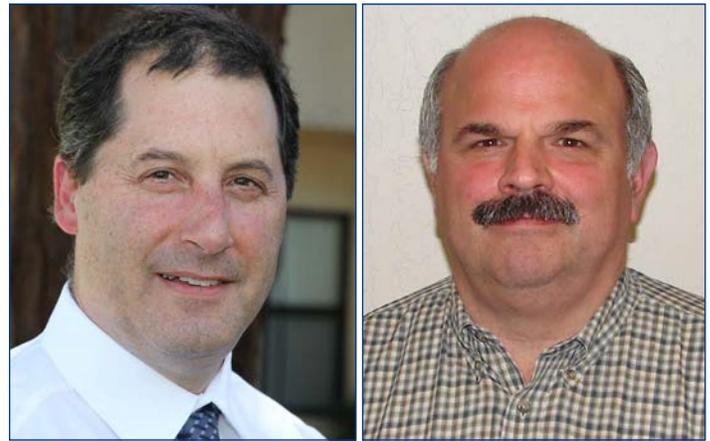


DMC management estimates that under the best-case scenario, the hospital will be able to stay open through the first quarter of 2015.

DMC Stakeholder Group Releases Interim Report

The Doctors Medical Center (DMC) stakeholder group released an interim report last month ruling out the possibility of preserving a full-service hospital at DMC. The group urged residents to unite behind alternative solutions to meet the medical needs of the region. Specifically, the group endorsed clinical, operational and financial evaluations of a satellite emergency department and an advanced 24-hour urgent care center. The DMC Stakeholder Group includes representatives from Doctors Medical Center, the West Contra Costa Healthcare District, Contra Costa Health Services, Contra Costa County government, the Hospital Council of Northern California, and area hospitals. The hospital, community owned by the West Contra Costa Healthcare District, has been working with its partners on strategies for closing an \$18 million annual operating deficit while maintaining its emergency, acute care and other healthcare services for West County residents. Hospital management estimates that under the best-case scenario, DMC has enough money available to stay open as a scaled-down full-service hospital only through the first quarter of 2015, according to the Stakeholder group interim report. The final report is expected later in the fall.

For more information, visit cchealth.org/dmc



Dr. David Goldstein (left) will succeed Dr. Joe Barger as medical director of EMS.

New Medical Director for EMS

Dr. David Goldstein will become the new Medical Director of Contra Costa Health Services' Emergency Medical Services Division (EMS) with a planned transition beginning November 1. As Chief Medical Officer for Contra Costa Regional Medical Center (CCRMC) and Health Centers since 2010, and as the former head of CCRMC's Emergency Department, Dr. Goldstein brings extensive leadership experience in the delivery system and a deep knowledge of emergency medicine to his new role. Dr. Goldstein earned his medical degree from UC Irvine and trained in the Family Practice Residency Program at CCRMC, where he has been a staff physician since graduating the program in 1994. He will be replacing Dr. Joe Barger, who retired as Contra Costa EMS Medical Director earlier this year. Dr. Goldstein will continue providing support to CCRMC during the recruitment process to fill the Chief Medical Officer position and Dr. Barger will continue to support EMS during this transition.

The next Director's Report will be the November issue. To publicize upcoming CCHS events and successes, contact Kate Fowlie at kate.fowlie@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-313-6636 by October 23. The Director's Report is available online at <http://cchealth.org/topics/publications/> and on site at <http://cchs/>

Hospital Leaders, Partners Showcase ‘Welcoming Policy’ for Supervisors

It has been a little more than a year since Contra Costa Regional Medical Center (CCRMC) eliminated its visiting-hour restrictions and instituted its “welcoming policy,” which recognized patients’ loved-ones as partners in care. During the welcoming policy’s first year, more than 7,500 people have been able to be with their loved ones after hours, CCRMC Chief Executive Officer Anna Roth told the Board of Supervisors during a presentation last month. Anna appeared before the board along with partners who helped shape and implement the policy: Teresa Pasquini, who provided a voice for family members of patients, and sheriff’s Lt. Jeff Moule, the hospital’s chief of security. Earlier this year, CCRMC was one of only 12 hospitals in the nation recognized by the Institute for Patient- and Family-Centered Care for supporting families as partners in care by eliminating restrictive visiting hours. Supervisor Candace Andersen described the policy as a “great benefit” to patients and staff. “I hope that other hospital communities are going to follow suit,” Andersen said. Later this month, CCRMC will officially introduce PassagePoint, which will allow loved-ones who come after-hours to check in electronically with a sheriff or ranger in the main lobby and by the Emergency Department. The new system also prints a self-expiring welcome badge with a loved-one’s photo on it.



Loved-ones or family members of patients who arrive after-hours at CCRMC will be electronically checked in by a ranger like Alana Rae Andrews starting later this month.

For more information about the welcoming policy, visit cchealth.org/medicalcenter

Flu Season: How CCHS Employees Can Get Vaccinated

Flu season will arrive shortly, and all Health Services employees involved in patient care must either receive a flu vaccine or wear a mask. Free vaccination is available to all employees affected by this requirement—check with your supervisor if you are not sure. All county employees, including those not subject to the requirement, may also receive flu vaccine on Fridays from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at Vista Oaks Occupational Medicine, 10 Douglas Drive, Suite 110 in Martinez, with approval for time off from their supervisors. The cost is \$25, or free for Contra Costa Health Plan members.

Vaccinations may also be offered at your work site. Contra Costa Regional Medical Center (CCRMC) and Health Centers staff can check the flu clinic schedule on the CCRMC page on iSITE. County employees with other healthcare providers may also receive vaccination opportunities through their own insurance. The flu vaccine protects against up to four of the most common strains of the virus, including H1N1.



CCRMC Dr. David Pepper has gotten his flu shot. Have you?

For more information on the flu, visit cchealth.org/flu

Regulatory Change for Popular Painkiller

A change in federal drug classification now prohibits prescribing refills of medicines containing hydrocodone, which became effective on October 6. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency shifted hydrocodone from a Schedule III drug to Schedule II to address growing abuse of prescription opioids, requiring that no new prescriptions of painkillers such as Norco may include authorizations for refills. Patients who need a rewrite of a previous prescription can request one through their mycLink patient web portal, have their retail pharmacy submit a request to their provider, or contact their health home team. Due to the high risk nature of these medications and in order to comply with medical board guidelines, providers may require that patients be seen and re-examined before another prescription is approved. The legal change also impacts doctors, pharmacy and clinic staffs, as we work to maintain and deliver appropriate medical care to our patients, which includes reliable access to these frequently prescribed drugs. Dr. Chris Farnitano, the ambulatory care medical director for our Contra Costa Regional Medical Center & Health Center, said he is working with local retail pharmacies to ensure they understand the new rules and that CCHS is working internally to mitigate the anticipated increase in prescription requests, including streamlining the prescription process in our electronic health record, cLink, and accelerating the rollout of electronic prescribing to all our providers.



New prescriptions for painkillers containing hydrocodone now can't include authorizations for refills.



FAS is now available in three school-based clinics in the county.

Program Fighting Obesity among Latino Kids Now in School-Based Clinics

Information and training for a family-based medical group-appointment program tailored to fight pediatric obesity in the Latino community is now available on the Health Services website. The program is designed to serve families receiving care from federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), and clinic providers in Contra Costa County are encouraged to use the program. Familias Activas Y Saludables (FAS) is a Spanish-language version of the Active and Healthy Families program for Latino families. FAS is a culturally and linguistically tailored 10-week program that features interactive learning and use of individual action plans to promote healthy diet, exercise, stress management and parenting to combat childhood obesity. FAS, now available at three school-based clinics in Contra Costa County, was developed and piloted by Public Health and Ambulatory Care. A University of California, Berkeley study found significant health improvements among participants of pilot classes in 2012 and 2013, and the FAS program has already been successfully replicated in FQHCs in two other Bay Area counties.

Clinic providers interested in replicating the FAS Program can visit the Active & Healthy Families website at cchealth.org/ahf or call Daniela Jaramillo at 925-313-6213.



Consider Giving to the Combined Charities Campaign

All Health Services employees are encouraged to consider giving this month to the 2014 Combined Charities Campaign. Each year, county employees donate to several nonprofit groups that help our community by giving to the cause of their choice. If you are interested in donating, contact your division coordinator for these materials and more instructions (check iSITE to see a list of division coordinators). Donations may be made by payroll deduction or one-time check.

For more information, please contact your division coordinator or Jackie Peterson at 925-957-5420. You can also visit combinedcharities.contra-costa.org

Autism Therapy Now a Medi-Cal Benefit

Starting last month, Medi-Cal managed care plans in the state—including Contra Costa Health Plan (CCHP)—began covering applied behavior analysis (ABA) therapy for eligible beneficiaries with autism under age 21. The expanded benefit is being offered following a recent information bulletin from the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services. In order to qualify for coverage, Medi-Cal beneficiaries must have a comprehensive diagnostic evaluation indicating ABA-based therapy is medically necessary, a prescription from a licensed physician or psychologist for ABA services, and prior authorization from CCHP. Patricia Tanquary, CCHP's chief executive officer, said the Health Plan already has a network of 15 ABA-qualified providers for its commercial members. Patricia said CCHP will continue to work with community partners and providers to implement the expanded Medi-Cal benefit, and ensure a smooth transition for those currently receiving ABA services outside the Health Plan's network.

For more information on the ABA therapy benefit, contact CCHP Member Services at 1-877-661-6230.

OCTOBER MILESTONES

Congratulations to these employees who have given us long years of service: Eugene Pakman, Delfin L. Lardizabal, Dora Woods, Donald A. Gomez, Demetria Y. Gary-Gallegos, Charlotte D. Rucker, Maria M. Ingraham, John D. Mason, Teresita Medina (10 years); Concepcion T. James, Pattie L. Smith, Anthony K. Wong, Audrey D. Gray, Cheryl R. Standley (15 years); Deborah Strych, Eileen I. Holland, Dorette J. McCollumn (20 years); Gregory Pilarski, Rhonda F. Walker (25 years); Yolonda R. Glasco, Roylen R. Stack (30 years) and Wendel C. Brunner (35 years).



DeShante Hall

Clerk–Specialist Level
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For her ability to work in a very fast-paced environment with an excellent attention to detail, her fantastic attitude and team work. For being a pleasure to work with.

◆Nominated by Gina Soleimanieh and Linda Thomas

Andy Bausone

Biomedical Equipment Manager

**Randy Hendrickson
Erick Manzanarez**

Biomedical Equipment Technicians I

Kevin Narducci

Biomedical Equipment Technician II

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For their rapid, very detailed inspection of numerous Alaris Infusion Pumps in a short amount of time. For all they do every day for our patients and staff.

◆Nominated by Timothy Thompson-Cook

Gina Soleimanieh

Medical Staff Coordinator

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For her willingness to think out of the box and find creative, effective solutions for her co-workers and her department in areas of staffing and office organization. For her excellent work ethic and always volunteering her well-thought out ideas to create change in a positive way.

◆Nominated by Steele Colby, Sue Pfister and Linda Thomas

**West County Health Center
Registration Staff
LuWanda Hill**

Clerical Supervisor

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For being part of the Appointment Text Message Appointment pilot as we move forward to improve patient care. For always going above and beyond.

◆Nominated by Lorena Garcia

Norma Martinez

Medical Social Worker II

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For utilizing her outstanding networking skills to provide appropriate resources to patients and for going the extra mile by making herself readily available with her tight schedule to address and provide support to urgent referrals.

◆Nominated by Dola Macaulay



**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.ca.us or fax to 925-957-5401. Forms are on our website (cchealth.org on the About Us page) or iSITE, our intranet, at <http://cchs/> Nominations are subject to approval by Division Directors.



Nicole Flowers

Certified Medical Assistant
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For providing excellent urgent care to a high risk pregnant patient. For providing prenatal resources, genuine care and support to all of her patients.

◆Nominated by Dola Macaulay

Elina Webb

Clerk—Specialist Level
Behavioral Health Services

For consistently going above and beyond to meet UR requirements and standards and assisting others. For her dedication and years of hard work.

◆Nominated by Marybeth Ruiz

Staff

Emergency Department
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For the excellent care and treatment provided to my 89 year old mother in Contra Costa Regional Medical Center's Emergency Department. Thank you for treating her with dignity and professionalism. She has made a complete recovery.

◆Nominated by a patient's son

Chantel Allen

Medical Records Coder
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For being very detailed with coding her accounts.

◆Nominated by Sihina Tatum

Mary Jane Kiefer

Senior Public Health Nutritionist
Public Health

For remaining calm under pressure during an emergency situation in the workplace.

◆Nominated by Patricia Richards

Ashley Cheun

Family Nurse Practitioner
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For ensuring that urgent needs of patients were met during a staffing shortage at Brentwood Health Center. For her willingness to help whenever and however needed and for providing excellent patient care.

◆Nominated by Sylvia Elizarraraz

Lorena Barajas

Patient Financial Services Specialist
Finance

For going above and beyond to ensure easy access for a patient to schedule future appointments.

◆Nominated by Laurie Terranova

Elmina Green

Community Health Worker Specialist
Public Health

For passionately providing services and resources to high risk prenatal patients. For going the extra mile to meet urgent requests from providers and responding to the needs of patients.

◆Nominated by Dola Macaulay