

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT



June 2005 — William B. Walker, MD, Health Services Director

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## Staying On Course

I appeared at the Board of Supervisors meeting May 10 to answer questions and discuss budget cuts. At that meeting, the Board made choices from the list of possible cuts I submitted to get to the \$14.7 million in reductions we were told to make. There was some good news. The County Administrator made small reductions in a number of other departments to generate \$1.3 million to prevent us from having to cut our advice nurses and to save some of our TB case management efforts. We heard a lot of concerns from the public at the May budget workshop about reductions in Basic Health Care, pediatric programs, services to children and homeless services. Some of those have been restored. We're going into the early June budget hearing with a target of \$13.4 million in reductions. It's my hope that during the June budget proceedings, revenues and cost savings will arise that will allow the Board to restore even more potential cuts.

### **There will be cuts**

Clearly, there will be cuts. We won't know how deep they go until the formal approval on June 21. Besides the Board's early June hearings, we will also conduct our required Bielsonson hearings related to direct patient service cuts. Those will be held at 1 p.m. on June 21.

I know there is a lot of upset about the impending cuts. I certainly understand how you feel. Emotions arise in all of us as we defend programs that are near and dear to us. As head of Health Services, if I disagree with the policy directions being considered, it is my role to speak up. The County Administrator understands that duty. Although I feel very protective about our programs, I have no personal animosity toward anyone and in fact, I have good relationships with other department heads, the County Administrator and the Board of Supervisors.

As painful as the current budget situation is,

I'm reminded almost daily that we are a thriving, vital organization. I want to share some of the experiences I've had recently that renew my energy and my optimism. You can read more about each of these in separate articles in this issue.



— Dr. Walker

### **New Brentwood Health Center opens**

It may seem strange to be opening a new health center in the midst of budget cuts, but last month, after more than 30 years of discussion, a new Brentwood Health Center opened, funded with federal funds for capital improvements. When I started with Health Services in 1974, there was a small health center in Oakley. You may have heard me talking about how we used sheets to create exam rooms. Eventually we found a site in Brentwood that was meant to be a temporary facility. At that time, we spent more than a year developing plans for a permanent site. Then Prop. 13 happened. More than 30 years went by, with many false hopes raised for a new facility. I guess this teaches us patience. It also illustrates something frustrating about the way money flows to public health systems like ours. The funds we used to open the new Brentwood Health Center can't be used to offset county general funds. At the same time we are having to cut back on essential programs, some of our fee-based programs, like Environmental Health, are expanding. And thanks to the voter-initiative

*Continued next page*

## DID YOU KNOW

More Healthy Families enrollees are choosing our health plan over any other in the County.

Prop. 63, Mental Health is also in an expansion mode. Running this department is sometimes like quilting, patching a variety of funding sources together to keep the department going.

#### ***Praise for FMCH programs***

Last month Cheri Pies, Director of Public Health's Family, Maternal and Child Health (FMCH) Programs, invited me to attend their annual staff meeting to talk about the budget situation. Obviously that wasn't designed to boost anyone's morale. But then I stayed to see a video they produced with state funds to highlight the services they provide.

Community partners talked about our staff and how important our work is in helping them do their work. Clients talked about how our programs help them and their families. I heard heartfelt gratitude from patients and clients for interactions they had with our staff. They talked about how the WIC, Black Infant Health and Breast-feeding programs helped them, how our SIDS program helped bereaved parents and grandparents cope with the death of an infant. Partners described our outreach efforts, getting kids enrolled in insurance programs and much more. The teenagers in the video were particularly striking when they described the positive impact of our TeenAge Program (TAP) on their lives, saying our staff was available to talk about everything. TAP is a good example of why this round of budget cuts is so painful and why the video was so poignant. TAP isn't a mandated program – we created it here in Contra Costa more than 20 years ago and it's incredibly important to teens and schools.

Even in the midst of difficult budget times, we all need to acknowledge the importance of our programs and the hard work and creativity of our staff – with or without a video.

#### ***Polio survivors share experiences***

May was a big month for impactful videos. I also attended the premiere showing of a documentary produced by volunteer Ray McFalone with Public Health's Dale Jenssen to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the polio vaccine. In it, local polio survivors talked of their early childhood, how polio affected their lives and how many are now dealing with post-polio syndrome. In the final segment, the polio survivors encouraged parents to immunize their children so that no child will suffer unnecessarily from any disease that can be prevented by vaccines. I was able to talk to the people who appeared in the video and share their experiences. This event reminded me how important our prevention efforts are. We created an immunization registry to track which children have

been immunized and we promote 12 childhood immunizations to get every child in Contra Costa protected before age 24 months. These efforts benefit the whole community.

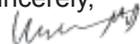
#### ***Avian Flu tabletop conducted***

Another event last month also reminded me how important our efforts are for the whole community. The Public Health Division brought together more than 60 people from myriad organizations – including nearly all of the local hospitals and representatives of the State Department of Health Services (DHS) – to begin a discussion about how to deal with a flu pandemic. (*Read more about the tabletop in a separate story in this issue.*) I was anxious to have this tabletop exercise because right now the country, and in fact the world, are ill-prepared to respond to an outbreak of something like avian flu if human-to-human transmission is confirmed. This exercise gave us a chance to talk realistically about what would happen in our community. It was revealing to explore what impact there would be if we were to have early isolation and voluntary quarantine. We might be able to contain the epidemic, but the discussion also raised issues about what it means to ask people to avoid crowds, shut down businesses and do other things that have major economic impacts. You couldn't be part of the tabletop and not think about the importance of our public health system and communicable disease prevention and how critical it is to bring all community partners, the state and even the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) into the discussion. Walking through what might really happen when the patient presented — in the absence of vaccine and anti-viral medication — provided a glimpse of the challenges.

We're the front line in that kind of situation, no matter how we talk about and rely on the World Health Organization, CDC and DHS. Our programs, mostly county-funded, are where the rubber meets the road.

We were gratified that Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control allowed us to use their facility for the event and that so many other agencies participated, including Animal Control Services, Kaiser, Doctors Hospital, John Muir/Mt. Diablo Health System, the City of Antioch, San Ramon Medical Center, ValleyCare Health System, CCTV, Kern and Solano counties and many of our own staff. Two newspapers — the *Contra Costa Times* and the *San Francisco Chronicle* — also sent representatives. So when I am discouraged about what is happening with the budget, I remind myself that dedicated and talented people work here and that I often hear from them that they are proud to be part of a Department that does such important work. I hope you all feel that way.

Sincerely,



William Walker, MD

# GOING THE EXTRA MILE FOR SERVICE EXCELLENCE

## Honor Roll

### **Jody Adelberg, RN, PHN**

*MSN Nurse Case Manager  
HIV/AIDS Program*

For her willingness to share her expertise and patience with novice nurses. Her thoroughness, medical knowledge and critical thinking skills provide excellent teaching examples. She is a leader by example in her easy-going, yet thorough manner and never-ending advocacy for clients. I could not have asked for a more skilled and professional nursing preceptor!

—Nominated by Donna Russell, RN

### **AIDS Program Case Management Team**

*Public Health Division*

For welcoming me, explaining the nuances of their roles, client care and commitment. I am very grateful for their professionalism, generosity and kindness and for making this clinical rotation a wonderful experience for me.

—Nominated by Donna Russell, RN

### **Dale Jensen**

*Public Health Nurse Program Manager*

For organizing and hosting a celebration of 50 years of vaccine success for the polio vaccine, and organizing volunteers from the Polio Survivors club to be filmed for a video documentary on the experience of having and living with polio in the 1950s and the effects of polio on their lives since then.

—Nominated by Francie Wise

### **Suliana Teo**

*Clerk—Experienced Level  
Payroll*

For her assistance in seeing that an employee got her paycheck in a timely manner. Her insight helped track paperwork. Her obvious attention to detail is greatly appreciated.

—Nominated by Chandra M. Gottschall

### **Regina Cones**

*Medical Records Technician*

For covering MRT duties in East, Central and West County while two MRTs were on leave and for training the newly hired temporary MRT in West County. She represents what it means to “do whatever is necessary in order to get the job done.”

—Nominated by Michele Y. Simes

### **Radiology Technicians and Radiologists**

*Diagnostic Imaging  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center*

For their consistent professionalism, kindness, hard work, enthusiasm and flexibility that benefit patients and staff. They are frequently asked to make last-minute changes in their schedules to accommodate in-patient studies and do so without complaint.

—Nominated by Joan Bauman

### **Ray McFalone**

*Volunteer*

For his time and valuable efforts to shoot the video “A Time to Remember,” stories from polio survivors who had never spoken of some of these events since they had polio in the 1950s. Ray developed a special relationship with the survivors to draw out their stories in a sensitive way.

—Nominated by Dale Jensen

## **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 “Going the Extra Mile” commendation form, available from every CCHS Division Director, or email your commendation to [ServicEX@hsd.co.contra-costa.ca.us](mailto:ServicEX@hsd.co.contra-costa.ca.us) or fax it to 925-313-6219. The form can also be downloaded from the Internet (About Us page) or Intranet. Please be specific about the behavior being recognized.

This page brings news of how the implementation of the CCHS Plan for Reducing Health Disparities is progressing and highlights program efforts. Our divisions have been working on three key areas to reduce health disparities. These are improving linguistic access, implementing educational activities on diversity and cultural and linguistic competence, and developing an organizational climate that values patient, customer and employee diversity.



## CCRMC/HCs Form Workgroup to Address Health Disparities

After more than a year of ongoing efforts to reduce health disparities, Contra Costa Regional Medical Center (CCRMC) and our nine health centers (HCs) have formed a formal workgroup to continue carrying out our Reducing Health Disparities Initiative (RDHI). The workgroup will focus on raising awareness about RDHI, tracking and



*CCRMC/HC Executive Director Jeff Smith, MD and (left to right) Work Group members Lindy Haagensen, Marcelle Indelicato, Concepcion Trevino James and Jeanne Walker-Johnson, RN. Missing are Cyndy Abram and Linda Bates*

evaluating progress and looking for ways to improve cultural competence and linguistic access programs at our medical facilities, said workgroup chair Marcelle Indelicato, who works in CCRMC administration. "We've done the groundwork. Now we'll take the next step in implementing these changes to continue improving access to health care at the Medical Center and Health Centers," Marcelle said. Some of the groundwork has been improving linguistic access at the hospital through interpretation and translation services for non-English speaking patients. Staff have been educated about the availability of these services to make sure they are used when needed. Staff also received training on cultural competence, and cultural awareness information and tips were included in CCRMC's newsletter, *Safety and Infection Control Review*. The workgroup also will develop a new pilot tool to conduct a cultural awareness needs assessment

for staff at both the hospital and the health centers. Workgroup members include: Marcelle Indelicato, CCRMC Administration; Lindy Haagensen, Staffing and Patient Care Coordinator; Concepcion Trevino James, manager of our Bay Point Family Health Center; Jeanne Walker-Johnson, RN, CCRMC Education and Training Specialist; Cyndy Abram, Director of Risk and Quality Management; and Linda Bates, Hospital and Health Center Recruiter. Jeff Smith, MD, executive director of CCRMC and the health centers, is proud of the RDHI work being done at the hospital and health centers. "RDHI is an example of our commitment to better serve our community's diverse population," Smith said.



*For more information on the CCRMC/Health Centers workgroup, contact Marcelle Indelicato at [mindelic@hsd.co.contra-costa.ca.us](mailto:mindelic@hsd.co.contra-costa.ca.us) or 925-370-5108. For more information about our RDHI, contact RDHI Leader Jose Martin at [jmartin@hsd.co.contra-costa.ca.us](mailto:jmartin@hsd.co.contra-costa.ca.us) or 925-370-5055.*

## Education Efforts Target Cultural Awareness and Linguistic Access

Two CCRMC/HC staff members have been working hard to educate employees about cultural competency and linguistic access as part of our Reducing Health Disparities Initiative (RDHI). Focusing on cultural awareness training is Jeanne Walker-Johnson, RN, BSN, MA, CCRMC Education and Training Specialist. Jeanne also chairs the RDHI Education Committee and is a member of the CCRMC/HC RDHI workgroup. Jeanne trains nursing and management staff in cultural and cross-cultural communication. She also worked closely with Financial Counseling Manager Wanda Session to create the recent customer service and cultural awareness training for our financial counselors, who screen clients for eligibility to be cared for at our health centers and help clients enroll in appropriate health insurance coverage programs. Lindy Haagensen, CCRMC Staffing and Patient Care Coordinator, recently finished teaching charge nurses how to use all of our interpretation services for non-English speaking patients. Lindy, who is a member of our departmentwide RDHI Education and Linguistic access committees, trains hospital staff, including doctors, on how to use and access these services, such as our telephone interpretation service, CyraCom International, and our bilingual interpreters. Both Lindy and Jeanne agreed the trainings have been well-received by staff. "The training really benefits both our staff and patients," Jeanne said.



*Lindy Haagensen (left) and Jeanne Walker-Johnson*

## First Responder Awareness and Operations Training at CCRMC

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center employees from several departments — Safety, Environmental Services, Ambulatory Care, Emergency Medicine and Nursing, Infection Control and Staffing — attended First Responder Awareness and decontamination training recently. Topics included were weapons of mass destruction, bioterrorism, Unified Incident Command Systems, personal protective equipment, and disaster triage. Participants, including staff from other hospitals, had the chance to don Level C decontamination equipment and practice clinical skills. CCRMC's Emergency Department was particularly recognized for the high level of skill demonstrated by its nurses to effectively triage and treat patients while wearing the level C personal protective equipment. Those nurses included Bobbie Allen, Jayne Argumaniz, Laura Felder, Sherrill Harris, Ann Molinaro and Akiko Rodriguez, all RNs. Mark Stinson, MD, was also recognized for his knowledge and experience. He is an internationally recognized teacher and practitioner of disaster first response techniques. Further training is being conducted by Mark and Safety Coordinator Kristina Spurgeon. *(Thanks to Kristina for this story.)*



CCRMC nurses carrying CCHS Emergency Services Manager Dan Guerra.



For more information, call Kristina Spurgeon at 925-370-5409.

## Celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Polio Vaccine

To mark National Infant Immunization Week and to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of polio vaccine, the Contra Costa Immunization Coalition hosted a luncheon April 30 at Kaiser Martinez. Featuring the premiere of "A Time to Remember," a moving documentary of personal testimonies of polio survivors, the event highlighted the need for parents to get their children vaccinated. Representatives of the San Francisco Bay Area Polio Survivors Network, Rotary Polio Plus, the California Coalition for Childhood Immunization (C<sup>3</sup>I), the State Immunization Branch, Contra Costa Health Services, and the local medical community shared experiences of the frightening days before polio vaccine. They applauded



*(Left to right) Lee Nolls, MD, Dale Jenssen, Immunization Coalition Coordinator, Norene DeBrocker, President, C<sup>3</sup>I, and Pam Challinor, polio survivor.*

the progress we have made in eliminating once-common childhood diseases, and stressed the need to encourage parents to continue immunizing their children. Special thanks to Ray McFalone, who volunteered countless hours to interview, record and edit polio survivors' stories into the documentary. It was featured at the C<sup>3</sup>I statewide meeting in May, and will be shown on CCTV this month on Wednesday, June 15 at 10 a.m.; Thursday, June 16 at 2:30 p.m.; Wednesday, June 22 at 10 a.m.; Thursday, June 23 at 2:30 p.m.; Friday, June 24 at 9 p.m.; and Saturday, June 25 at 12:30 p.m. and 9 p.m. CCTV is Comcast Channel 27 and Astound Channel 32. *(Thanks to Dale Jenssen for this story.)*



For more information about the documentary, contact Dale Jenssen at 925-313-6362.

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## Employee Milestones

Congratulations to these employees who have given us long years of service: Julie Custer, Dawna Henderson, Lisa Felix, Lisa Derita, Andrew Minutoli, Haydee Wong, Monique Bassi, Veda Bhatt, Amy Buoncristiani (10 years); Thomas McNabb, Lani Ching, Elizabeth Faulkner, Linda Lazure, Ingrid McDowell, Janet Frankhouser, Robert Kajdan, Lourdes Vitan, Yueh-Kuang Peng, Stuart Forman, David Mac Donald (15 years); Leigh Pierson Brown (20 years); Lauren Kovaleff, Michael Cornwall, Gloria Ousbourn (25 years); Zabeth Cooper and Richard Harrison (30 years). *(We know there are lots of other dedicated employees with long years of service. Because of space limitations, we are only reporting those with 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 years.)*

## High Marks Given to Our Intensive Care Unit

Hospital stays at our Contra Costa Regional Medical Center Intensive Care Unit are reserved for our sickest patients, treated with the most cutting edge technology and tightest staffing ratios. Hospitals all over the country are looking at ways to measure this intense level of care by identifying benchmarks or standards of care. Our ICU has been participating in a benchmarking study coordinated by the University of California, San Francisco California Intensive Care Outcomes Project (CALICO). The project, which reviewed more than 10,000 patients nationally, found most of our ICU admissions originate from the Emergency Department (ED). We get patients admitted quickly to the ICU from the ED so that care can begin as soon as possible. Other ICU strengths include excellent care for patients with Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome, and above average care by using more non-invasive mechanical ventilation when appropriate. Staff in our ICU also address sensitive issues like end-of-life care, ensuring that if a serious situation arises, families are more prepared to make the difficult decisions because of prior discussions with the ICU team. Our ICU is headed by Mitch Applegate, MD and Lisa Massarweh RN, CCRN, outstanding providers who are committed to teamwork. Teamwork is a necessary feature of care and each provider (nurse, doctor, physical and occupational therapists, speech therapist, dietician, social worker, pharmacist, respiratory therapist) is a vital part of the patient's outcome. The next part of the CALICO study is slated to look at actual processes in our ICU. (Thanks to Julie Kelley for this story.)



Mitch Applegate, MD and Lisa Massarweh, RN.



For more information, call Lisa Massarweh, RN at 925-370-5118.



## New on Our Website: chealth.org

- Our Hazardous Materials program has a new feature on its page: the ability to look up information about Contra Costa industrial facilities. A simple search shows where the facility is. More advanced searches are available to find out which facilities deal with which chemicals. Another feature allows users to look up hazardous materials incidents by address.
- Now available on our data page are an Executive Summary and a PowerPoint presentation that accompanies the 170-page report *Health Indicators for Selected Cities and Places in Contra Costa County*. The report, commissioned by the Hospital Council of Northern and Central California, was presented to the Board of Supervisors in May. You can also find some interesting new items on the asthma page. Reach it by clicking on "Health Topics."

## Local Immigrant Stories From Central America Highlighted

ArtsChange is presenting a new art exhibition at the Richmond Health Center "Siluetas: de Centro America a Richmond," exploring stories of migration from Central America to Richmond. The exhibition features the work of Bay Area artists Carlos Cartegena, Ruth Morgan and Lonny Shavelson. To celebrate the exhibition opening, ArtsChange and the Richmond Health Center will hold two events. An educational lunch forum will be held for Richmond Health Center staff and interested community Wednesday June 8 from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. A community reception will follow on Thursday, June 9 from 5-7 p.m. featuring Francisco Herrera of Caminante, who will lead a poetry and music exploration of displacement from departing Central America and resettlement in the Bay Area. ArtsChange (formerly known as *The Quilt of Many Colors*) has organized visual art exhibitions and education programs in public venues since 1997. The exhibits engage an urban and culturally diverse community with art and education programs addressing health and community.



For more information about the exhibition or events, email [artschange@artschange.org](mailto:artschange@artschange.org) or call 510-231-1348.

## Motivation is Key

Eight CCRMC nurses were spotlighted in the May issue of *Advance for Nurses*, a publication serving Northern California and Reno, Nevada. The “Speak Out” feature shared our staff’s secrets for staying motivated. Anthony Longoria, Detention Health, Jeanne Walker-Johnson, Education and Training, M. Kathy Rayl, Labor and Delivery, Maxima Warrell, Chemotherapy, Christina Dizon, Psychiatric, Albert E. Hall, Telemetry and Norma Erazo, ICU, and Sherrill Harris, RN, CEN, Emergency Department described how to maintain high standards in a difficult environment. They cited factors like critical thinking, teaching, helping, being a good role model, learning new things, challenges and making a difference as things that keep them motivated.



## Detention Mental Health Unit Cuts Across Disciplines

Our Detention Mental Health Unit is re-evaluating its mission to provide optimal services to mentally ill inmates in these days of shrinking resources by building team models with medical and jail staff. They’ve formed a pain management treatment group with nursing, medicine, and behavioral health staff to address chronic pain needs of inmates with drug dependency problems and provide them with alternative methods of coping with pain. Inmate response has been very positive and the unit hopes to present its program at the National Conference on Correctional Health Care this fall in Denver. They are also conducting a weekly men’s meditation group to help inmates with anger management and impulse problems. Starting this month (June 1), a women’s support group will be launched at the West County detention facility to address issues of domestic violence, self-esteem and hopelessness and to provide social services referrals. Detention Services started a project to identify frequent users of both Psychiatric Emergency and the jail, hoping to improve access to mental health services for these people, who often only receive mental health services while incarcerated. In April, the unit began training to help jail custody staff identify and deal with problem behaviors that are psychiatric in nature. *(This story thanks to Francyne Molina, PhD)*



For more information, contact Francyne Molina, PhD at 925-646-4702.

## Avian Flu Drill Draws Dozens

More than 60 representatives of county and state agencies, infection control specialists from local hospitals, the media and others participated last month in a tabletop exercise to discuss and strategize responses to an outbreak of Avian flu. Avian influenza has caused the slaughter of millions of farm birds in eight Asian nations. Although it is generally a bird disease, it has killed 51 humans in Asia since December 2003. Health experts fear it could begin to spread more rapidly from human to human. Quoting Dr. Julie Gerberding, Director of the Centers for Disease Control, CCHS Director William Walker said that avian flu is a potential major public health threat on the horizon, especially because there is no vaccine available and there is a shortage of antiviral medication that could ease symptoms. Participants heard presentations regarding pandemic flu, an Avian flu update, isolation and quarantine issues, emergency preparedness, laboratory testing and procedures as well as hospital response and surge capacity planning. The group discussed information that the public would want and need, what barriers to disease control there might be and what their organizations could do to help prevent the spread of the disease. An after-action report will be prepared to incorporate suggestions and concerns into future plans. *(Thanks to Gerald Tamayo for this story.)*



*Contra Costa Times animal columnist Gary Bogue participated in the tabletop exercise.*



For information about the drill or Avian flu, contact Gerald Tamayo at [gtamayo@hsd.co.contra-costa.ca.us](mailto:gtamayo@hsd.co.contra-costa.ca.us) or 925-313-6417.

## New Brentwood Health Center Opens

In the late '70s, our Oakley Health center moved to Brentwood, into what was to be a temporary site. In the early '90s, there was some thought about closing that location. Patients sat out front and collected signatures to keep it opened. This month, we are delighted to finally celebrate the opening of a new, permanent and bigger location. We knew the community wanted this expansion because our Appointment Unit kept statistics about where patients wanted appointments and where demand wasn't being met. It was clear that Brentwood was a key location. Fortunately there was federal money for capital construction available, and after 30 years of hoping for a permanent site, the new Brentwood Health Center opened in May. To develop plans for the new site Sylvia Elizarraraz, Project Manager, worked with Planning and Evaluation Director Steve Harris, Brentwood physician David Hearst, MD, General Services department architect Ted Johnson, Wynette Mason, Ambulatory Care Clinic Coordinator, Sue Crosby, Public Health Clinic Services Director, Clinical Services Manager Nancy McCoy and Beverly Clark, WIC Director. Sylvia says everyone at the Health Center had input into the planning process. The new Center is located at 171 Sand Creek Road, Suite A, in a brand new building in a light industrial area. The 10,000-square-foot facility has 15 exam rooms, Public Health services, a treatment room, a lab draw station and a beautiful waiting room with children's play area. WIC is delighted that the new building has a classroom so they no longer have to teach their classes in the waiting area. Exam rooms are equipped with computers. Nurses and providers are no longer sharing workstations. The plan is to increase family practice, pediatric and internal medicine services gradually.



For more information, call Sylvia Elizarraraz at 925-513-6805.

## HIV/AIDS Consortium Seeking Input

Our HIV/AIDS Consortium is inviting public comment on how federal funds should be spent in Contra Costa for support services to people living with HIV/AIDS. The Consortium is sponsoring a public forum to hear comments on Monday, July 11 at 10 a.m. The forum will be held at Chapman University, 2600 Stanwell Drive, Room 3, Concord. Written comments can also be submitted by June 20 by fax to 925-313-6798, email to rchoi@hcd.co-contra-costa.ca.us or by mail to 597 Center Avenue, Suite 200, Martinez, CA 94553. The Consortium will use the public comments along with other information to make recommendations to Contra Costa Public Health about annual funding for the Ryan White CARE Act in Contra Costa. Final recommendations will be presented to the regional Planning Council of the Oakland Eligible Metropolitan Area (EMA) for approval in August 2005 and then submitted to the Federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in September 2005. The new program year for Ryan White CARE Act funds begins March 2006.



For more information, call Rhonda Choi at 925-313-6775.

## FMCH Staff Learns About Life Course Model

More than 200 staff from 14 Family, Maternal and Child Health (FMCH) Programs participated in a meeting recently to learn more about the new Life Course Initiative that FMCH is launching this year. The Life Course Model, based on the research of Michael Lu, MD, MPH and others, suggests that a complex interplay of biological, behavioral, psychological and social protective and risk factors contributes to health outcomes across the span of a person's life. The day also offered staff a chance to learn more about the range of FMCH programs that serve families, women, children and adolescents, meet new staff and reconnect with current staff, and take time for reflection and discussion with others. One highlight of this day was an outstanding video entitled "Honoring Our Staff" produced by Lorena Martinez-Ochoa and Kristina Kutter in conjunction with Contra Costa Television and the State Department of Health Services, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Branch, which provided the funding. It included interviews with community residents, partners and others in the county talking about their experiences with FMCH Programs and their recognition and appreciation of the FMCH staff.



(left to right) FMCH Director Cheri Pies with Padmini Parthasarathy and Kristina Kutter, who were members of the event planning committee.



For more information, call Lorena Martinez-Ochoa at 925-313-6951.