

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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## Threats of Natural Disasters

After two of the most disastrous fires in California's history, the ongoing threat of more fires and longer-term threat of the effects from global warming, Californians are facing an ever-increasing possibility of natural disasters.

We know that the threat of a major earthquake in or near Contra Costa is real and we can't be overly prepared. Drills such as the statewide earthquake drill on October 1 that we participated in are important to keep us prepared and ready to respond during any disaster.




William B. Walker, MD  
CCHS Director

## Valley Fire Hit Home

The Valley Fire in Lake County reminds us of this fact. One thousand two hundred eighty homes plus hundreds of other structures were destroyed. Many residents had only minutes to evacuate their homes.

This fire hit very close to home, literally—our family's vacation home is in the area. Many of my neighbors and friends lost their homes and all of their belongings. I was one of the fortunate ones—my home suffered very little damage. One of my neighbors, 90 years of age, was lying in bed reading a book when she received a call to evacuate. She had only minutes to escape and was only able to grab her purse and carry her shoes before a deputy sheriff whisked her away. Unfortunately, her home was completely destroyed.



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I know that this is only one of many such stories, and it will take many months for these families to rebuild their lives and homes as they contend with issues such as the removal of hazardous waste from their properties. Lessons learned from this disaster will help refine our own planning for a major earthquake or fire in Contra Costa, particularly around mass shelters for those who may lose their homes and possessions.

## Mutual Aid to Our Neighbors

I was very proud of our Medical Reserve Corps, who were called upon to provide medical assistance in the temporary shelters and ongoing clinics in Middletown, and our Behavioral Health team, who also responded to requests to assist fire victims experiencing psychological trauma. All of the preparation that we do as a County keeps us and our emergency response partners ready to

respond not only to disasters in our County, but those of our neighbors when we are called upon for mutual aid.

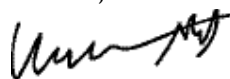
## Get Prepared

During times of disaster, resources are tested and emergency personnel may not be able to respond to everyone in need immediately. Personal emergency preparedness is essential. One thing I heard from many of the victims of the Lake County fires was they wish they had been better prepared. We should all take the time NOW to ensure that we have planned well to keep

our families and ourselves safe during emergencies. Please refer to the [guidelines on personal preparedness](#) on our website.

As Disaster Service Workers, you are mandated to report to work during disasters and help those in need. You won't be able to do this effectively if you and your family are not safe.

Sincerely,



William B. Walker, M.D

## Friday Flu Clinics for County Employees Begin Oct. 9



CCHP members and medical staff like Dr. David Pepper (shown here) can get flu vaccine for free.

Contra Costa County employees can get their flu vaccination—shot or nasal spray—for the upcoming flu season on Fridays beginning October 9 at Vista Oaks Occupational Medicine. Employees should request time off from their supervisor to take advantage of this opportunity

during work hours. For employees with the Contra Costa Health Plan (CCHP) there is no charge; simply bring your CCHP card. For employees with other health insurance, flu shots are \$25, payable by cash, credit card (VISA and MasterCard), or debit card. No checks please. Free flu vaccine will be provided to employees who need to be vaccinated to comply with the Health Officer order (all employees involved in direct patient care or in patient care areas must receive a flu vaccination or wear a mask). Vaccinations may be offered at your work site—including Contra Costa Regional Medical Center—so please check first with your supervisor for flu vaccine options. This opportunity is for employees only.

### VISTA OAKS FLU CLINIC

#### WHAT

- Flu Shots for County employees
- Free for CCHP members and employees subject to vaccine mandate
- \$25 for all others

#### WHEN

**October 9:** 8 a.m.-2 p.m., including lunch hour

**Oct. 16 and After:** Every Friday, 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

#### WHERE

Vista Oaks Occupational Medicine

10 Douglas Drive, Suite 110, Martinez

925-313-1100

The next Director's Report will be the November issue. To publicize upcoming CCHS events and successes, contact Will Harper at [will.harper@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:will.harper@hsd.cccounty.us) or 925-313-6903. The Director's Report is available online at [cchealth.org/newsroom](http://cchealth.org/newsroom) and on site at <http://cchs/>

## New Program Covers County Residents Ineligible for Health Insurance

The Board of Supervisors voted last month to establish and provide \$500,000 funding for a new pilot program called Contra Costa CARES. This program will provide primary care to undocumented adults who are ineligible for Medi-Cal or Covered California. Local hospital boards have also approved a combined total of \$500,000 to help fund the Contra Costa CARES program. This combined County and community hospital funding will provide care for approximately 3,000 adults. CCHS Director Dr. William Walker said he hopes the state or federal government will eventually provide a permanent funding source for the program.



CCHS Director Dr. William Walker describes the new Contra Costa CARES program at a Sept. 22 Board of Supervisors meeting.

The program was developed through an extensive planning process representing many local stakeholders over the past year with leadership provided by Contra Costa Health Services, Hospital Council of Northern & Central California and the Community Clinic Consortium of Contra Costa, including representatives from Kaiser Permanente, Sutter-Delta Medical Center, John Muir Health, La Clínica de la Raza, LifeLong Medical Care, Brighter Beginnings, and Planned Parenthood. The planning process was funded by grants from the Blue Shield of California Foundation and John Muir/Mt. Diablo Community Health Fund.

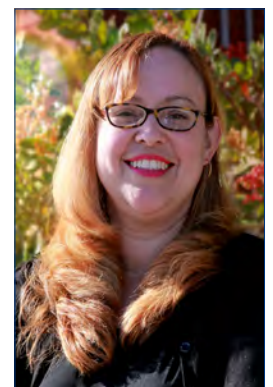
Contra Costa CARES may begin operating as early as November. Contra Costa CARES participants will access primary care services, including basic laboratory and radiology services, at La Clínica, Lifelong, Brighter Beginnings and Axis Health Care. Specialty care, dental, vision, emergency care and hospitalization won't be covered under the program.

In 2009, in the midst of a recession, the county stopped providing health care coverage for undocumented adults. Dr. Walker said Contra Costa CARES will save the county money because it will deter people from relying on county emergency rooms for primary care.

For more information on Contra Costa CARES, contact the Community Clinic Consortium of Contra Costa at 510-233-6230.

## Meet Our New Communications Officer: Vicky Balladares

Vicky Balladares, a longtime member of our communications team, has been named CCHS' new Communications Officer. Vicky started her career with Health Services more than 16 years ago as an administrative intern and has since served in several different roles, including senior health educator and community & media relations specialist. In recent years, she has served as the backup to former Communications Officer Kate Fowlie, who left in August to take a job in Atlanta working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Vicky will oversee the Community Education & Information (CEI) unit, which handles media relations, website management, graphic design and the publication of department newsletters, including the *Director's Report*.



Vicky Balladares



## CCRMC Re-Opens Parking Circle

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center (CCRMC) recently re-opened the parking circle in front of the hospital's main entrance to make it easier to drop off people or pick them up. The circle is currently open from 7 a.m.–5 p.m., Monday through Friday, with the hopes of expanding to include weekends and longer hours during the weekdays. The circle, which had been closed off after 9/11 for security concerns, was re-opened following a three-day pilot in May, which elicited overwhelmingly positive feedback from patients, families and staff. During the pilot, 88 people were counted dropping off patients or picking them up. Those surveyed resoundingly supported permanently re-opening the circle to traffic, citing the improved convenience.



The circle was re-opened following a three-day pilot that elicited overwhelmingly positive feedback.

For more information, contact Chief Operations Officer Timothy Thompson-Cook at 925-370-5224.

## Medi-Cal Drug Waiver to Expand Treatment Options in Contra Costa

Recent changes to Medi-Cal rules have dramatically expanded Contra Costa County's ability to refer and cover patients who need treatment for substance use disorder (SUD), and the Behavioral Health Division has begun its public planning process to meet the anticipated need. Contra Costa will be among the first California counties to implement the Section 1115 Medi-Cal Demonstration Waiver that expands SUD treatment, including residential and medication-assisted treatment, to all Medi-Cal beneficiaries by referral from their medical providers. Medi-Cal has historically provided limited residential treatment coverage exclusively for pregnant or postpartum patients. The 12 Bay Area counties will be among the first to implement the waiver, and all are required to use community engagement processes to prepare implementation plans showing how they will create organized systems of care to serve their communities. Alcohol and Other Drugs Services (AODS) kicked off that process in September with a series of community planning meetings.



More Medi-Cal patients suffering from substance use disorder will have access to treatments, including residential-based treatments.

For more information and to keep up to date on planning efforts, visit [cchealth.org/aod](http://cchealth.org/aod).



Like our other pediatric clinics, the Kennedy High clinic offers well-child exams and sick visits.

## Kennedy High School Clinic Now Open to Community

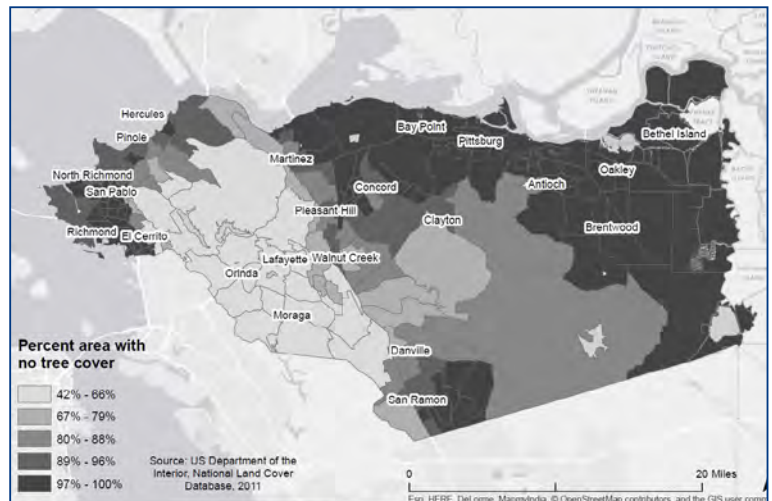
Our school-based clinic at Kennedy High School in Richmond is now offering pediatric appointments and dental services to community members. Medical services are available from 1 p.m.–5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Parents can schedule medical appointments at the clinic by calling our Appointment Unit at 1-800-495-8885. Like our other pediatric clinics, the Kennedy High clinic offers well-child exams and sick visits. Dental services are available Tuesdays from 8 a.m.–4 p.m. and include exams, x-rays, cleanings, preventative care and fillings. Dental appointments are scheduled by dental staff at 510-730-9625. The school-based clinic, which is managed by Public Health Clinic Services, opened in February 2015. It initially only served Kennedy High students two mornings each week. In April, the clinic added pediatric dental services and this summer it began offering pediatric medical services to the community five afternoons a week.

For more information, contact School-Based Clinic Managers Ashley Carrion or Kristina Kutter at [ashley.carrion@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:ashley.carrion@hsd.cccounty.us) or [kristina.kutter@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:kristina.kutter@hsd.cccounty.us).

## Public Health Releases Report Projecting Community Risk from Climate Change

In future years Contra Costa County will experience more heat waves of longer duration because of climate change and should prepare for associated health impacts, according to a report recently released by Public Health’s Epidemiology, Planning & Evaluation (EPE) Unit and Climate Change and Health Working Group. “Climate Change Vulnerability in Contra Costa County: A Focus on Heat” predicts more annual 100-degree days across the county and a range of climate-related health impacts, including worse air quality, increased risk of wildfire and an increase in certain allergens and infectious diseases.

The report identifies low-income communities, non-English speakers, people with pre-existing health conditions, the very old and the very young among those particularly vulnerable to climate-related health issues, and it recommends coordinated community planning and public education. The report was partially funded by the California Department of Public Health’s Office of Health Equity and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



This map from the report shows that many cities in Contra Costa contain areas with very little continuous tree cover to provide cooling shade.

To read the report, visit [cchealth.org/health-data/reports.php](http://cchealth.org/health-data/reports.php).

## Staff Encouraged to Take LGBT Client-Centered Training

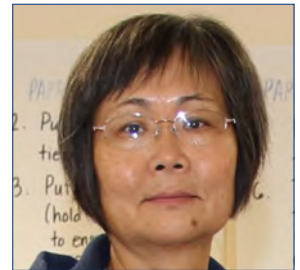
In order to maintain and enhance our standing as a designated national leader in the care for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) patients and clients, more CCHS managers, supervisors and staff are being encouraged to take free training sessions on LGBT best healthcare practices. In 2013 and 2014, our Contra Costa Regional Medical Center (CCRMC) was recognized as a leader in healthcare equality by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), the largest national organization advocating for LGBT rights. This year, the goal is to obtain the healthcare equality designation for others in Health Services in addition to CCRMC, including the West County Health Center, Behavioral Health and Public Health. HRC's trainings are available online through the Center for Affiliated Learning. The required courses in the training series take from one hour to three-and-a-half hours to complete. The purpose of participating in the trainings is to increase accessibility and quality of care for LGBT patients and family members.



For more information, visit iSITE or email Joanne Genet at [Joanne.Genet@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:Joanne.Genet@hsd.cccounty.us).

## This year's Ruth Pease Award Winner Named

Grace Ma, a nurse at Contra Costa Regional Medical Center, was recently named this year's Ruth Pease Award winner. The award is given by the medical staff to a non-physician who exemplifies the dedication of Ruth Pease, a longtime CCHS nurse. The person who nominated Grace lauded her for excellent care of critically ill patients: "When patients are gravely ill, I have seen the absolute compassion and integrity with which Grace cares for these patients, including at the end of life for some of them. ... We could all take a lesson in compassion and professionalism from her. It is no coincidence that her name is Grace. We are so very blessed to have her on our team." Grace was honored last month at the annual Medical Staff Dinner & Dance at the Pleasant Hill Community Center.



Grace Ma

## SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER MILESTONES



Congratulations to these employees who have given us long years of service: Michelle M. Holmes, Elizabeth J. Martinez, David A. West, Andrea C. Enos, Evelyn P. Rodriguez, Anthony R. Coate, Amanda J. Reed, Catherine Audrey-Quinn, Sandra E. Sosa-Morales, Gilberto V. Garcia, Michael H. Fischer, Eugenie E. Kaiser, Gay F. Leonard, Sonya R. Johnson, Chantell J. Baker, Jicara S. Collins, Cheri L. Mohay, Shannon J. Ladner-Beasley (10 years); Robin M. Melendez, Joanne M. Salazar, Timothy R. Taylor, Patricia A. DeRose, Brenda J. Fields, Dionicia C. Cuevas, Troy T. Kaji, David B. Reedy, Jovanka D. Beckles, Ma. Alicia O. Pormento, Robin W. Bevard, May M. Word, Kuljit K. Bhandal, Monica L. Harrich, Amelita T. Toleyos, Brett F. Beaver, Sonia Garcia, Rita M. Lopez, Mercedita S. Salazar, Senetta R. Roberson (15 years); Tina L. Greco, Zenaida P. Hernandez, Kathleen M. Lawrence, Margery K. Kushner, Maxine L. Larry, Blanca Lopez (20 years); Niloufar Shafigh, Rosemarie A. Aguinaga-Tripp, Mabel Negron and Cyril Hinds (25 years); Sharon A. Riccobono (30 years); Delia M. Alanis (35 years).





**Erin Daisley, RN**

Public Health

For the exemplary service she provides to the families in her care. For her extraordinary knowledge and professionalism and her willingness to assist and provide support to her peers.

◆Nominated by Michelle Williams

**Melissa Lucero**

Laboratory Technician II  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For being non-judgmental, open-minded, empathetic and sincere. For understanding the needs of her patients.

◆Nominated by Deanne Bologna

**Hanna Alemu, RN  
Akwinder Kaur, RN**

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For always trying to do their best and for being willing to help their peers.

◆Nominated by Zohra Akbari

**Christine Martinez, RN  
Martha Flores**

Community Health Worker II  
Public Health

For responding quickly during a home visit to save a patient's life.

◆Nominated by Marilyn Condit

**Edward Capalla, RN**

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For going above and beyond to comfort and support a terminally ill patient and his family.

◆Nominated by Sally Reader-Mathews

**Vanessa Wilson**

Medical Social Worker II  
Contra Costa Health Plan

For helping my wife receive the care and equipment she needed.

For being there for me and my wife. Thank you so much.

◆Nominated by Patient's Husband

**Kandy Heinen, RN**

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For her dedication and initiative in coordinating a CPR & AED training at a 2-day swim meet.

For helping the Medical Reserve Corps train over 150 swimmers and parents in lifesaving skills.

◆Nominated by Lisa Vajgrt-Smith

**Eskinder Daba, RN**

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For remaining professional during a very difficult situation. For keeping patients and staff safe.

◆Nominated by Judith Quittman

**David West, LVN**

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For always going the extra mile to help Women Infant and Children's clients receive the medical services they need and for always having a smile.

◆Nominated by Dionicia Cuevas

**Ellen Griffith**

Student Worker  
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For being a great asset to our department. For always bringing a smile, great attitude, eagerness and willingness to help to the Medical Staff Office.

◆Nominated by Steele Colby

**Floris Mendoza**

Clinical Specialist  
Mental Health

For going above and beyond to provide guidance, organization and support to East County Adult Mental Health clinicians in establishing Dialectical Behavior Therapy services.

◆Nominated by Marina Becerra

**Shelly Maramonte, MD**

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Health Centers

For being a true example of a committed, service oriented primary care provider. For voluntarily increasing her clinics to increase access in the Brentwood Health Center.

◆Nominated by Joseph Chavez Carey, MD



**Rachel Mitchell**  
 Medical Social Worker II  
 Contra Costa Regional Medical Center  
 and Health Centers  
 For going above and beyond to locate a discharged patient's personal belongings and seeing that they were returned to him.  
 ♦Nominated by Sally Reader-Mathews

**Aaron Doyle**  
 Paramedic/Prehospital Care Coordinator  
**Bruce Kenagy**  
 Prehospital Care Coordinator  
**Jeanne Kerr**  
 Administrative Analyst  
 Emergency Medical Services

For their leadership and support in making Contra Costa EMS the first agency in California fully compliant with the new federal mandates for National Practitioner Data Base reporting.  
 ♦Nominated by Patricia Frost

**Matthew Chang**  
 Pharmacist  
**Nalini Singh**  
**Brian Fadrigon**  
 Health Plan Authorization Technicians  
 Contra Costa Health Plan  
 For persevering and working long shifts to ensure that urgent re-

quests were handled immediately during the transition of the CCHP Pharmacy Unit. For showing compassion, impressive adaptability and great judgment.

♦Nominated by Andrew Haydon

**Jami Vargas, LVN**  
 Contra Costa Health Plan  
 For her positive attitude and enthusiasm. For being an invaluable addition to our team and for always being willing to help.  
 ♦Nominated by Khamisi Knox

**Vivian Lee**  
 Secretary-Advanced Level  
 Contra Costa Health Plan  
 For her hard work and dedication to her team and willingness to assist the department in every possible way.  
 ♦Nominated by Blanca Brossa, Angelique McDade, Wendy Mailer

**Hannah Nash, RN**  
**Sharon Rini, RN**  
 Contra Costa Health Plan  
 For going above and beyond to cover nursing assignments in addition to their heavy workloads. For taking ownership and practicing excellent follow through on all tasks they touch.  
 ♦Nominated by Michael Cain

**Stephen Daniels, MD**  
 Contra Costa Regional Medical Center  
 and Health Centers

For going the extra mile to take the time to review my medical record and recommend a primary care provider for me.

♦Nominated by a Patient

**Corlette Williams**  
 Senior Medical Rec Technician  
 Contra Costa Regional Medical Center  
 and Health Centers

For going above and beyond to assist a patient get a form to her doctor so that required paperwork could be completed and her surgery scheduled.

♦Nominated by a Patient

**Johnnie Frison**  
 Clerk-Senior Level  
 Contra Costa Regional Medical Center  
 and Health Centers

For going above and beyond to ensure that a provider received a message from his patient.

♦Nominated by Ellen Griffith

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](mailto:wanda.session@hsd.cccounty.us) or fax to 925-957-5401. Forms are on our website ([cchealth.org](http://cchealth.org) on the About Us page) or iSITE, our intranet, at <http://cchs/> Nominations are subject to approval by Division Directors.