

Director's Message

Dear OC Health Care Agency (HCA) Team,

Happy New Year to you and your families! I hope that all of you enjoyed a safe and wonderful holiday with your loved ones. As we begin this brand new year of 2022, I want to take a moment to thank you for your patience and resilience in overcoming another year of challenges brought on by the pandemic. You have remained committed to doing your part to adapt, all the while continuing to support the health and safety of our community members. I also appreciate

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Peer-to-Peer

Christine Nguyen

By **Julia Mayuga**,
Communications Intern

“My motivation is to support and give back to the community, help our clients and connect them with the right resources.” Through her work as a Mental Health Specialist in Mental Health and Recovery Services, Peer-to-Peer recipient **Christine Nguyen** said she, “aims to bring joy and happiness to her clients that will have a



lasting impact on their future.” Christine has worked as a mental health specialist at the OC Health Care Agency (HCA) since 2002. Among her duties, she assists the City of Santa Ana outpatient unit, outreach & engagement programs. She also works with the Westminster Police Department and County Community Service Center.

During the past two years, she’s volunteered on weekends with the Riverside County Mental Health Department. Christine also serves at the Asian Pacific Treatment Center as a mental health promoter and in older adult services. Christine said she recognizes the positive impact successful programs

have in supporting families and communities. “These programs support mental health care and are changing lives by offering a new beginning to our clients. So many of our clients are dealing with difficult situations in their lives and I’m grateful to be a part of these programs because we do not want to give up on anyone.”

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EVERYONE COUNTS OC

Volunteers can still sign-up for the 2022 Point In Time (PIT) Count. The biennial event takes place in Orange County (OC) from Monday, January 24 through Thursday, January 27. There are shifts in the mornings and evenings each day where teams of volunteers deploy into each city to canvass the area and survey individuals experiencing homelessness. Volunteers are also needed in deployment centers.

The PIT Count provides vital information that helps the County of Orange and the Orange County Continuum of Care better understand homelessness in the community and guides the response to homelessness in OC. The 2022 PIT Count will provide us with information regarding:

- Number of people experiencing homelessness in OC
- Locations of where people stay within the county
- Demographics of individuals and families experiencing homelessness, including number of Veterans, Transitional Age Youth (ages 18 to 24) and Seniors (age 62 and older)
- Number of people affected by physical or mental health concerns or disabilities

This information, which volunteers, nonprofits, government agencies, businesses, faith groups, and elected officials come together as a community to gather, helps the organizations working to address homelessness in OC identify which services are needed, identify trends and changes in demographics over time and decide how best to work together to collaboratively solve this complex social issue.

Volunteers will need to provide proof of being fully vaccinated for COVID-19 or provide a negative PCR test to ensure the safety of volunteers and of people being surveyed. Two dose vaccines (Pfizer or Moderna) must have been completed within the past six months while a single dose vaccination (Johnson & Johnson) must have been done within the past two months. If it's been longer than six months or two months respectively, a booster is required. PCR tests must be completed within 48 hours of the scheduled volunteer shift. For more information and to volunteer please visit: www.everyonecountsoc.org.



 WWW.EVERYONECOUNTSOC.ORG



Director's Message

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seeing many new leaders step forward to take on new roles to help move our Agency forward, especially in our mission to deliver sustainable and responsive services that promote population health and equity in partnership with the community.

I am excited for what is to come this year:

- New campaigns to be launched by our newly renamed service area, Mental Health and Recovery Services
- The Point in Time count, led by the Office of Care Coordination, takes place this month to support our response to homelessness in the county
- The Office on Population Health & Equity continues to evolve and grow, leading a movement in our community towards achieving health equity for all
- Our vaccination pods, led by Public Health Services, continue to focus on delivering the COVID-19 vaccines to our most vulnerable populations and hard-to-reach communities
- The distribution of newly authorized therapeutics to our community providers by Emergency Medical Services ensures equitable protections for our most vulnerable and at risk residents

And so much more. We are proving that the pandemic will not slow us down or prevent us from evolving in order to meet the needs of our community.

This month, we also recognize January as Cervical Cancer Awareness Month. According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), for every 100,000 women, 8 new cervical cancer cases were reported and 2 women died of this cancer. Cervical cancer may not cause signs and symptoms, and two screening tests (the Pap test and HPV test) can help prevent cervical cancer or find it early. Please take a moment to learn more about how to protect yourself from cervical cancer or support your loved one who may be at risk, by visiting the CDC's website at [cdc.gov/cancer/cervical/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/cervical/index.htm).

Thank you so much for your ongoing hard work and please continue to be safe and be well as we enter this new year.



Stay Well,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clayton Chau MD, PhD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Clayton Chau, MD, PhD
HCA Director and County
Health Officer

Mental Health and Recovery Services

WELCOME

"I am very excited about my new role with the OC Health Care Agency (HCA) as the new Chief of Mental Health and Recovery Services (MHRS)," said **Dr. Veronica "Ronnie" Kelley**. As she takes over MHRS, Dr. Kelley said, "California embarks on significant changes in mental health and addiction recovery services." She said Orange County (OC) must be ready for change.

For the past 5 years, Dr. Kelley served as Behavioral Health (BH) Director of San Bernardino County (SBC). Previously she served 3 years as Assistant BH Director in SBC. She returns to the HCA, where she served as Service Chief in Cultural Competency and Multicultural Services. "I look forward to leading a great team, with open communication, to enhance the vision and mission of the HCA."

Dr. Kelley is optimistic about what's ahead. "I'm very proud of the shift in the role of substance use disorder (SUD) in the field of behavioral health, having worked with SBC and the state to focus on the importance of recovery from a substance use disorder as essential in overall wellness. I've worked hard to ensure Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) programs meet stakeholder and regulation requirements, but most importantly, get funds out into the community so services are provided. I'm also proud that both Dr. Tom Insel (Governor Gavin Newsom's

"Mental Health Czar") and Darrel Steinberg (co-author of the MHSA) have seen the programs I've worked on in action, so they have a deeper understanding of how implementation of the act really helps save lives."

Dr. Kelley is very active both in the mental health field and as an educator. She is a member of the

Governing Board for the County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California (CBHDA), serving as past-President; she sits on the Executive Committee and serves as the Co-Chair for the Substance Abuse Prevention & Treatment (SAPT) Committee; she is a Council Member to the California Behavioral Health Planning Council; Board Member to the California Mental Health Services Authority; and Associate Member to the American Society of Addiction Medicine. In August of 2019 she was appointed by the governor as a member of the No Place Like Home Program Advisory Committee. In education, Dr. Kelley is an Assistant Clinical Professor

at Loma Linda University; Professor at Mount St. Mary's University; and has taught at California State University-San Bernardino. She's also very involved with her family, "I'm a mother of 3, grandmother of 1 and love spending time with my family, along with teaching the next generation of social workers!"



Dr. Veronica A. Kelley
Chief of Mental Health and Recovery Services

"Together, with our partners and diverse communities, we can align ourselves with the vision of working together for a healthier tomorrow, having a focus on improving the mental health and recovery of all residents in an equitable manner."

ME NEW FACES

“The HCA is uniquely equipped to be part of this transformation by holding the expertise in caring for the mental health needs of our highest risk and most vulnerable patients. As a Medical Director, I am eager to be part of this momentum and contribute in meaningful ways to our collective vision of improving access to care, while reducing the complexities within our health care system.”

“It is an honor to have the opportunity to serve the residents of Orange County (OC) as the Medical Director for Mental Health and Recovery Services (MHRS).” **Dr. Patricia “Patty” De Marco** is a double-boarded Psychiatrist with fellowship training in Consultation-Liaison; the branch of psychiatry that takes care of medically complex patients. During her career, Dr. De Marco has been fortunate to experience health care delivery in vastly different contexts. “By treating patients across the socio-economic spectrum, crossing state lines, and working in both public and private sectors, I have witnessed the many disparities in accessing mental health services. Now, with the pandemic leading to a rapid increase in mental health conditions and simultaneously igniting awareness, we are witnessing a critical need for cross-sector collaboration as we meet the demand and overcome these disparities.” Addressing these challenges can happen if we work together, said Dr. De Marco. She said the OC Health Care Agency (HCA) is positioned to make positive changes in our health care delivery systems in an equitable and sustainable way.

Dr. De Marco has additional training and expertise in the areas of Reproductive Psychiatry, Women’s Mental Health and Mental Health Program implementation. After completing Medical School in her native country of Venezuela, Dr. De Marco



Dr. Patricia De Marco
Mental Health and
Recovery Services
Medical Director

completed subspecialty training between the Mayo Clinic, the University of California-San Diego, and the University of Southern California (USC). During this time, Dr. De Marco acquired additional training in perinatal psychiatry at the Maternal Wellness Program of Los Angeles County-USC, primarily treating monolingual pregnant and post-partum women.

Prior to joining the HCA, Dr. De Marco served as the Medical Director of Consultation-Liaison Services at Hoag Hospital, serving patients in crisis in the emergency rooms, as well as hospitalized patients with complex medical and mental health needs. She later took a Medical Director Position at the Women’s Institute to establish a

comprehensive program serving women during pregnancy and the post-partum period. Most recently, Dr. De Marco spent nearly two years at the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitations providing services to inmates at Mule Creek State prison, as well as inmates at the Central California Women’s facility.

When she’s not at work, Dr. De Marco is still “on the job.” She and her husband, a busy cardiac anesthesiologist, are raising two daughters. Dr. De Marco said she has a passion for teaching her children about geography, languages, food, and culture, through travel and visiting family abroad.

5 Things You Need to Know About

1 The OC Health Care Agency (HCA) has partnered with John Wayne Airport to hand out COVID-19 self-collection test kits to travelers at the airport in Terminals A and C. You can see a report done by KNBC Channel 4 on the partnership [here](#).

2 COVID-19 testing remains a key component to stopping transmission of the virus and its variants by supporting early detection and reducing an individual's likelihood of unknowingly spreading the disease.

3 The HCA has provided COVID-19 test kits at no cost to those who live or work in Orange County since 2020. The test kits are available to order online by visiting ohealthinfo.com/covidtest.

4 The test kits are Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) tests that may be administered in the convenience of the individual's home. Each kit comes with a prepaid shipping return label and results are provided within 24-48 hours upon receipt of the specimen.

HEALTHY RETAIL TEAM

The OC Health Care Agency, City of Santa Ana, and the Santa Ana Healthy Retail Team (SAHRT) are recognizing local businesses that participate in the new "Shop Local, Shop Healthy" program. "The retailers commit themselves to improving the overall health of the community by offering healthy food choices and by removing alcohol and tobacco products

and display ads, from the line of sight of younger customers," said **Alicia Carranza**, Health Educator, Tobacco Use Prevention Program.

"Currently, 14 stores in Santa Ana are participating and the feedback is positive," said Alicia. "We've helped retailers make changes such as removing alcohol ads in places visible to

youth; another retailer is selling healthier snack options even plant-based milk; and another provides free recipe cards near produce and displays ads for healthy foods."

Mayor Vicente Sarmiento said, "The Shop Local, Shop Healthy program is giving Santa Ana families access to healthier foods and will help lead to better eating

R-Ranch Fresh Farm



Criteria Met:

Does not accept tobacco product discounts/coupons

Removed alcohol ads in places visible to youth

Sells healthier snack options & plant-based milk

Offers free recipe cards near produce

[Visit R-Ranch Fresh Farm](#)

El Mercado



Criteria Met:

Does not accept tobacco product discounts/coupons

Removed alcohol ads in places visible to youth

Healthy advertising

Offers free recipe cards near produce

[Visit El Mercado](#)

Out: COVID-19 Self Collection Test Kits

5 Regardless of vaccination status, everyone should test 24 hours before and 3-5 days after gathering or traveling. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has additional guidance on who should be tested. You can find that information and subscribe to CDC emails by visiting [here](#).



COVID-19 test kits handed out at John Wayne Airport.

habits for our children.” The Mayor continued by saying, “I’m grateful to the OC Health Care Agency and our local retailers that are helping make their community a better place through this program.”

The healthy stores recognition program is featured on the City of Santa Ana’s Shop Local webpage: <https://www.santa-ana.org/ShopHealthy>, which also offers store owners and managers the Healthy Retail Toolkit, a guide to joining the program. Residents can get involved by letting your local stores know what you want to see sold and by spreading the word about the program on social media. Shop at stores that participate in the “Shop Local, Shop Healthy” program. To see the list of stores, click the link above and scroll to the bottom of the page.



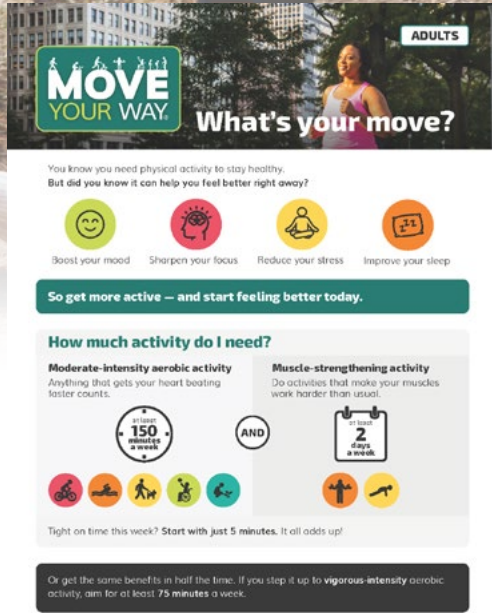
Food Waste: Be Food Safe

Food safety is the top reason US consumers throw away food at home. Preventing food from becoming unsafe can help reduce food waste. Below are some tips to help decrease the amount of food thrown out while consuming foods that are safe to eat.

Try these tips to help you reduce food waste:

- 1. Prevent** food from spoiling too soon by placing a thermometer in your refrigerator and freezer. Set the fridge at 40°F and the freezer at 0°F.
- 2. Refrigerate** fresh food within 2 hours after shopping. This includes meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy products, and cut fruits and vegetables.
- 3. Freeze!** Freezing is a great way to store most foods to keep them from going bad until you are ready to eat them.
- 4. Use** a food thermometer when cooking to be sure the food has reached the correct temperature before serving.
- 5. Eat** cooked leftovers within 4 days. You can freeze leftovers before the 4 days if you cannot eat them in time.

By **Patricia Stabile**, Public Health Nutritionist II



For Health



MAKE A GOAL TO MOVE MORE!

Did you know that regular physical activity can produce long term health benefits? Moving more can boost your mood, sharpen your focus, reduce your stress and improve your sleep.

People of all ages, shapes, sizes, and abilities can benefit from being physically active. Here are some tips to help you reach your goal.

Be active your way – Mix it up – there are endless ways to be active. Try out different activities to see what you like best and to add variety.

Set goals – Decide what activity you want to do, when you will do it and for how long. A sample goal could be “I will walk 5 days every week for 30 minutes.”

Add on to your active time – Once you get used to regular physical activity, try to increase your weekly active time. The more time you spend being physically active, the more health benefits you will receive.

For more ideas visit <https://health.gov/moveyourway>.

By **Christine Baun**, Public Health Nutritionist II

Try making this delicious Lightly Curried Butternut Squash Soup to warm up your winter evening.

Lightly Curried Butternut Squash Soup

Ingredients:

1 Butternut Squash	13 ½ ounces Coconut Milk light
1 Onion medium, diced	1 teaspoon Olive Oil
1 Green Bell Pepper, diced	3 cups Water
1 teaspoon Cumin Powder	Salt to taste
1 teaspoon Ground Coriander	Black Pepper to taste
1 teaspoon Turmeric	Sour Cream (optional)
½ teaspoon Cayenne Pepper	Scallions (optional)
or more if you like it spicy	Cilantro (optional)

Directions:

1. To prepare the squash, peel off the tough skin with a potato peeler. Cut the squash in half lengthwise with a sharp chef's knife, then scoop out the seeds and gloop.
2. Next, slice off the stem and very bottom of the squash and throw them away. Take each half of the squash and place it face-down on a cutting board. Slice each across into ½-inch sticks, then turn each slice into cubes.



SERVICE AWARDS

2021 Fourth Quarter Employee Service Awards (October 1 – December 31 Hire Dates)

Congratulations to the following staff for their years of service to the OC Health Care Agency and the County of Orange!

- Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion, pepper, and garlic, then sauté for 2 minutes. Add the cubed squash and spices and stir it all together.
- Put a lid on the pot and let it cook for another 2 minutes. Add the coconut milk and water and stir. Bring the soup to a boil, then turn down the heat to low and let it cook for about 30 minutes, or until the squash is tender.
- Once the squash is tender, taste the soup and add salt and pepper as needed.
- Wait until the soup has cooled before transferring it to a blender. Puree until smooth, then taste again and add any more salt and pepper it might need.
- Pour into bowls and add toppings, if desired.

For nutritional information and additional recipes click [here](#).

30 Years

Janice Coniglio
Joseph Guzman
Sarah Huynh
Yan “Jenny” Qian
Steven Sharp

25 Years

Jeannine Bender
Pauline Bui
Erlinda Doyo-Hou
Maritza Fajardo
Jenny Hudson
David Maciel
Florin Maracine
Maria Olvera
Kelly Soemantoro
Vanessa Thomas

20 Years

Carolina Aucott
Vincent Baca
Beatriz Baires
Renato Bautista, Jr.
Jean Brayer
Jessica Castaneda
Mark Davis
Glenn Dimaano
Jessica Gardea
Ezequiel Gutierrez
Jennifer Henriquez
Bradley Hutchins
Travers Ichinose
Duy Lam
Benito Luna
Diana Mentas
Diana Nava
Marcel Navarro
Tammy Nguyen

Helen Ninh
Christy Ortega
Milagros Ortiz
Anna Peters
Quyên Phan
Elana Randol
Christopher Ried
Cheryl Rowe
Luz Salazar
Karina Vasquez
Jennifer Wayt

Christina Weckerly-Ramirez
Mariam Zhouwandai
Teresa Zimmerman

15 Years

Sandra Alvarez
Juan Anzora
Charlie Arispe
Scarlett Bajjali
Donna Cooper
Linda Cox
Rhonda Cruz
Ricardo Delgado
Hanaa Escatel
Julia Gomez
Asmeret Hagos
Nathan Huynh
Marco Ibarra Villegas
Katherine Lam
Lawrence Lingren
Terrence Maher
Elizabeth Martinez
Luis Martinez
Salvador Martinez
Teresa Moran
Julie Nguyen
Mylien Nguyen
Douglas Phan
Gene Pineda
Erika Punchard

Ryan Ramos
Catherine Roque
Bobi-Jo Ross
Rodrigo Sigala
Selma Silva
Tamara Spataro
Roland Tabangin
Luiz Torres
Adriana Vasquez
Jessica Vasquez
Sheryl Woodhouse

10 Years

Cristina Aamot
Erin Hersh
Temple Jellerson
Rosalba Morales
Nancy Roman Delgado
Matthew Zahn

5 Years

Mariam Carter
Jannet Castellano
Darlena Downey
Navneet Kaur
Maggie Lopez
Akiko Mihara Wollenberg
Alexandra Mora
Kassandra Nguyen
David Ortega
Patricia Perez
Meredith Robie
Tiara Thomas
Gary Tran
Alyssa Vergara
Alexandra Viramontes

Peer-to-Peer

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Christine was born in Vietnam and grew up there and in Laos, before coming to the states. She is proficient in other languages (Thai, Lao and Vietnamese) and has specialized her work with Asian-Pacific communities. “I have a good pedagogical ability to observe and communicate. I combine that with a high sense of responsibility,” she said. “My proficiency in foreign languages, is a tremendous asset for working with clients. Together we’re able to communicate, approach, grasp and handle situations well, and work together for an effective outcome.”

During her career, Christine has worked with battered women and refugees through the Pacific Asian Family Center; she has worked with the Federal Emergency Management Agency as a case manager during the aftermath of the Rodney King verdict; and the Northridge Earthquake. Through her decades of work, Christine has kept a positive attitude even in difficult situations. “There are always obstacles that hinder my ability to do things perfectly, but I am willing to learn and improve my professional skills, accumulate knowledge, and improve my attitude to serve the community better and with excellence.”



Christine's family operates a pilot training and skydiving company in Thailand.

VISION
Quality health for all.

MISSION
In partnership with the community, deliver sustainable and responsive services that promote population health and equity.

GOALS
Promote quality, equity, and value.
Ensure the HCA's sustainability.
Offer relevant services to the community.

Connect with Us



The **What's Up** newsletter is created and distributed monthly by HCA Communications.

We welcome your ideas, input and/or insight into HCA people and programs. To contribute, comment or connect please email us at hcacomm@ochca.com or call (714) 834-2178. Thank you!